

Formation Of Defence Corridor in Maharashtra

The Synopsis: Defence Corridor in Maharashtra

Following the dream project of Viksit Bharat @ 2047 of Government of India we envisaged the need for formation of defence corridor in Maharashtra state in order to develop economic prosperity and ever-increasing demand of weapons and equipment by our defence forces.

The Hon'ble Prime Minister of India has put forward the policy of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' in Defence, aimed at making the country self-reliant in defence production and thereby reducing imports and dependency on foreign manufacturers. In order to meet these objectives, manufacturing facilities in dedicated clusters are needed to be set up to establish an indigenous supply chain for equipment and systems required by the defence forces. Such clusters in the form of a Defence Corridor can serve the said purpose effectively on the line of UP and Tamil Nadu defence corridor. A Defence Corridor is a dedicated region or hub strategically planned and located to promote and catalyze indigenous production of defense and aerospace equipment. Maharashtra state with a conducive and diverse ecosystem, aligns with the requirements of a Defence Corridor for defence production. Apart from the other manufacturing hubs of the state, Pune is one of the established manufacturing, auto components, IT and defence industrial hub, and has supporting infrastructure and is very well connected. Pune is also known as Oxford of India for having technically advanced educational institutes producing technical and management professionals regularly for the industry in Maharashtra.

Defence concerns and the establishments :

Maharashtra state has a large-scale coastal line spreading in Indian Ocean towards Arabian sea at a strategic point close to Pakistan and other adversaries. The Indian Navy supported by Coast Guard is safeguarding the security concerns of the nation under the able command of Western Naval Command. IAF has a major air base with the latest fighter aircrafts in Pune and closely located at Ojhar near Nashik is the most important fighter aircraft overhaul production depot of the IAF and HAL producing fighter aircrafts. The Maintenance Command is situated in Nagpur. C295 aircraft made its successful inaugural landing at Navi Mumbai International Airport on 11 Oct 2024. The HQs of the Indian Army's Southern Command is located in Pune. There are military institutes located in Maharashtra state including the College of Military Engineering and Armed Forces Medical College. Further Defence Research and Development Organizations and its establishments include center for air Borne Systems and Artificial Intelligence and Robotics are spread across in Maharashtra. Ordnance factories are the oldest and the largest set up under Defence production. Mazagaon Docks Limited (MDL) one of the largest Ship Builders constructing warships and submarines for the Indian Navy and Coast Guard and also involved in large scale exports is located in Mumbai. MDL has regularity approval by both US and Japanese Governments for refits and repairs of their warships and submarines. CHOWGULE LAVGAN ship-repair facilities are situated at GLANCEAN ULTRA MODERN SHIPYARD on the West Coast, around 70 Nautical miles from Mumbai and involved in refit and repair of Coast Guard ships.

Logistics Support and connectivity:

Maharashtra state has well established infrastructure and is very well connected by Air, Rail, Sea and Road. Travel time between Mumbai and Delhi is being reduced to half and

Nagpur and Mumbai travel time reduced again due to Samruddhi Highway. The Bullet Train from Mumbai to Ahmedabad and Hyper Loop connectivity between Pune and Mumbai, travel time 25 minutes, both are expected soon. Proximity to Mumbai provides it with seaports at Nava Shiva and Angre port near Ratnagiri, close to 100 KM from Mumbai and another seaport coming up will be Vadhavan port, around 200 KM from Nava Shiva port. Mumbai has one of the busiest international airports in the world and we have another one in Pune and one coming up close to New Mumbai to ease out the international traffic.

The Industry :

Maharashtra has a very well-established technological advanced and reliant industry spread all over the state producing defence equipment and items. Pune is a high-tech city with brilliant minds and facilities. A proper military and civil infusion are required looking into space and cyber interaction. Viksit and Surakshit Bharat are in need of the hour along with emerging technologies and we need Engines, Semi-conductors, Aerospace, Artificial Intelligence, Drones and other equipment and Maharashtra is an automatic choice. Ship Building industry is one of the largest in Mumbai.

