

CARACAL CAR 816: The Tactical Weapon for Military Applications

Hitting the Mark

In an effort to modernise its small arms infantry, the Indian Army in 2017, announced that it would replace the 9mm British Sterling 1A1 submachine guns with Close Quarter Battle (CQB) CAR816 carbines.

The **CARACAL CAR816** is a magazine fed, gas-operated tactical rifle chambered in 5,56x45mm NATO. Produced in Abu Dhabi, UAE, the weapon was declared 'L1' (the best bid) after extensive trials by the empowered committee of the Indian Defence Acquisition Council. Now as the final decision from the Ministry of Defence looms, we take a closer look at the features of this weapon.

Designed for the high-end use of law enforcement and military applications, the operating principle of this tactical weapon is by a short-stroke pushrod gas piston with a rotating bolt system. The CAR816 is provided with an adjustable gas regulator that has at least two settings (optional up to four settings) - dependent upon the operation. The first setting is used for normal operations, while the second setting is used when the weapon is equipped with a sound suppressor. The additional settings may be used during adverse conditions or when low impulse ammunition is used.

It has three positions on the selective fire switch, safe, semi-automatic and full automatic mode. The CAR816 is capable of firing up to 900 rounds per minute in the full automatic mode. It is fitted with a telescopic buttstock, which is adjustable in six positions, and the fire selector control is located above the pistol grip - conveniently adjusted by the shooter's thumb. Depending on the customer's requirements, the weapon can be completely ambidextrous, with all controls operational for both right-handed and left-handed shooters.

Furthermore, unlike the old technology of the direct gas impingement systems, the CAR816, due to its advanced piston system, remains clean and cool even after rapid succession firing. This is achieved because the hot gases are not redirected into the action of the weapon, and hence requires much less cleaning and boosts the weapon's reliability.

The tactical rifle is also equipped with a detachable flip-up iron sight and fitted with quad-rail handguards with integrated Mil-Std-1913 Picatinny rails on the 3,6,9 and 12 o'clock positions, used to accommodate additional optics and accessories such as laser pointers, tactical flashlights, vertical grips, bipods, etc.

The CAR816 is also available in various barrel lengths (7.5", 10.5", 14.5" Carbine and 16"), and boasts an effective range that can reach 550 metres. As for the CQB version, it has a weight of around 3.0kg without the magazine - which is similar to the currently-used British Sterling submachine gun. The CAR816 provides far greater punching power for the soldier and the ability to accessorise for the various missions, than the currently used British Sterling 1A1 submachine gun.

Overall, CARACAL's position as a leader in the manufacture of high-performance small arms in the Middle East and North Africa, coupled with its experience in meeting the evolving and challenging mission requirements of customers in the UAE and internationally, mean that its CAR816 is riding high in competition - and is all set to be an efficient companion for the Indian Armed Forces.

