



Indigenous gun trials of Army to enter next stage by June

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Indigenous gun trials of Army to enter next stage by June-Developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation, Advanced Towed Artillery Gun System will undergo user-assisted trials

- The development of the indigenously-designed heavy artillery gun, the Advanced Towed Artillery Gun System (ATAGS), has advanced to a stage where user-assisted trials of the gun are likely to start by June and the Army has begun finalising the Preliminary Specifications Qualitative Requirements (PSQR).

ATAGS

- The ATAGS is a 155mm, 52 calibre gun being developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation on two parallel tracks: one prototype is being built in partnership with Tata Power (Strategic Engineering Division), and the other is in collaboration with Bharat Forge.

Army's concerns

- The Army, which is in the process of drawing up the PSQR that details the essential and desired parameters for the gun, has already flagged a few concerns related to weight and accuracy.
- The gun has been undergoing development trials for some time now, with a few trials held in the Pokhran firing ranges as recently as last month.
- Once the PSQRs are approved, the process for formulating the final Qualitative Requirements would begin.
- Guns from both Bharat Forge and Tata Power would be evaluated and based on the commercial bids, the order would be split between them with the lowest bidder getting a larger order.
- The Defence Ministry has already approved the in-principle purchase of

150 of these guns at an approximate cost of Rs.3,365 crore.

Features

- The gun has several significant features including an all-electric drive, high mobility, quick deployability, auxiliary power mode, advanced communications system, automated command and control system.
- It also sports a six-round magazine instead of the standard three-round magazine.
- This necessitates a larger chamber and is a major factor pushing up the overall weight of the system.

Other Weapons

- The Army, which has been seeking to modernise its weaponry, recently inducted its first modern pieces of artillery in 30 years: the M777 Ultra-Light Howitzer from the U.S. and the K9 Vajra-T self-propelled artillery gun from South Korea.

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