

India successfully tests nuclear-capable Dhanush missile

Notching a major milestone in its missile technology, India Friday successfully test fired its indigenous Dhanush missile - the nuclear-capable naval version of the Prithvi short-range ballistic missile - from a war ship off the Orissa coast. The mission objectives were met 'satisfactorily', defence sources said.

'The missile was test-fired at about 2.30 p.m. from naval ship INS Subhadra in the Bay of Bengal at a distance of nearly 45 km from the Integrated Test Range of Chandipur and Paradip coast,' the sources said.

'Another ship, INS Rajput, was providing all the support. The flight test results are believed to have indicated that the mission objectives were met satisfactorily,' they added.

Dhanush is one of five missiles designed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). The others include the short-range ballistic missile Prithvi, medium-range Agni, anti-tank Nag and supersonic Brahmos.

Dhanush was first test-fired on April 11, 2000, from Chandipur. However, it failed at the blast-off stage due to a technical snag in its software system.

The missile was also tested earlier on Sep 21, 2001, on Nov 7, 2004, and Dec 28, 2005, from naval ships positioned in the Bay of Bengal off the Orissa coast.

'The technical problems which were spotted during previous trials were rectified. The missile took up as coordinated and travelled the desired height before covering the estimated path during today's test. The scientists are happy with the success,' the sources said.

'During the test, which was aimed to study the control and guidance system of the missile as part of an ongoing development programme, the missile maintained its intended trajectory and stayed aloft for nearly six minutes before dropping into the sea,' they said.

'The test launch was tracked from its take-off to impact point through an integrated network of sophisticated radars and electro-optic instruments for data analysis,' the sources added.

Developed and built exclusively for the Indian navy, Dhanush has a 250 to 250 km striking range and can carry a single warhead of up to 750 kg.

The missile, which is a part of India's Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme, is about 8.53 metres long and 0.9 metre wide and has a launch weight of about 4.4 tonnes. It uses liquid propellant.

India had earlier tested its indigenous beyond visual range air-to-air missile Astra on March 25, 26 and 29 from the launching complex No II of the Chandipur defence base in the coastal district of Balasore, about 230 km from state capital Bhubaneswar.

Scientists of Integrated Test Range of Chandipur (ITR), Defence Research Development Laboratory (DRDL), Hyderabad, Research Centre Imarat (RCI) Hyderabad, Electronics Research Development

Establishment (LRDE), Bangalore, and a host of senior naval officers from [Mumbai](#) and Visakhapatnam were present during the test.

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