Defence Corridor :

In view of the foregoing Defence Corridor for Maharashtra is an automatic choice. Honorable Chief Minister of Maharashtra Shri Devendra Fadnavis advised early this year that the state government has requested the Defence Ministry to declare Mumbai-Nagpur Samruddhi Expressway as a defence industry corridor. The Mumbai-Nagpur Samruddhi Expressway will be one of the most vibrant and economically viable corridors in India, on the lines of corridors in Seoul and Busan (in South Korea). "I have also requested the defence minister to declare Samruddhi Expressway as a defence industry corridor," he said. The Union government is selecting certain areas for encouraging defence manufacturing and Maharashtra hopes to turn the Vidarbha, Marathwada region (through which the Mumbai-Nagpur Expressway will pass) as a defence industry hub, the chief minister said. "We have already started the work on this 700-km greenfield road. It is not a mere road but an economic corridor which will connect the industry in Vidarbha, Marathwada with JNPT Port in Mumbai, Fadnavis said." Maharashtra now has 600 defence MSMEs who have created a value and assets worth Rs 12,000 to 15,000 crores. These MSMEs have played a key role in Atmanirbhar Bharat ecosystem," said Devendra Fadnavis. A Defence corridor is recommended covering four Defence manufacturing clusters at "Nagpur, Shirdi, Pune and Ratnagiri" and indigenization cells of the Defence Forces and the ship builders be made available in these cities.

Honorable Prime Minister
Honorable Defence Minister
Honorable Chief Minister of Maharashtra

Sub :- Formation of Defence Corridor in Maharashtra

At the outset we, the residents of Maharashtra, would like to convey our gratitude to both the Governments, at the centre and the state, for the large-scale development in the state.

Viksit Bharat@2047 represents the government of India's ambitious vision to transform the nation into a developed entity by the centenary of its independence in 2047. Encompassing diverse facets of development such as economic prosperity, social advancement, environmental sustainability, and effective governance. Living on this dream we Viksit Bharat Pune Chapter team started working on various projects including formation of Defence Corridor. The starting point was to get the Navy and Ship Builders including Mazagaon Docks Limited, Goa Shipyard Ltd, GRSE, Cochin Shipyard Ltd and Hindustan shipyard Ltd close to Pune for indigenization of the weapons and equipment. Subsequently it was envisaged that formation of defence corridor in Maharashtra will be the answer to enhanced Defence manufacturing/production, indigenization and will contribute to India's defence sector growth while extending its reach to international markets.

Seminar on Defence Corridor:

Going forward we conducted a seminar on "Defence corridor in Maharashtra", on the 03 Dec 2024 in Pune attended by Defence Veterans, Industrialists and other professionals from the state and it was agreed that the formation of Defence corridor is the need of hour. Please find below and attached (Videos) the views of the participants. May like to click on the link below to go through the complete viewpoints of the speakers.

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ttUVEkXkZUEigchBow6jysARsiB7FPRw>

Defence concerns and the establishments :

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warships and submarines. CHOWGULE LAVGAN ship-repair facilities are situated at GLANCEAN ULTRA MODERN SHIPYARD on the West Coast, around 70 Nautical miles from Mumbai and involved in refit and repair of Coast Guard ships.

Defence Corridor:

From being largest importer of defence equipment, Bharat is now transiting more and more on indigenous design and productions and even expanding as exporter of armed forces weapons and equipment. The concept of defence corridors started as a step in this direction wherein the participating states grow in their economy and employment opportunities for residents. Being self-reliant in defence production is not only to control costs but more importantly not being at mercy of others during hostilities.

