

October 17th, 2018 Sample Current Affairs

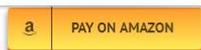
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1. Rafale controversy: The opacity in the Rafale deal only raises doubts, with its fallout on national security and the ‘Make in India’ programme.

- What is Rafale jet? What is its significance?**
- What is the dispute with sharing price details of Rafale deal?**
- How important is this deal to both India and France?**

GS paper 2 (Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India’s interests)

In this video, you can find detailed answers for all the above questions.

The above article has been retrieved from:

Rakesh Sood . (2018, October , 17).
Decoding the Rafale controversy. The Hindu. Retrieved from
<https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/decoding-the-rafale-controversy/article25230283.ece?homepage=true>

What is the context about?

- The controversy over Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s decision to go in for an outright purchase of 36 Rafale fighter jet aircraft, after scrapping the old negotiations, is unlikely to die down.**
- The Congress party has yet to find a smoking gun and hopes that a joint parliamentary committee probe might reveal it.**

- ❑ The government has meanwhile tied itself up in knots by making opaque, and often, contradictory statements, in turn raising more doubts and questions.

What is Rafale jet? What is its significance?

- ❑ Rafale is a twin-engine medium multi-role combat aircraft, manufactured by French company Dassault Aviation. Dassault claims Rafale has 'Omnirole' capability to perform several actions at the same time, such as firing air-to-air missiles at a very low altitude, air-to-ground, and interceptions during the same sortie.
- ❑ The aircraft is fitted with an on-board oxygen generation system (OBOGS) which suppresses the need for liquid oxygen re-filling or ground support for oxygen production.
- ❑ It carry out a wide range of missions: Air-defence/air-superiority, Reconnaissance, close air support dynamic targeting, Air-to-ground precision strike/interdiction, anti-ship attacks, nuclear deterrence, buddy-buddy refueling.

What is the dispute with sharing price details of Rafale deal?

Earlier deal - The previous government's price for 126 aircraft was never finalised, and no contract was signed or executed.

Hence, no official figure on the price was ever given.

New Deal - Recently, the Defence Minister declined to share the cost of the Rafale fighters under the new deal, with Rajya Sabha.

- ✓ It was said that the price details were "classified information". This was as per the Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) between the Governments of India and France.
- ✓ Accordingly, material exchanged under IGA is governed by the provisions of the Security Agreement. However, in 2016, Minister of State for Defence had shared the price in the Lok Sabha in a written reply.
- ✓ The basic price of each Rafale aircraft was said to be around Rs 670 crore. At the time of its signing, the 36-aircraft deal was said to be worth around Rs 59,000 crore.

How important is this deal to both India and France?

□ France:

- ✓ Rafale jets are currently being used mostly by France and also by Egypt and Qatar.
- ✓ Dassault is hoping that export of Rafale jets will help the company meet its revenue targets.
- ✓ India was the first country that agreed to buy Rafale, after it was used in Libyan airstrikes.
- ✓ If India inducts these jets in its military fold, other nations could express its willingness to buy Rafales.

India:

- ✓ India chose Dassault over its traditional partner Russia's MiG. It also ignored U.S.' Lockheed, at a time when India and U.S. were aiming for closer ties. Procurement of combat aircraft is long overdue for the Indian Air Force. Further delay can only make things worse.
- ✓ This deal is India's biggest-ever procurement. In the effectiveness of the Rafale deal lies the future of other defence procurements.