

## BrahMos cruise missile test fired for 15th time

The BrahMos supersonic cruise missile that India and Russia have jointly developed was successfully launched for the 15th time Wednesday - and for the first time from a naval ship toward a land based target, a defence ministry official said.

Fired from the frontline Indian Navy warship INS Rajput, the missile successfully impacted on its target in the Andaman and Nicobar Island chain, the official added.

'The missile met all the parameters during its launch, flight and selection of the designated target from among a group of targets and hit precisely, destroying the target,' the official said.

'This mission was very important as it has established the sea-to-land attack capability of the missile,' he added.

Scientists of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), who have been involved in the joint development of the missile with their Russian counterparts, conducted the launch with the support of the Andaman and Nicobar Command (ANC) that deployed 10 ships, three aircraft and three helicopters for logistics support.

A. Sivathanu Pilla, CEO and managing director of missile builder BrahMos Aerospace, Rear Admiral P.K. Nair, the officiating head of the ANC, were among those who witnessed the launch.

Defence Minister A.K. Antony congratulated the DRDO scientists and the Indian Navy for the successful missile launch.

The DRDO and Russia's NPO Mashinostroyeniya have jointly developed the BrahMos, which is named after the Bramaputra and the Moskova, the two major rivers of India and Russia respectively.

Work on the project began in 1998 and the missile was first test fired on Dec 22, 2004. BrahMos is a two-stage missile with a solid propellant booster and a liquid propellant ram jet system that gives it a 300-km range.

The Indian Army is currently preparing to operationalise at least one regiment of the BrahMos missile mounted on a mobile launcher. The triple-barrelled launcher is capable of firing the missile singly or in salvos of two or three.

Work is also progressing on an Indian Air Force version that will be delivered from the Sukhoi SU-30MKI platform.

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