

P-8I aircraft

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In news: The U.S. State Department approved the proposed sale of six P-8I patrol aircraft and related equipment, a deal estimated to cost \$2.42 billion.

More about the deal-

- In November 2019, the Defence Acquisition Council, chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, approved the procurement of the **long-range maritime surveillance aircraft**.
- The original proposal was for 10 more aircraft but was cut down to six due to budgetary constraints as well as because the Navy had adopted some fleet rationalisation measures.
- The Indian Navy is currently in the process of inducting the four P-8Is contracted under the offset clause in 2016.
- The Navy had procured eight P-8Is in a \$2.2-billion deal in 2009 with the optional clause for four more.
- The aircraft are **part of the 312A Naval Air Squadron based at Arakkonam in Tamil Nadu**.
- With India having signed the **Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) foundational agreement** with the U.S., the six aircraft will come fitted with encrypted systems.

About P-8-

- The **Boeing P-8 Poseidon** (formerly **Multimission Maritime Aircraft**) is an American maritime patrol aircraft developed and produced by Boeing Defense, Space & Security.
- It was developed for the US Navy.

- The P-8I is **based on the Boeing 737 commercial aircraft** and India was its first international customer.
- The P-8 operates in the anti-submarine warfare (ASW), anti-surface warfare (ASUW), and shipping interdiction roles.
- It is **operated by the United States Navy, the Indian Navy, the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF), and the UK's Royal Air Force (RAF)**.
- It has also been ordered by the Royal Norwegian Air Force (RNoAF), the Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF), and the Republic of Korea Navy (ROKN).