Defence and Aerospace market with estimated requirements by the three defence forces will be over USD 250 billion by 2025. These defence requirements range from aircraft, helicopters, ships, submarines and tanks, to ground systems, missiles and weapons. Defence and Aerospace is one of the key manufacturing sectors identified by the Government of India as part of its 'Make in India' campaign. The Hon'ble Prime Minister of India has put forward the policy of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' in Defence, aimed at making the country self-reliant in defence production and thereby reducing imports and dependency on foreign manufacturers. In order to meet these objectives, manufacturing facilities in dedicated clusters are needed to be set up to establish an indigenous supply chain for equipment and systems required by the defence forces. Such clusters in the form of a Defence Corridor can serve the said purpose effectively on the line of UP and Tamil Nadu defence corridor. A Defence Corridor is a dedicated region or hub strategically planned and located to promote and catalyze indigenous production of defense and aerospace equipment. Pune (and around), a city with a conducive ecosystem, and Maharashtra, a state with a diverse ecosystem aligns with the requirements of a Defence Corridor for defence production. Apart from the other manufacturing hubs of the state, Pune is one of the established manufacturing, auto components, IT and industrial hub, and has supporting infrastructure in the form of dry ports, truck terminals and air, rail, road connectivity and is known as Oxford of India for having technically advanced educational institutes. Maharashtra state has the presence of several key defence establishments such as that of India Air Force, Army Southern Command, Armament factories, Western Naval Command, Mazagaon Docks Ltd, Coast Guard and a number of DRDO and other testing laboratories and facilities in the state, which can support the Defence Corridor ecosystem. The envisaged Defence Corridor in Maharashtra will accord multi-fold benefits, such as business and economic opportunities to the MSME manufacturing units located within, employment generation, and increased revenue generation for the government through taxes.

The advantages of Defence corridor in Maharashtra can be enumerated . 1. Proximity/ Coexistence of Users/ operators(Armed forces) , Integrators(Shipyards, Ordinance factories etc.) and manufacturers of defence platforms/ vessels 2. Will not only be able to fulfill/support requirement of Indian forces but also has all essentials(ecosystem/ infrastructures) for becoming export hub for defence hardware and software .

Viewpoints of an IAF veteran:

Our team member, Wing Cdr Anil Hoshangabade, a Defence veteran had the good fortune of exposure to every field of military aviation in IAF, including operations, maintenance, overhauls production, indigenization, founding member and instructor at the first training institute for fighter aircraft, setting up overhaul production lines and flight safety. During the process of indigenization, it was realized that our private sector had huge potential. At the same time, due to the high costs involved in development, production, testing and certification requirements which are quite stringent in IAF while the quantity or

continuity of production was not assured. A Defence corridor is expected to address these and other similar issues. The range of items which can form part of a defence corridor are vast, they vary from electronics, aerospace, electrical, mechanical to rubber items. This opportunity exists not only in weapon systems but also in ground support equipment of the aviation. For example, IAF always has great need for ground equipment like aircraft jacks, portable air conditioning trolleys, ladders, portable power supplies, etc and similar support equipment for the Army and the Navy.

This brings to say that Maharashtra has a first right to a Defence corridor as below. Maybe these decisions are taken based on political drivers and acceptably. A big early bird advantage is getting lucrative industries which have capabilities and are eager to start early.

In Maharashtra Pune is most suitable candidate for being centre of a Defence corridor for the following:

1. It has a major air base with the latest fighter aircraft. It has headquarters of the largest command of Army, the Southern Command and the Largest Naval base with Western Naval Command, Mumbai too is nearby.
2. Closely located at Ojhar near Nashik is the most important fighter aircraft overhaul production depot of the IAF and HAL producing fighter aircraft.
3. Proximity to Mumbai provides it with a seaport and large international airport. Pune is well connected by road to every corner of the country.
4. Every kind of industry be it aerospace, IT, electronics or heavy industry, is available in Pune including some of the big names.
5. It has climate and environment suitable for industrial set up.
6. Pune has huge population of educated young and experienced higher management level people.
7. It has large number of world class hotels with very good transportation facilities.

With active bases for all the three services and coast guard this defence corridor may go in for design, development and production of jet engines for aircraft which has been a tumbling block for indigenous fighter production. In the seventies we lost an excellently designed aircraft, Marut HF24, due to the nonavailability of suitable engines and presently production Tejas is facing similar issues.

It is therefore natural that with the incentives available at a defence corridor all industries including MSMEs will be able to function in the interest of country's defence.

The study includes infrastructures, connectivity, by state highways, railways, national & international airports and one new coming up, cargo terminals at Nava Shiva, ease of water & grid power. The possibility of establishing residential, educational, sports & recreational facilities with easy, short movements to city area & established industrial estates exists. Efforts to use renewable energy sources will be a priority. Young professionals and technologists will lead the movement, assisted by selected qualified graduates from non-primer institutes under NEP schemes. Skill development initiative will be designed to inculcate required skill sets and Japanese work culture with defense discipline till the Corridor is established. It will make skilled manpower available when functional maturity is in sight.

