

Prime Minister & French President virtually inaugurate Final Assembly Line of H-125 Light Utility Helicopter at Vemagal, Karnataka

H-125 final assembly line is a milestone in India-France strategic partnership: Raksha Mantri

“Govt is committed to achieving self-reliance in critical tech & manufacturing high-end products through mutually beneficial partnerships”

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Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and French President Mr Emmanuel Macron, on February 17, 2026, virtually inaugurated, from Mumbai, Tata Advanced Systems Final Assembly Line of the Airbus H-125 Light Utility Helicopter, located at Vemagal, Karnataka. Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh, French Minister of the Armed Forces and Veterans Affairs Ms Catherine Vautrin, Union Minister of Civil Aviation Shri KR Naidu and Minister for Large & Medium Industries, Government of Karnataka Dr MB Patil were present at the Final Assembly Line facility during the virtual inauguration.





In his address, Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh described the final assembly line of H-125 helicopters as a milestone in the strategic partnership between India and France. “Our collaboration with France is limitless, where even sky is not a limit to our mutually beneficial partnership,” he said, congratulating TASL and Airbus Helicopters for the H-125 initiative which follows their earlier collaboration to manufacture C-295 transport aircraft in India. He termed the project as a symbol of how India can collaborate with international Original Equipment Manufacturers to contribute to the *Make-in-India* vision.



Emphasising that *Make-in-India* and *Aatmanirbhar Bharat* have been the cornerstones of India's economic policy since 2014, Raksha Mantri termed the initiative as one of the major highlights of PM Modi-led Government's commitment to achieving self-reliance in critical technologies and manufacturing high-end products & equipment through mutually beneficial partnerships with friendly countries.

Shri Rajnath Singh pointed out that the H-125 program investment is anticipated to exceed Rs 1,000 crore and is likely to create direct & indirect employment opportunities for skilled and hardworking youth. He dubbed the H-125 helicopters as a platform renowned for its exceptional reliability, versatility, and outstanding performance in diverse operating conditions. "The H-125 has proven to be one of the most effective and trusted single-engine helicopters globally," he said.



Raksha Mantri stressed that India, for more than a decade, has been charting the path of rapid industrial development through large scale infrastructure building, capital infusion in important sectors through a number of schemes such as Production Linked Incentive, apart from providing a liberalised regime for facilitating investment. He underlined that the focus has also been to support the small & medium industry and strengthen the start-up ecosystem. “Overall, our objective is to ensure holistic industrial development which not only caters to our domestic needs, but also fulfills the requirement of other countries,” he said.

Shri Rajnath Singh enumerated the reforms undertaken by the Ministry of Defence to augment the contribution of the private sector in the defence industrial ecosystem, including the corporatisation of Ordnance Factories, liberalised investment schemes, and establishment of defence industrial corridors. He stated that, historically, Indian defence production was largely public sector oriented due to various reasons such as requirement of high capital investment and long gestation period, that resulted in less-than-desirable contribution of the private sector in production and exports. He highlighted that due to the steps taken by the Government, the share of the private sector stands at almost a quarter of total defence production, and defence exports have increased manifold putting India among the top defence exporters of the world.

Raksha Mantri stated that this growth trajectory has provided a massive boost to the MSMEs and ancillary sectors, which have grown to over 16,000 in number today, adding that a large number of foreign companies currently source many components from Indian MSMEs. He invited companies to deepen this partnership through meaningful technology transfer and offer advanced solutions to meet the security needs of other countries as well.

Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal AP Singh, Defence Secretary Shri Rajesh Kumar Singh, Secretary (Defence Production) Shri Sanjeev Kumar and other senior officials were also present at the event.

The H125M is optimised to serve as a high-altitude force multiplier across a spectrum of critical missions. This versatile platform is designed to excel in tactical reconnaissance and surveillance by leveraging its low acoustic and thermal signatures. Additionally, the H125M provides a decisive edge in high-altitude logistics, ensuring the delivery of vital supplies to remote frontline outposts, and serves as a rapid-response asset for search and rescue or medical evacuation operations.

The H125 is the only helicopter in history to have landed on the summit of Mount Everest, giving it a performance ceiling that exceeds existing light utility fleets. For the Indian military, which operates in some of the most challenging high-and-hot environments in the world, this performance can be a critical differentiator.

This is the second major Tata Advanced Systems and Airbus industrial collaboration, following the C295 military transport Final Assembly Line, cementing a comprehensive military aerospace ecosystem in India.

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