



DECCAN HERALD

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An army tank and other equipment are on display at the Parliament House in New Delhi on Tuesday.

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Ahead of an Exhibition in Parliament, PM Narendra Modi looks at a BrahMos missile along with ministers Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi and S S Ahluwalia

Army to get 'steep-dive' BrahMos missile regiment for China front

By Rajat Pandit

The NDA government has given the final go-ahead for the Army to induct and deploy an advanced version of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile, with "trajectory manoeuvre and steep-dive capabilities" for mountain warfare, in the northeast as a conventional deterrent against China.

Sources said the Cabinet Committee on Security, chaired by PM Narendra Modi, cleared this fourth BrahMos regiment at a cost of over Rs 4,300 crore. The regiment consists of around 100 missiles, five mobile autonomous launchers on 12x12 heavy-duty trucks and a mobile command post, among other hardware and software.

The 290-km range BrahMos is a tactical or non-nuclear missile with "nine times more kinetic energy than sub-sonic missiles" for greater destructive potential. Jointly developed with Russia, it has become the preferred precision-strike weapon for the Indian armed forces.

From 2007 onwards, the Army has progressively inducted three regiments of BrahMos with largely Block-I and II missiles developed to hit a specific small target with a low radar cross-section in a cluttered environment, as earlier reported by TOI. The missile's Block-III "steep-dive" version will now be deployed in Arunachal Pradesh to counter China's huge build of military infrastructure all along the 4,057-km Line of Actual Control. Flying at a velocity almost three times the speed of sound at Mach 2.8, the missiles also have "a combined high-low trajectory" to evade enemy defence systems.

PRECISION STRIKE WEAPON

<p>1 CHARACTERISTICS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supersonic cruise missile with a 290-km range Developed jointly by India & Russia after project sanctioned in October 1999 Named after Brahmaputra & Moskva rivers Precision-strike, 	<p>air-breathing missile</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supersonic speed (Mach 2.8) all through the flight Fire & Forget principle of operation Higher destructive capability reinforced by large kinetic energy of impact 		<p>3 EXPORTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> India & Russia had earlier agreed to sell BrahMos to 'friendly third-world countries' identified by mutual consent India now looking to export BrahMos to Vietnam, Indonesia & Philippines as well as some countries in Gulf & Latin America
<p>2 INDUCTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indian armed forces have placed orders worth over Rs 31,000 crore till now Army has already inducted three BrahMos regiments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Navy has inducted the missile on 10 warships IAF Sukhoi-30MKI fighter conducted 'BrahMos carriage trials' in June. 'Separation trials' later this month 		

“This BrahMos variant can take a steep dive up to 75 degrees. Defence scientists are already working on achieving a 90-degree steep-dive capability, which in the future can lead to acquiring an aircraft carrier-killing capability, said a source.

The latest Rs 4,300 crore contracts takes the overall orders placed for the BrahMos missiles to over Rs 31,000 crore. The Navy has already installed the missile on 10 frontline warships, including the latest stealth destroyers and frigates.

BrahMos chief Sudhir Mishra had earlier told TOI that the plan was to begin testing the missile from Sukhoi-30MKI fighter jets this year. The air-launched version of BrahMos, which at 2.5 tonnes is lighter than the 3-tonne land and sea variants, has already undergone “carriage trials “on a Sukhoi in June. The “missile separation trials “are likely to take place later this month.