

Speed up deliveries of defence equipment, PM tells DRDO

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh Monday asked the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), the country's premier military organisation, to gear up for the future needs of the armed forces and speed up delivery of defence equipment.

He also said that private-public partnerships should be encouraged to ensure that the defence forces get critical products and systems at affordable costs.

'In the coming years, the DRDO will focus on several state-of-the-art technologies such as hypersonic propulsion, unmanned air, land and underwater vehicles, robotics, stealth, smart materials, micro and nano technologies, as well as war-fighter support,' Singh told a gathering of scientists here.

'This will enable us to keep pace with current trends in warfare, especially the emergence and growth of non-conventional and asymmetric warfare,' Singh said, addressing the awards function of the Golden Jubilee year of the DRDO. He also felicitated scientists and researchers of DRDO.

Singh advised the scientists to work in the direction of self-reliance with determination, keeping long-term perspectives in mind.

Admitting that the development of high technology is complex and time-consuming, the prime minister asked the DRDO to speed up the process.

'With the long experience and expertise now available with DRDO and the industry, all efforts must be made to ensure timely delivery of technologies and equipment to our defence forces,' Singh said.

The availability of appropriate technological solutions to problems faced by our defence services will greatly help optimize their combat effectiveness, he added.

'It is essential to encourage the development of private-public partnerships based on sound business and financial criteria. This will ensure that critical products and systems are available at affordable cost,' Singh said.

The prime minister also acknowledged the fact that India is among a few countries in the world with a broad-based defence industry and advanced defence technological capability.

'With India's rapid economic development in the last few years, our economy is now able to sustain greater investments in the area of defence research and development,' he said.

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