

## IAF to Integrate Brahmos to Sukhoi as Border Heats Up

In view of the ongoing conflict in the borders, Indian Air Force is all set to integrate ingeniously-built Air to Surface BrahMos supersonic missile to multi role Sukhoi aircraft soon. This is seen as very much critical in view of the changing positrons at the borders. Addressing the media in Bengaluru on Tuesday Air Vice Marshal KY Sandeep Singh, Commandant of Aircraft and Systems Testing Establishment (ASTE) said after the successful tests conducted on Sukhoi the integration of BrahMos will begin soon. He said “Soon Sukhoi-30 MKI will be ready with BrahMos missile.” According to officials, ASTE has test flown improvised version of BrahMos and already two separation trails had been conducted successfully.

ASTE is also working towards making optimum use of Indian Navigation System by using ISRO’s earth observation satellites. Air Vice Marshal Singh said the Air force was working towards realising the full use of IRNSS, the indigenous navigation system of seven satellites, christened ‘Navik’ by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The launch of the final satellite was completed by ISRO, recently.

“It is our own system and we will make use of it (for military purpose). We have been working towards integrating our systems with the constellation and make full use of it.

ASTE set up in 1973 had moved up and was one of the six such training centres to train test pilots in the world. In other five three in the US, two for military purpose and one for civilian test pilots, besides one each in France and United Kingdom.

The BrahMos is a short-range ramjet supersonic cruise missile that can be launched from submarines, ships, aircraft or land. It is a joint venture between the Russian Federation’s NPO Mashinostroyeniya and India’s Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) who have together formed BrahMos Aerospace. It is based on the Russian P-800 Oniks cruise missile and other similar sea-skimming Russian cruise missile technology. The name BrahMos is a portmanteau formed from the names of two rivers, the Brahmaputra of India and the Moskva of Russia.

It is the world’s fastest anti-ship cruise missile in operation. The missile travels at speeds of Mach 2.8 to 3.0. The land-launched and ship-launched versions are already in service, with the air and submarine-launched versions currently in the testing phase. An air-launched variant of BrahMos is planned which came out in 2012. A hypersonic version of the missile, BrahMos-II, is also presently under development with speed of Mach 7 to boost aerial fast strike capability. It is expected to be ready for testing by 2017.

Since its inception in April 1957 as Aircraft and Armament Testing Unit (A&ATU) at Kanpur, and later as Aircraft and System Testing Establishment since August 1972 at Bangalore, the Establishment has functioned as the only flight test establishment of the Indian Air Force. This Establishment has been undertaking flight test operations in three primary spheres to meet the requirements of the Indian Armed Forces, Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). These are flight evaluations of new aircraft and systems before induction into Indian Air Force, flight testing for integration of weapons and avionics systems as part of aircraft upgrades and flight test towards indigenous development of prototype aircraft and systems. Besides the active flight test component, training of flight test crew is an integral and important role of the Establishment.