

Thu, 12 March 2020

## **Safeguarding Space Assets: Dr G Satheesh Reddy, DRDO**

Dr. G. Satheesh Reddy, Chairman of the Defence Research and Development Organisation, Secretary of the Department of Defence Research and Development and Scientific Adviser to the Defence Minister, opens up about his priorities – launch of DRDO's Next Gen flagship programs, platforms specific to reduce major imports in defence. Excerpts from an interview with Aeromag:

As the chief architect of India's path-breaking anti-satellite missile test Mission Shakti which is completing one year, how do you analyse the programme and could you explain the follow-up measures taken?

The importance of Mission Shakti lies in demonstrating deterrence in space and proving the country's technological capability to provide protection for our space assets. It is intended only for technology demonstration.

As the Chief of DRDO, what are your priorities?

Launch of Next Gen flagship programs, platforms specific to reduce the major imports in defence is the priority. DRDO is taking major steps in the direction of 'Make in India' with defence corridors being planned by the Government of India. We have laid emphasis on NG MBT, TEJAS Mk-II, AMCA, new generation missile systems and HEAUV. The thrust would be to incorporate advanced technologies in design and development of flagship programs so that we are ready for meeting the futuristic requirements.

Artificial Intelligence would be a key factor in the modern battlefield. Please update us about DRDO's programs in this regard.

DRDO has been working in the field of Artificial Intelligence and the work is being majorly carried out at one of our laboratory, CAIR. Other laboratories like R&DE and VRDE are also working on autonomous technologies.

<https://www.defenceaviationpost.com/2020/03/safeguarding-space-assets-dr-g-satheesh-reddy-drdo/>

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## **Induction of Astra missile into IAF fleet will tilt the scales in India's favour against Pak**

*Along with the Meteor missile, India's indigenously made Astra missile, will allow the IAF to regain the air strike superiority it surrendered to Pakistan post the Kargil War*

The Indian Air Force (IAF) has begun the process to procure and induct the indigenously developed Beyond Visual Range (BVR) Astra missile into its fleet. Along with induction of the Astra, it is also currently integrating the Israeli I-Derby Extended Range missile on its Su 30 MKI. Speaking to the media, IAF representatives explained that, along with the medium-range BVR MICA, and the long-range Meteor missile, India's air strike capabilities would be significantly enhanced with the Astra's induction.

The move comes over a year after the Balakot strike that saw Indian aircraft cross the Line of Control, enter into Pakistani airspace, and conduct a series of strikes in retaliation to a Jaish-e-Mohammad suicide bombing in the Pulwama district of Kashmir. What followed was a dogfight between Pakistani F16s, equipped with the American-made BVR missile, AMRAAM, and India's Su 30 MKI and Mirage aircraft. It was noted at the time that Pakistan's AMRAAM missile had higher capabilities than the R-77 and MICA, used by India's fleet.

Pakistan's AIM-120 C-5 AMRAAM missile, reportedly, has a maximum range of approximately 105 km. The MICA has a maximum range of just 50km, and the R-77, supposedly Russia's answer to the American missile, has a range of 80 km.

### **Reclaiming the skies**

In a frank discussion, following the Balakot strike, IAF Chief RKS Bhadauria stated that India's air strike capabilities were superior to Pakistan's during the Kargil War, but India had since let that advantage slip. He stressed the need to improve the IAF's weapons capabilities stating, "In air engagement, especially in a deeply contested area, it is important to have a weapon's edge. Once we retain this edge, it is important that we don't allow to slip back this edge."

The IAF Chief was alluding to the procurement of the European-made Meteor missile that, reportedly, has a range of 150 km. These missiles, when integrated with the newly purchased Rafale jets, the first batch of which are expected to arrive in May, would allow India to recapture the advantage in the skies.

However, the foreign Meteor missiles are expensive, and as such, there has been a growing need to develop an indigenous missile on par with those of Pakistan's. As such, the Astra, with a reported range of 100km, will prove to be a fine addition to the spine of the IAF's fleet. Future versions of the missile currently being developed, are also likely to have a comparable range to the Meteor, according to some reports.

<https://www.timesnownews.com/india/article/induction-of-astra-missile-into-iaf-fleet-will-tilt-the-scales-in-indias-favour-against-pak/563588>



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## **Contribution of women to research applauded at TBRL**

Chandigarh: A workshop on 'Women in Research and Development – WIRED 2020' was organised by the Terminal Ballistics Research Laboratory (TBRL) to mark International Women's Day here today.

Dr Chandrika Kaushik, head of DRDO's Directorate of Interaction with Services for Business, was the chief guest for the occasion. She highlighted the achievements of women in various scientific disciplines and motivated the scientists to work with dedication.

Director TBRL, Dr Manjit Singh, highlighted and appreciated the role of women at different positions across the world. He also applauded the contribution of women employees of the TBRL in scientific research.

Expert talks on social, professional and health issues faced by women were organised on the occasion. Lt Col (Dr) Vikas Agarwal apprised the delegates of Covid-19 and precautionary measures.

Dr Anurag Sharma, head of the Cardiology Department at Ojas Hospital, Panchkula, guided the delegates towards maintaining their health.

TBRL scientist Vikrant Satya touched the area of gender sensitisation while scientist Meenakshi Bhatt Kala talked about the challenges faced by women at workplace.

More than 300 TBRL women employees, teachers of the Ballistics Vidyalaya, Ramgarh, and members of the Ballistics Officers' Wives Welfare Association participated in the workshop.

A medical camp was also conducted on the occasion and a cultural programme was presented to celebrate the participation of women in all walks of life.

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/contribution-of-women-to-research-applauded-at-tbri-53446>