

Business Standard

MKU, Thales jointly Develop optronic devices, close-quarter battle rifles for Indian Army

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[MKU](#) Limited and [Thales](#) have signed two MoUs for strategic co-operation in the development and production of [optronic devices](#) and F90 close quarter battle (CQB) rifle for soldiers. The [optronic devices](#) will be co-developed by [Thales](#) and [MKU](#) and both the [optronic devices](#) and F90 rifles will be manufactured in [India](#) at MKU's facilities in Kanpur, [Uttar Pradesh](#). These products will be offered to the [Indian army](#) and homeland security forces under the 'Make in India' initiative of the Government.

Neeraj Gupta, MD of [MKU](#) said, "[MKU](#) is pleased to sign the strategic co-operation MoUs with [Thales](#). This partnership will not only focus on meeting the requirements of our forces in India, but will also look at exporting the products to other parts of the world."

Alex Cresswell, [Senior Executive Vice-President for Land and Air Systems](#) at [Thales](#) said, "We are very pleased to work in close collaboration with [MKU](#) for the development of weapons and [optronic devices](#) to address specific needs of the Indian and international markets. This co-development partnership reaffirms our commitment to [India](#) and is the result of our ambition to support soldiers on operations."

The strategic co-operation for [optronic devices](#) between [Thales](#) and [MKU](#) is committed to enhancing the night fighting capabilities of the [Indian Army](#) and homeland security forces. It envisages [manufacturing](#) of [optronics equipment](#) including weapon sights, night vision goggles, handheld thermal imagers and thermal infrared sensor engine for soldier systems, and other image intensification and [thermal imaging systems](#) for soldiers and platforms respectively.

For weapons, the two companies plan to cooperate so that [MKU](#) could set-up an assembly and [manufacturing](#) plant in [India](#) for the carbine version of the F90 assault rifle, combat-proven and already in service with [Australian Defence Forces](#). Light, balanced and accurate, the F90CQB (Close Quarter Battle) developed with [MKU](#) will be well suited to Indian conditions and requirements.

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