

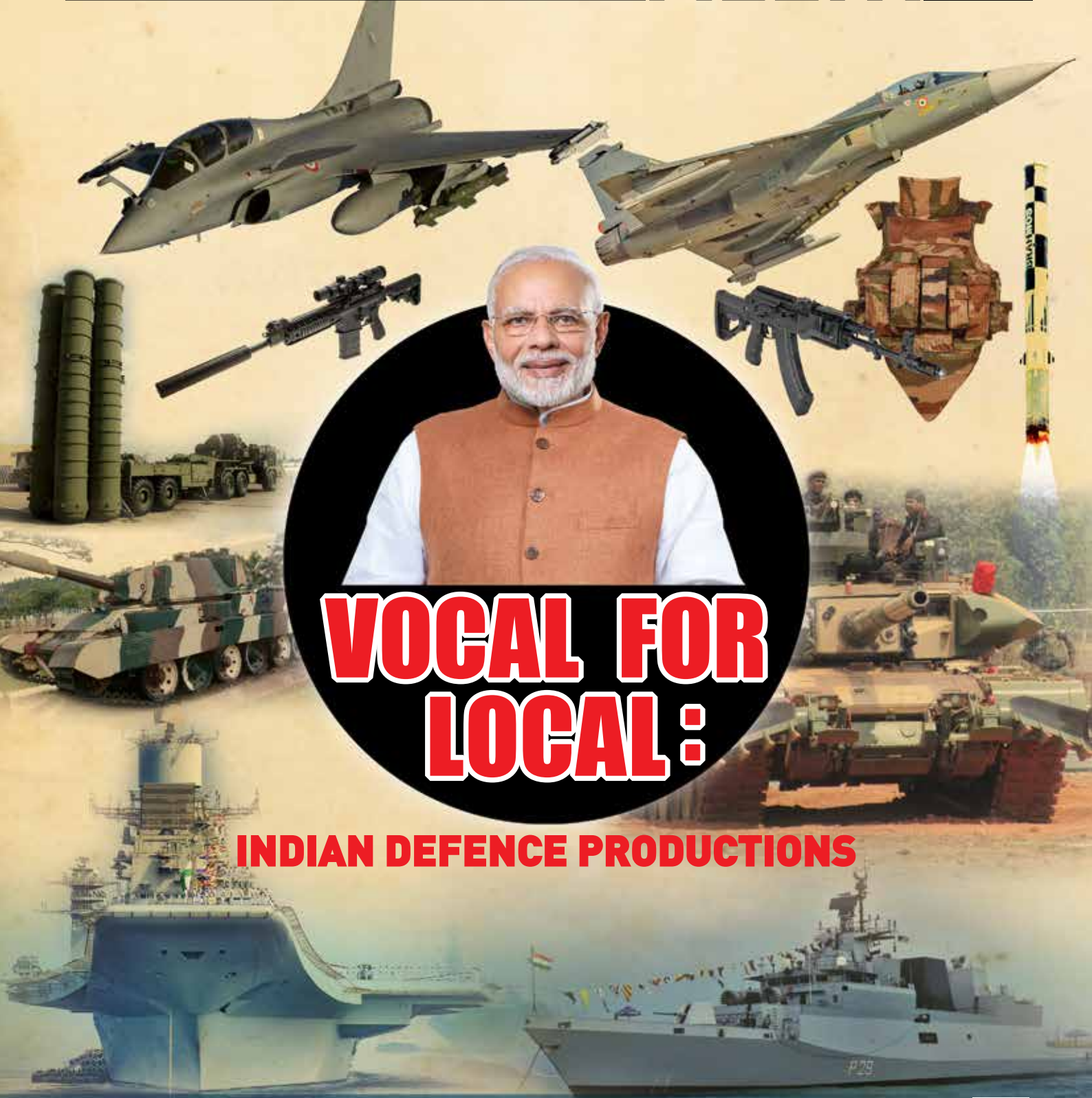
Committed To Defence And Security Worldwide

# DEFENCE & SECURITY ALERT

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**VOCAL FOR LOCAL:**

**INDIAN DEFENCE PRODUCTIONS**



THE FIRST CHOICE IN THE DOMAINS OF  
DEFENCE, SECURITY AND WORLD AFFAIRS  
WORLDWIDE



**11 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE**







## MISSION

We endeavour to sound **ALERTS** and create **AWARENESS** about the myriad dimensions and manifestations of **DEFENCE** and **SECURITY** in India and around the world.



**The power of a King lies in his mighty arms...**

Security of the citizens at peace time is very important because State is the only saviour of the men and women who get affected only because of the negligence of the State.

- Chanakya

# DSA IS AS MUCH YOURS, AS IT IS OURS!



**A**t 06:45 am on 22 October 2020, the Defence Research and Development Organisation conducted its final trial of the Nag anti-tank missile at the Pokharan field firing ranges. It was a landmark event in India's quest for an indigenous defence base and industry. Nag has a number of variants depending on launch platforms, from man-portable to air launched. In an increasingly stressed economy, any savings from indigenous defence breakthroughs is always welcome, especially since India is amongst the world's largest importers of military hardware. In the euphoria a footnote requires greater attention, for the first trial of Nag was held in 1990.