The Industry and the future scope :

Maharashtra has a very well-established technological advanced and reliant Industry spread all over the state producing defence equipment and items. Pune is a high-tech city with brilliant minds and facilities. A proper military and civil infusion are required looking into space and cyber interaction. Viksit and Surakshit Bharat are in need of the hour along with emerging technologies and we need Engines, Semi-conductors, Aerospace,

Artificial Intelligence, Drones and other equipment and Maharashtra is an automatic choice. Ship Building industry is one of the largest in Mumbai. Pune has the most potential for manufacturing Defence Equipment with the scale of industries already present and also it being the SCHQ and the presence of CME, Ammunition Factory, DRDO and ARDE with other Defence R&D and academic institutions. There are already major players in Pune like Bharat Forge, Garware, Kirloskar , L&T and Mahindra making Defense Equipment. Along with the above Pune is climate neutral with no floods or extreme weather conditions such as in Chennai or UP which are constantly hit by Cyclones or Heat and Cold waves which can disrupt industrial operations. It is well connected to all parts of India by Railway and Road networks to critical Defence stations along the West Coast of India. It should not only be declared a Defence Cluster as per the present policy, but it should be the HUB of Defence R&D and manufacturing. Vidharb and Marathavada region has been persistently sidelined and need to be looked into. Though the Indian army and the Indian air force are well connected to this industrial belt, but we do expect the Navy and the ship builders to make full use of the industry talent here. The Navy is connected to Kirloskar and Garware and still has a lot to explore in terms of OEMs and spares. We need to carry out a drill wherein we get connected the selected industry here with Naval Dockyards, Materials Organizations, Indigenization cell and for design and innovation part Controller Warship Production & Acquisition (CWP&A) on regular bases. DRDO offices are already located in Pune/Nashik and maybe a dedicated team of experts can look into the answers to the industry issues. Similarly, GEM can permanently post a couple of their experts in Pune who can resolve the issues on a day-to-day basis and get the vendors motivated to use GEM without any apprehension. The above can be well looked into during formation of the Defence corridor.

Logistics Support and connectivity:

Maharashtra state has well established infrastructure and is very well connected by Air, Rail, Sea and Road. Travel time between Mumbai and Delhi is being reduced to half and Nagpur and Mumbai travel time reduced again due to Samruddhi Highway. The Bullet Train from Mumbai to Ahmedabad and Hyper Loop connectivity between Pune and Mumbai, travel time 25 minutes, both are expected soon. Proximity to Mumbai provides it with seaports at Nava Shiva and Angre port near Ratnagiri , close to 100 KM from Mumbai and another seaport coming up will be Vadhavan port , around 200 KM from Nava Shiva port. Mumbai has one of busiest international airport in the world and we have another one in Pune and one coming up close to New Mumbai to ease out the international traffic.

New ports and Ship Building :

Apart from already established Nava Shiva Port and ship building facilities at MDL Mumbai we can concentrate to develop and modernize the following :

Port and ship building and repair services in Ratnagiri:

Angré Port:

Angré Port is a state-of-the-art cargo terminal located on India's western coast, situated halfway between Mumbai and Goa, close to Ratnagiri. The port is well equipped to handle your end-to-end logistics needs, from origin to destination, for all kinds of containers, dry bulk, and liquid cargo. With a draft of 11 m, Angré Port is well equipped to handle vessels of up to 55,000 DWT including Supramax vessels.

CHOWGULE LAVGAN SHIPREPAIR FACILITIES AT A GLANCEAN ULTRA MODERN SHIPYARD ON THE WEST COAST OF INDIA:

70 NAUTICAL MILES FROM BOMBAY HIGH DRY-DOCKING | REFIT | CONVERSION | FABRICATION | LOAD-OUT With the Synchrolift Shiplift having a capacity of 7655 Ton, the Ship module transfer system capable of shifting up to 10000 Ton on 6 Dry Berth & Wet Berth of 260 m length, Chowgule Lavgan Shipyard provides world-class facilities for Ship Repairs. Facilities : Lloyds certified Ship Lift System Ship and module transfer system 6 dry repair berths – each 150m length 260m wet repair berth 7m draft at wet repair berth 40T rail mounted level luffing crane and serving repairs and refits of Coast Guard ships.

