

Prithvi-II proves its mettle in user test-firing

With a strike range of 350 km, Prithvi-II is capable of carrying 500 kg to 1,000 kg of warheads and is thrust by liquid propulsion twin engines.

Strategic Forces Command personnel test-fired the nuclear-weapons-capable Prithvi-II missile from Chandipur in Balasore district of Odisha on Thursday for a range of 250 km as against its full strike range of 350 km. The missile regiment unit of the Command picked up a missile randomly from the production lot and launched it from a road mobile launcher around 9.15 a.m. for regular user training.

After a nearly seven-minute flight, the surface-to-surface missile carrying a 500-kg dummy payload splashed into the Bay of Bengal within less than 20 metres of the target point, said Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) scientists.

Objectives met

The “copybook flight” met the mission objectives. A hybrid GPS-INS (inertial navigation system) aided accuracy, they said. Two indigenously developed radar transponders for S and C bands were test-flown in the missile and validated, a scientist said adding they could be used for bigger missiles. The transponders would communicate via radar the position of the missile and help track it. Radars and electro-optical tracking and telemetry systems along the coast monitored the trajectory and other parameters of the missile in real time, while a down-range ship recorded the explosion during the terminal event.

Many tests carried out

The nine-metre-tall, single-stage liquid-fuelled Prithvi-II, the first missile to be developed under the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme of the DRDO, was inducted into the Command in 2003. Several flight-tests were held for user training. The scientist said Prithvi-II could not be intercepted because of its “manoeuvring trajectory capability”.