All defence equipment take time to research, develop and put into production. There can't be shortcuts to success in this field, for lives and national security is at stake. But for a country that can send a successful moon mission, to take 30 years to develop an anti-tank missile is reason enough to pause and think deeply about skills, priorities and capabilities. The same country with such varying success rates cannot

but have deep introspection about its structures and management of defence research and development. Delays compel acquisitions based on imports that cost a lot of money.

It is a little remembered fact but so true that it must be pondered seriously. In terms of defence research and development, India and the United States began their government structures in the same year, 1958. The much derided Krishna Menon sanctioned the creation of DRDO, while then President Dwight Eisenhower raised Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency. Since then, the success rate of both DRDO and DARPA can be compared dispassionately, and which organisation comes across as winner is apparent to even a novice. There are no excuses other than simple structural and mindset issues, for India wasn't a novice then.

At Independence, India had the most advanced industrial and scientific base amongst all Asian countries. Little wonder that it was the first to develop a jet combat aircraft, space and nuclear advancements were second to none continentally. That logical

follow-up steps were not taken is now a matter of debate and of little consequence since the time has passed. What needs to be undertaken now is a serious study about hardware priorities, emerging threats, economic opportunities, and emerging technologies. For all of these fields, and more, conjoin to make a defence product usable, scientifically viable, and economically rational.

'Vocal for Local' will only see results once the country is willing to introspect dispassionately, and arrive at decisions that may seem harsh but will serve the national interest in the long run. And, for starters, it is important to accept the fact that none has the monopoly over national interest. For numerous private sector enterprises, from small to large, have the capability and prioritise India, but haven't been allowed to make the breakthrough that is essential to keep them afloat and interested. All that happens for them is the constant dangling of a bait for field trials. The light at the end of the tunnel has not shone on them, and until it does, 'Vocal for Local' will remain a mere slogan.

**Manvendra Singh**



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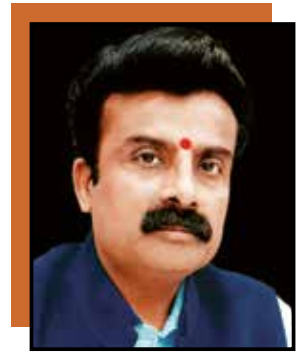
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**Editor: Manvendra Singh**

# “VOCAL FOR LOCAL: INDIAN DEFENCE PRODUCTION”



In the wake of the Pandemic of 2020, every industry has been very badly affected. Many manufacturing units have either shut down or have come to a stand-still. Import and export also plummeted to almost nil for quite a long time. The entire world economy had been shaken due to this Covid-19 pandemic; India was no exception. But the silver lining during these bad times came from the top leadership of the country. Our Prime Minister understood the need of the hour and the current and the forthcoming challenges very well, and thus, announced a new dictum — “Vocal For Local” — covering all the industries. It is for every industry, be small or large, to adopt this dictum at the earliest.

After Independence, India has been primarily dependent on foreign procurement for its defence and security needs. Hoping to cash in on a peace dividend, Indian leaders neglected the defence sector till they were rudely woken by the Chinese aggression of 1962. Post-haste, the foundations of a military industrial complex exclusively in the public sector was laid on the bedrock of licence production of foreign weapons with the promise of “leapfrogging” technology indigenously and move towards self-reliance and thence, on to self-sufficiency. That promise was never fulfilled except in missiles as demonstrated by the recent series of successful tests of several different types of missiles.

It is gratifying to note that Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has made sweeping changes intended to encourage the private sector to participate in the new defence architecture. At the same time the public sector defence undertakings are being revamped to innovate and produce weapons and war material of quality.

Though it may take some time but good efforts have been started by the Government of India and the Ministry of Defence. Some 101 defence technologies and products which have been imported so far will now not be allowed to be imported from December 2020 to give fillip to the “Vocal for Local” process. It is expected that dependence on foreign sources will come to an end at least in these items.

The private sector has now been presented with an opportunity to live up to the oft-repeated aspirations. It is also a challenge to ensure that indigenous military hardware becomes available to the armed forces as early as possible and quality is assured. Having opened the gateway of opportunity, the government will have to ensure ease of doing business and be prepared with an effective programme of “handholding” to lead the fledgling private sector into the defence arena where reliability is the touchstone. Several “mini ratnas” from the private sector have already created production lines in their current establishments to take on defence contracts. The list of banned items is big enough to allow for picking and choosing.

In this edition, our eminent contributors have discussed the challenges and the possible solutions to attain indigenous defence production. I am sure that you will get many new insights on this subject through this dedicated edition on “Vocal for Local: Indian Defence Production”. We wish the project great success!

Jai Hind



**Pawan Agrawal**  
 Chief Executive Officer



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LEVERAGING DEFENCE OFFSETS EFFECTIVELY

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VSM

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