

DAP 2026 proposes transformative leap in India's defence procurement framework

Posted On: 13 FEB 2026 7:46PM by PIB Delhi

The Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) 2026, the draft of which was released recently by the Ministry of Defence to replace the existing 2020 version, has been designed to bolster self-reliance, accelerate acquisition timelines, and empower the Indian defence industrial ecosystem. It aims to achieve a greater indigenous defence manufacturing base, reduce import dependency and position India as a global leader in defence technology by streamlining processes, enhancing indigenous content mandates & introducing innovative procurement categories. The major changes proposed in DAP 2026 as compared to DAP 2020 are as follows:

- Procurement categories reduced from 5 to 4
- Indigenous design defined in DAP to promote Aatmanirbharta
- Indigenous Content raised from 50% to 60% in Buy Indigenous Design, Development & Manufacturer category and providing incentives
- Involving subject experts in the finalisation of SQR/Specifications and oversight of Trials
- New procedures (i) Long Term Bulk Acquisition for industry visibility and (ii) Low-Cost Capital Acquisition for fast-moving, low-cost tech items introduced
- Introduction of Technology Readiness Level (TRL) based categorisation
- Ab-initio single vendor allowed in Buy (Indian-indigenous design, development, and manufacture) for TRL 6 to 9 equipment
- Provision for Two-stage trials introduced
- Fast Track Procedure refined with downward delegation for procurement involving emerging & shorter development cycle technology
- Compensation to all vendors who are successful in trial evaluations
- Development-cum-Production Partner (DcPP) selection for DRDO projects reviewed to ensure level playing field
- Make/iDEX projects updated with Spiral development & 05 years of assured orders
- Services to choose the mode of QA trials for faster procurement cycle
- Monitoring of timelines from Request for Information (RFI) onwards and planning concurrent activities to achieve reduced timelines for acquisition

The draft DAP 2026 has been uploaded on the official MoD website seeking suggestions and comments from all stakeholders.

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