

First public lecture on Mission Shakti

Pune: Mission Shakti Project Director U Raja Babu delivered his first public lecture on the topic at Fergusson College on Saturday.

Babu told TOI that a team of scientists from Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) involved in the project worked for at least 18 hours a day in the last six months to meet the deadline. “We maintained highest order of secrecy to avoid ‘external pressure’ to halt the mission. We distributed the work in small segments so nobody would have a complete idea of the project,” he said, adding the DRDO chairman was monitoring the progress everyday.

The DRDO launched the country’s first anti-satellite missile test on March 27 at Abdul Kalam Island in Odisha. India is now the fourth country to have such space ability. Earlier, the US, Russia and China had similar missile technology. This type of missile application enables a country to attack and disrupt enemy satellites to affect communication networks.

On difficulties faced during the project, Babu said completing it on time was the biggest challenge.

“India had nuclear capabilities in the early 1970s but could not perform the test due to pressure of foreign countries. This mission could have also faced a similar fate so it was necessary to complete it on time” Babu said.

Babu said the A-SAT missile was developed indigenously. “Around 15 to 16 DRDO laboratories including Pune-based High Energy Materials Research Laboratory and Research and Development Establishment (Engineers) contributed to the project” he said.

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