Other Ship repair services in Ratnagiri :

- Basra Star Vessel. 4.429 Ratings. ...
- Bharati Defence And Infrastructure Limited. 3.930 Ratings. ...
- Oceanwaves Industries. 4.02 Ratings. ...
- Mr Engineering. 3.02 Ratings. ...
- Sesa Goa Ltd. 3.01 Rating. ...
- Kumar Engineering. 4.02 Ratings. ...
- Mandovi Drydocks. 4.188 Ratings. ...
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The above services and facilities can be augmented and modernized with the formation of defence corridor.

"Vadhavan Port" will be located just north of Mumbai and nearly 200 km north of Jawaharlal Nehru port. Nava Shiva, which itself handles more than 6m teu a year.

At capacity, Vadhavan would comfortably surpass Jawaharlal Nehru and move into the top 10 biggest container ports in the world.

When finished, the port will boast nine container terminals, each with quay of 1,000 metres, four liquid cargo berths and a ro-ro berth.

It will require nearly 15 sq km of land to be reclaimed from the sea and the building of a 10 km offshore breakwater and container storage area.

Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority will own 74% of the joint venture and the Maharashtra Maritime Board 24%. The total project cost is expected to reach close to \$10m.

Although Jawaharlal Nehru remains a highly successful container port, its expansion is limited by the port's draught of 15 m, which means it will struggle to berth the biggest boxships.

Vadhavan has a natural draught of 20 m close to the shoreline, which means it could welcome the biggest containerships on the ocean.

We need to look at the place from the Navy and Coast Guard's angle and future ship building and repairs. The above is just a brief on our proposal predominantly from the Navy and Ship building angle.

We believe that the Navy and the ship builders still need to get more connected to this industrial corridor and make use of the industry here.

We can see a larger scope of the Navy for the proposed defence corridor (four defence manufacturing clusters at Nagpur, Shirdi, Pune and Ratnagiri and may be Nashik) and extensive study research may be carried out and formal proposal be submitted to the Government of India and the Maharashtra Government. Meanwhile, the concerned Government authorities must study the challenges as brought out by the industry here and educate, train , motivate and support them to be an integral part of this ever-growing defence industry. Further, we shall be looking forward to the interaction of the industry here with the Navy and the shipbuilders and we do already have a positive response from these quarters.

Suggestions to increase participation by MSMEs:

With reference to the suggestions for the upcoming D&A policy of the Maharashtra Government we have the following suggestions to promote increase in participation of MSME in the above policy:

1. Duty free import of special steels and other Raw materials required for manufacturing of Defence and Aerospace Industry. As no Indian Steel manufacturers are producing the special steels needed for D&A application incentive to be given to existing and new industries to produce such steels.
2. Special Defence Equipment manufacturing Industrial Area Zone for such industries near major Armed forces Headquarters in Maharashtra for speedy interaction with the forces to understand and cater to their specific requirements.
3. Special R&D centers where MSME innovators can avail high end Design,machining and testing facilities for new inventions and upgrading existing technology presently being used by Defence and Aerospace Industry.
4. Fast track grant of Patents for new inventions in partnership with DRDO and ISRO by MSME Innovators.
5. 100% subsidy for New Units and Existing Industry entering into Defence and Aerospace field of Research and Development , Innovation and manufacturing of Defence Equipment. The subsidy to be in form of grant for industry to remain in operation for minimum 20 years.
6. Marketing for and Hand holding of SME Units in procurement of Defence Orders and their execution by providing soft loans from banks at reduced interest rates.
7. Special Steels warehouse to provide raw materials to Defence and Aerospace Industrial Units exempt from GST.
8. 20 years holiday for GST on sales to Armed Forces, MOD and export to foreign countries.
9. As most Defence orders are taken by large Industries,70% of procurement of parts to be from SME industries in Maharashtra and Buyers to provide all hand holding to SME for successful supply of components.
10. Large Industries for Defence and Aerospace Equipment to give advance payment to SME to procure Raw materials for execution of jobwork subcontracted out. Balance payment against inspection prior to delivery. No 45 days credit facility for defence procurement.
11. Single window for SME to avail all necessary permission for starting and running Units.
12. Refinance and revival to Sick Industrial Units supplying to Defence and Aerospace Industry and even those vendors of components for large defence equipment manufacturers. Presently MIDC does not recognise SME supplying components and sub assemblies to large scale Defence Equipment Units as defence equipment manufacturers.
13. Strict anti corruption policy with severe punishment of officers and staff of MIDC and other government establishments and Banking staff in the granting and promotion of SME Units for Defence and Aerospace. Presently there is rampant corruption in MIDC, DIC, GST and other MDC.
14. 100% subsidy for Defence Equipment manufacturing Industrial units for participation in domestic and international Defence Equipment Exhibitions.
15. Special courses in ITI for skilling of defence equipment manufacturing process.

