

First US-made Kalashnikov AK-47 rifles, shotguns up for sale

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WASHINGTON: Kalashnikov assault rifles - they are not just Russian anymore.

The guns, popular with terrorists and national armies in Asia and Africa, are now being manufactured in America and are up for sale.

Kalashnikov USA announced yesterday that it is now selling AK-47 assault rifles and shotguns that have been manufactured at a US factory.

The Kalashnikov USA website provides a menu of two rifles and two shotguns, all semiautomatics. One of the rifles features a curved, banana-style high-capacity magazine with 30 rounds.

Thomas McCrossin, CEO of Kalashnikov USA, had said in January that his company was going to manufacture the guns in America as soon as a factory was established. The company, however, has not disclosed where in US the factory has been established.

The Kalashnikov USA brand is owned by Russian Weapons Company (RWC) in Pennsylvania. The company's slogan is, "Russian heritage, American innovation."

The company was established by the original, Moscow-based Kalashnikov Concern to export its guns into the US but that plan was stymied by President Barack Obama's anti-Russian sanctions, to punish Russian businesses for President Putin's war in Ukraine.

The firearms made Kalashnikovs a hot commodity in the US, since there was a finite supply. McCrossin told CNN that his company would fix that problem by making the guns in the US.

The AK-47 was invented by Mikhail Kalashnikov in the former Soviet Union in 1947. Its durability and reliability in combat has made it the most popular assault rifle in the world, rivalling even the AR-15.

AK-style rifles are manufactured all over the world, including in the US but this is the first time official Kalashnikov-brand guns have been produced in the US.

It is believed that more than 100 million Kalashnikov rifles have been sold worldwide. The inventor of the rifle, Soviet Lt-Gen Kalashnikov, died in 2013.

- PTI