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Army Plans Over 300 K9 Vajra-T Howitzers in Largest Artillery Buy in Decades

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SECURITY & DEFENCE

GS3

CURATED & WRITTEN BY

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Army Plans Over 300 K9 Vajra-T Howitzers in Largest Artillery Buy in Decades

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Source: ujjyari.com — Free UPSC & State PCS Current Affairs

✓ Every fact web-verified against primary sources **HOW**

WHY IN NEWS

The **Indian Army** has moved a proposal before the **Defence Procurement Board** for over **300 K9 Vajra-T** 155mm self-propelled tracked howitzers, worth about **Rs 23,000 crore**. If cleared, it would be India's **single largest artillery procurement in decades**. The guns are to be built in India by **Larsen & Toubro (L&T)** at Hazira, Gujarat, under licence from South Korea's Hanwha, reinforcing the **indigenisation** drive in defence.

THE PROCUREMENT AT A GLANCE

ASPECT	DETAIL
Platform	K9 Vajra-T (155mm/52-calibre self-propelled tracked howitzer)
Quantity	Over 300 guns
Value	About Rs 23,000 crore
Maker	L&T (Hazira, Gujarat), under licence from Hanwha (South Korea)
Range	Over 40 km
Significance	Largest artillery buy in decades

WHAT THE K9 VAJRA-T IS

The **K9 Vajra-T** is the Indianised version of South Korea's K9 Thunder self-propelled howitzer. Key features:

- **155mm/52-calibre** main gun with a range of **over 40 km**
- A **self-propelled tracked** platform that can fire and reposition quickly, an advantage over towed artillery

- Built for varied terrain, from desert to high-altitude operations

Procurement History

ORDER	DETAIL
First order (2017)	100 guns, about Rs 4,500 crore; delivered by 2021
Second order (2023)	An additional 100 guns, about Rs 7,600 crore
Proposed (2026)	Over 300 guns, about Rs 23,000 crore

WHY IT MATTERS STRATEGICALLY

The procurement reflects two priorities:

- 1. Two-front firepower.** The Army needs mobile, long-range artillery for both the desert sector facing Pakistan and the high-altitude theatres along the Line of Actual Control with China. The K9 Vajra-T's mobility and range serve both.
- 2. Atmanirbhar Bharat in defence.** Building the guns in India through a private firm (L&T) under licensed transfer of technology advances **self-reliance**, creates jobs, and supports a domestic defence-manufacturing base, with potential for exports. It aligns with **Make in India** in the defence sector.

UPSC RELEVANCE

Prelims

- **K9 Vajra-T:** 155mm/52-calibre self-propelled tracked howitzer; range **over 40 km**
- Built by **L&T** under licence from **Hanwha (South Korea)**
- Proposed order: over **300 guns**, about **Rs 23,000 crore**
- First order in **2017** (100 guns); a second order of 100 guns in 2023
- Aligns with **Atmanirbhar Bharat** and **Make in India** in defence

Mains Angles

- 1 GS3 Defence Indigenisation:** Examine how licensed manufacturing through the private sector advances self-reliance in defence.
- 2 GS3 Security:** Discuss the role of mobile, long-range artillery in India's two-front military preparedness.

FACTS CORNER

FACT	DETAIL
Platform	K9 Vajra-T
Calibre	155mm/52-calibre
Range	Over 40 km
Maker	L&T (Hanwha licence)
Proposed order	300+ guns, ~Rs 23,000 crore
First order	2017 (100 guns)
Policy frame	Atmanirbhar Bharat, Make in India

Sources: *Bharat Shakti, Ministry of Defence, The Hindu*

Source: [Army Plans Over 300 K9 Vajra-T Howitzers in Largest Artillery Buy in Decades](#) — Ujyari.com | Free UPSC & State PCS Current Affairs

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