16. Maharashtra Defence and Aerospace Manufacturers portal with directory of Units specifying their products for procurement by MOD.
17. Exemption from payment of Tender fees, EMD, Security Deposit, or Performance guarantee holdback of payment part as is prevalent at present.
18. Ease of process and compliance for entering into JV with foreign Defence Equipment manufacturing Industry for import of raw material, special purpose machinery and technology to fulfill requirements of Armed Forces and MOD.
19. Protection against local goons and Unions that may cause disruption of production or harm to staff of Units.
20. Priority to award contract to Defence and Aerospace Manufacturers in non defence projects for survival as lead time for Defence Equipment contracts is long drawn out procedure.
21. Assistance to Defence and Aerospace Industry manufacturers in clearing compliances for registration with MOD and Armed Forces procurement agencies with providing of high cost R&D and inspection and testing facilities to reduce duplication of facilities.
22. If the implementing agencies of the Maharashtra Government fail to provide the subsidies, payments and facilities under the Defence and Aerospace policy within 30 days of fulfilling all compliances then the participant MSME will not be penalized for non performance as happened in earlier Industrial Development policies.

Formation of Defence Corridor :

In view of the foregoing Defence Corridor for Maharashtra is an automatic choice. Honorable Chief Minister of Maharashtra Shri Devendra Fadnavis advised early this year that the state government has requested the Defence Ministry to declare Mumbai-Nagpur Samruddhi Expressway as a defence industry corridor. The Mumbai-Nagpur Samruddhi Expressway will be one of the most vibrant and economically viable corridors in India, on the lines of corridors in Seoul and Busan (in South Korea). "I have also requested the defence minister to declare Samruddhi Expressway as a defence industry corridor," he said. The Union government is selecting certain areas for encouraging defence manufacturing and Maharashtra hopes to turn the Vidarbha, Marathwada region (through which the Mumbai-Nagpur Expressway will pass) as a defence industry hub, the chief minister said. "We have already started the work on this 700-km greenfield road. It is not a mere road but an economic corridor which will connect the industry in Vidarbha, Marathwada with JNPT Port in Mumbai, Fadnavis said." Maharashtra now has 600 defence MSMEs who have created a value and assets worth Rs 12,000 to 15,000 crores. These MSMEs have played a key role in Atmanirbhar Bharat ecosystem," said Devendra Fadnavis.

The formation of a Defence corridor in Maharashtra state is recommended covering four Defence manufacturing clusters at "Nagpur, Shirdi, Pune and Ratnagiri". Subsequently, indigenization cells of the Defence Forces and the ship builders be made available in these cities in order to have Atmanirbhar and import substitution. Further, Maharashtra state will look forward to augment manufacturing bases by Adani Defence Aerospace, Tata group, Ambani defence, Mahindra defence, L&T apart from the foreign investment and advent of latest technology. Making Maharashtra a defence manufacturing corridor will contribute to India's defence sector growth while extending its reach to international markets and apart from the investments will have opportunities for joint ventures with the most advanced industries world over.

Viksit Bharat, Pune Chapter are looking forward to Maharashtra Defence industrial corridor so that talent and very high order of skill in this this corridor is put to the fullest use by the defence forces under the backdrop of Atamnirbhar and indigenization and enhanced national security.

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