

Kalyani bets big on artillery systems

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NEW DELHI: Eager to become a key player in artillery systems, Pune-based Kalyani Group, on Thursday, showcased its 130-155 mm fully upgraded gun system at the Defexpo here for which it has now applied to the Centre for testing permission.

Chairman of the group Baba N. Kalyani said his company was keen to become a globally known artillery house. "For that, however, we have to be accepted in India first. Only then, will other countries accept us," he said.

Mr. Kalyani said the company had developed the 155 mm gun, a model of which it had displayed at the last De-

fexpo in 2012. "We have urged the Ministry of Defence for testing facility, and they are looking at it positively. Testing requires use of ammunition, which is available only with the government," he said.

Stating that a lot of experimentation was needed in the production of defence equipment, Mr. Kalyani said the 155 mm gun was 100 per cent indigenous. The company, which specialises in metallurgical know-how, has, in the last two decades, scaled up its role in strategic sectors such as defence, aerospace and nuclear businesses. At the defence exhibition, the group has also put on display its Bharat-52 and Garuda-105

artillery systems, its Mine Protected Vehicle and Light Tactical Vehicle and various other products.

Mr. Kalyani said the group had recently forged a joint venture with Elbit Systems of Israel for advanced technology to manufacture modern gun systems and mine protected vehicles in India. "With our partner, we are competing in a number of important artillery programmes. We are hopeful of bringing the best to the armed forces. The joint venture will undertake major manufacturing within the country," he said. The group has also signed an agreement with SAAB of Sweden to provide air defence solutions.