



AK-203 Rifles

Why in News?

India and Russia have begun the joint production of **AK 203 rifles at a factory in Amethi, Uttar Pradesh.**

- India and Russia had inked an agreement in **December 2021 for procurement of 6,01,427 AK 203 assault rifles** through Korwa Ordnance Factory in Uttar Pradesh's Amethi district.

What are the Key Points of Joint Contract?

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A Defence Upgrade

Korwa Rifle Factory in Amethi being upgraded to manufacture latest version of the Kalashnikov rifles

After multiple hurdles like payment issues over western sanctions and a complicated technology transfer agreement, the JV is back on track and equipment to make the rifles will be sent in two stages, officials said

Kalashnikov has delivered a batch of 70,000 AK-203 assault rifles made in Russia as part of the larger order

₹5,124-crore deal was signed between India and Russia last December

The infographic features a silhouette of a soldier, a Kalashnikov rifle, and the Indian national flag.

- More than **six lakh rifles are to be manufactured in India as part of a joint venture — Indo-Russia Rifles Private Limited** — established between the Indian Ordnance Factory Board (OFB), Kalashnikov Concern, and Rosoboronexport, (both subsidiaries of the Rostec State Corporation).
- The Rs 5,124 crore deal was signed between India and **Russia in December 2021.**
 - It is the biggest defence deal between the two nations in recent years. The deal has a clause for complete technology transfer. The rifles will also be exported to friendly foreign nations.
- The idea is to have **rifles made of 100 % indigenous components** over a period of 128 months.

What is an AK 203 Rifle?

- AK-203 assault rifle is **considered to be the latest and most advanced version** of the AK-47 rifle.
- It is a 7.62×39mm variant from the AK-100 rifle family (one that offers the AK-74M system, in multiple cartridges and lengths).
- It is expected **to replace the Indian Small Arms System (INSAS) 5.56×45 mm assault rifle**, which are presently being used by Army, Navy and the Air Force besides other security forces.
- INSAS rifles are not suitable for use at high altitude. Several other issues with these rifles include gun jamming, oil leakage etc.

How has Indo-Russia Defence and Security Relations been?

- India-Russia military-technical cooperation has evolved from a buyer-seller framework to one involving joint research, development and production of advanced defence technologies and systems.
- Both countries regularly conduct the Tri-Services exercise **'INDRA'**.
- The joint programmes between India and Russia include:
 - **[BrahMos cruise missile programme](#)**
 - 5th generation fighter jet programme
 - **[Sukhoi Su-30MKI programme](#)**
 - **Ilyushin/HAL Tactical Transport Aircraft**
 - **[KA-226T twin-engine utility helicopters](#)**
- The military hardware purchased/leased by India from Russia includes:
 - **[S-400 Triumf](#)**
 - **Kamov Ka-226 200 to be made in India under the [Make in India](#) initiative**
 - **[T-90S Bhishma](#)**
 - **[INS Vikramaditya](#) aircraft carrier programme**
- **Russia also plays a very important role in assisting the [Indian Navy](#) with its submarine programmes:**
 - **Indian Navy's first submarine, '[Foxtrot Class](#)' came from Russia.**
 - India is dependent on Russia for its nuclear submarine programme.
 - INS Vikramaditya, the sole aircraft carrier operated by India, is also Russian in origin.

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