

# Now, private defence players can apply to commerce min for licence

**New Delhi:** Private sector players can now apply to commerce ministry for licences to manufacture tanks, fighter planes, warships and other defence equipment, a step which the government feels will promote ease of doing business and give impetus to 'Make In India' initiative.

In a gazette notification, the home ministry said the secretary in the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) can now issue licences for manufacturing of defence items.

However, the licences will be issued to the prospective manufacturers by the DIPP under the home ministry's "supervision and control", the notification said. The power of

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issuing licences was exclusively with the home ministry earlier. The decision has been taken to expedite the 'Make In India' initiative, a pet project of the Narendra Modi government, and to invite private sector in the defence manufactur-

ing sector, an official said.

The DIPP comes under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and mainly deals with promotion of investment and industries. The private sector can now apply to the DIPP for the licences. Categories which will come under the new arrangement are tanks and other armoured fighting vehicles, military vehicles fitted with mountings for arms or equipment for mine lying, all tracked and wheeled self propelled armoured and non-armoured weapon systems. PTI