

India acquires capability to fire missiles from under water

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), the country's premier military research organisation, Monday said it had successfully acquired the technology to launch missiles from the ocean depths, becoming the world's fifth country to do so.

The acknowledgement came when Prime Minister Manmohan Singh gave away the performance excellence award 2007 to A.K Chakrabarti, under whose leadership a team of 86 scientists achieved the success under this project called K-15.

'The team has designed and developed a state-of-the-art missile system with the capability of being launched from sub-surface (underwater) environment,' the DRDO's citation said.

The missile named Sagarika has been test fired successfully on Feb 26 this year and last year too from a submerged pontoon. The missile has a range of 700 km. Powered by a turbojet, it can carry a 500-kg payload. It is 8.5 metres long and about a metre in diameter.

The government had not acknowledged that it had acquired the capability till Monday's awards function.

With this, India has become capable of launching missiles from air, land, ships and submarines and joins an elite group that includes the US, Russia, France and China.

The performance of the missile system was 'far higher' than the requirement specified by the navy. 'It has already been accepted by the user and is presently under productionisation for induction into the services,' the citation said.

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