

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh addresses the maiden India-Australia Defence Industry Business Round Table in Sydney

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Table in Sydney on October 10, 2025, reaffirming the growing synergy between the two nations across strategic, industrial, and technological domains. “Under the banner of our Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, established in 2020, we stand at a pivotal juncture to re-position our defence relations, not merely as partners, but as co-creators of a secure and prosperous Indo-Pacific,” stated Raksha Mantri. He also added that the Round Table is not merely a dialogue, it is a declaration of intent to make India and Australia natural allies in business, industry and innovation.

Shri Rajnath Singh recalled the series of high-level engagements that have strengthened bilateral relations including the India-Australia Summit in November 2024, the 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue in October 2024, the visit of the Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister of Australia to India in June 2025 and his ongoing visit to Australia. Raksha Mantri underlined that the foundation of the bilateral relationship lies in shared democratic values and institutional similarities. “Both India and Australia are part of the Commonwealth of Nations. Our shared history is built on democracy, diversity, liberty, and similar governance structures,” he added.

Raksha Mantri highlighted that strong bilateral ties rest on three essential pillars: a forward-looking government-to-government collaboration, people-to-people connect and convergence of business interests. “Our governmental frameworks are robust and getting further strengthened. On the people’s front, we have a large Indian diaspora in Australia, complemented by an increasing Australian presence in India. However, our defence industrial partnership, based on joint R&D, innovation, co-creation and co-production, still has untapped potential,” he stated.

Shri Rajnath Singh highlighted the details of India’s recent economic and industrial achievements, stating that India is on a transformative journey of structural reforms, particularly in manufacturing. “Today, India is globally the fourth-largest economy and the fastest-growing large economy in the world. Our defence production touched Rs 1.51 lakh crore (approximately USD 18 billion) last financial year, the highest ever with an 18% increase from the previous year. Our defence exports reached Rs 23,622 crore (USD 2.76 billion), with Indian companies now exporting to nearly 100 countries,” he added.

Calling for closer industrial collaboration, Shri Rajnath Singh stated, “I see this forum as an important instrument to make India and Australia natural allies in business and industry too. This alliance has compelling economic reasons to be successful and mutually beneficial.”

Raksha Mantri underscored that Australia excels in niche technologies such as quantum systems, autonomous underwater vehicles and advanced maritime surveillance, while India offers vast manufacturing scale, software capabilities, and indigenous strength in shipbuilding, missile technology and space. “This Round Table can be a great catalyst to tap the unrealised potential in our defence industry collaboration,” he added.

Raksha Mantri underlined that initiatives such as Make in India, Production Linked Incentive schemes and digital transformation have created an enabling environment for innovation and investment. He stated that government has liberalised the FDI policy up to 74% under the automatic route and beyond that with government approval, especially when modern technology is introduced. Shri Rajnath Singh added that the defence production ecosystem is being continuously liberalised through policy interventions and simplification of compliance mechanisms.

“To accelerate defence R&D in the private sector, we have opened avenues for free-of-cost technology transfer through DRDO. There are attractive schemes for development of cutting-edge technologies and they are giving excellent results,” highlighted Shri Rajnath Singh while underscoring the steps taken to promote research and innovation. He added that the DRDO and Australia’s Defence Science & Technology Group are already collaborating on towed array sensors, and discussions are advancing in quantum technology, AI, cyber security, information warfare, and advanced science and technology.

Raksha Mantri brought light to the fact that India welcomes Australian companies to co-develop and co-produce high-end systems, including propulsion technologies, autonomous underwater vehicles, flight simulators, and advanced materials. He underlined that the ventures can help build interoperable platforms aligned with the strategic objectives of both nations.

Highlighting specific areas for partnership, Shri Rajnath Singh stated that India with its robust shipbuilding

capabilities, diverse manufacturing base and a growing ecosystem of private sector innovators & start-ups, stands ready to be a trusted partner. “Our shipyards have a proven track record in building and maintaining a wide range of naval platforms. Indian yards can offer refit, mid-life upgrades, and maintenance services to the Royal Australian Navy and vessels under Australia’s Pacific Maritime Security Program,” he added.

Raksha Mantri cited examples of active industrial partnerships such as Indo-MIM Pvt. Ltd. with Thales Australia, Tata Advanced Systems with W&E Platt Pty Ltd, and Munitions India Ltd. with Aqusport. “These examples show how our industrial ecosystems complement each other and how businesses can become the driving force behind our governments’ strategic intent.” He exuded confidence that this list can grow much bigger in the near future, allowing both sides to fully benefit from the existing potential.

Shri Rajnath Singh also welcomed Australia’s proposal for a reciprocal provision of defence articles and services MoU. “We welcome this initiative. Importantly, Australia has identified India as a Top Tier Partner, removing certain regulatory barriers to enable easier technology sharing. This is a testament to the trust and confidence that bind us,” he added.

Raksha Mantri underlined the vast opportunities that lie ahead for the two nations. “There are huge opportunities for co-production of naval vessels and sub-systems, ship repair, refits and MRO support in India for Australian and partner nation vessels, joint R&D in autonomous systems and green shipbuilding technologies,” he highlighted. Shri Rajnath Singh stated that by diversifying supply chains, building joint capacities and investing in innovation, the two nations can contribute to a resilient, secure, and self-reliant Indo-Pacific.

“I invite the Australian business community to invest, collaborate, and innovate with India. Together, we can develop cutting-edge technologies, build advanced platforms, and ensure that our industries are not just suppliers, but strategic enablers of peace and security in the region,” underscored Shri Rajnath Singh. He urged them to seize this moment to build a partnership that is not only economically beneficial but also strategically transformative.

Raksha Mantri highlighted that the India-Australia defence partnership is at a defining moment and the convergence of the strategic interests, combined with the energy of the industries & the vision of the leaderships, gives the nations a unique opportunity to shape the future together.

The Round Table was jointly organised by the Ministry of Defence (Government of India), the Australian Department of Defence, the Newland Global Group and the Australia-India Business Council. The event was attended by Assistant Minister for Defence of Australia Mr Peter Khalil along with senior government officials, diplomats, industry leaders, research institutions and innovators from both countries.

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