

Axis Bank Hosts Defence Conclave 2025, 'Atmanirbhar Defence' – Empowering the Defence Ecosystem

February 18, 2025

Axis Bank, one of India's leading private sector banks, hosted the **Defence Conclave 2025** in New Delhi, reaffirming its commitment to strengthening India's defence ecosystem through enhanced financial accessibility and strategic innovation. Organized in collaboration with **KPMG** as the knowledge partner, Innovation for Defence Excellence (**iDEX**) as the mission partner, and Indian Venture and Alternate Capital Association (**IVCA**) as the ecosystem partner, the conclave served as a key forum for dialogue on driving self-reliance in the defence sector.

Under the theme '**Atmanirbhar Defence – Empowering the Defence Ecosystem**', the conclave aligned with the Government of India's vision to bolster indigenous defence manufacturing, fortify MSMEs, and nurture the growth of defence startups. The event brought together policymakers, industry leaders, defence PSUs, MSMEs, private and foreign OEMs, venture capitalists, and startups to address critical financial challenges that hinder the Defence MSME and Startups growth & innovation.

The gathering was honoured by the presence of senior government officials, including **Shri Rajesh Kumar Singh, IAS, Defence Secretary, Ministry of Defence (MoD)**, **Shri Sanjeev Kumar, IAS, Secretary - Defence Production** and **Dr. Mayank Sharma, Special CGDA**.

As India's defence sector transforms, Axis Bank is strengthening its financial backbone by addressing key challenges faced by MSMEs, including funding constraints, delayed payments, and regulatory hurdles. The **Defence Conclave 2025** fostered discussions on improving liquidity and financing access. As part of its commitment, Axis Bank has introduced tailored solutions such as **Trade Receivables Discounting System (TReDS)**, sector-specific credit lines, and financing instruments to help MSMEs and defence startups scale operations, ensuring seamless cash flow and supporting India's self-reliant defence manufacturing ecosystem. Additionally, Axis

Bank has launched **sector-specific credit lines and financing instruments** to help MSMEs scale operations without capital constraints, further strengthening India's defence manufacturing landscape.

Speaking at the conclave, **Mr. Kartik Bangalore, Head of Conglomerates & Large Corporates, Axis Bank** said, "Axis Bank is deeply committed to supporting India's Atmanirbharta goals by offering tailor-made financial solutions that empower MSMEs and startups to become integral contributors to the defence manufacturing ecosystem. By addressing structural funding challenges, we aim to foster innovation and unlock the true potential of India's defence supply chain."

Axis Bank's defence-focused financial solutions include:

- **Tailored Credit Offerings:** Dedicated lending programs for defence MSMEs, OEMs, and supply chain partners to support working capital requirements and expansion plans
- **Supply Chain Finance Solutions:** Enabling seamless cash flow for defence vendors through digital financing solutions, ensuring uninterrupted production and timely deliveries
- **Trade Receivables Discounting System (TReDS):** Promoting faster payments and financial stability for MSMEs, helping them overcome delayed payment challenges and improving liquidity
- **Venture Capital and Startup Support:** Encouraging innovation through partnerships with India's vibrant defence startup ecosystem, in collaboration with iDEX and IVCA

Axis Bank's entry into the defence sector aligns with India's ambitious goal of achieving ₹1.75 lakh crore in defence production this fiscal year, with a vision to touch ₹3 lakh crore by 2029. The bank's proactive approach will contribute to bolstering indigenous capabilities and supporting India's exponential growth in defence exports, which have surged from ₹686 crore in FY 2013-14 to ₹21,083 crore in FY 2023-24, with a target of ₹50,000 crore by 2029.

Axis Bank remains committed to fostering collaboration between defence PSUs, private manufacturers, foreign OEMs, and venture capitalists,

ensuring a holistic approach to strengthening India's defence sector. Through its innovative financial offerings and strategic partnerships, Axis Bank is set to be a key enabler in the nation's mission for self-reliance and global leadership in defence.