

Pakistan to buy eight attack submarines from China for Rs 3300 cr: Report

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Islamabad: In a bid to strengthen its naval force, Pakistan is all set to buy eight modified diesel-electric attack submarines for USD 5 Billion (over Rs 3300 crore) by 2028.

According to a report in Pakistani daily "The Express Tribune", the National Assembly's Standing Committee on Defence was briefed about the development by the head of Pakistan's next-generation submarine programme and senior naval officials on August 26.

The deal is believed to be the largest ever arms export deal for China.

The report comes as India is grappling with the fiasco of details of its new Scorpene submarines being leaked in over 20,000 pages. The Scorpenes, designed by a French shipbuilder, DCNS, are being made in Mumbai at a cost of \$3.5 billion (over Rs 2300 crore).

An Australian newspaper published excerpts that showed combat and crucial other details of the Scorpenes had been made available. The articles redacted sensitive information, but made the point that one of the world's largest defense projects has been compromised.

The Indian navy has said that it is taking the leak "very seriously". France has been asked to submit a report to the government.

It has not officially been confirmed what type of submarines will be supplied to the Pakistan Navy by China.

Analysts suggest that the new submarines will be lighter export versions of the Chinese Navy's (PLAN) Type 039 and Type 041 Yuan-class conventional attack submarines.

The first four submarines are expected to be delivered by the end of 2023 while the remaining four will be assembled in Karachi by 2028.

China is Pakistan's biggest supplier of military hardware.

- With PTI Inputs