

Prithvi-II Test-fired Successfully

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HYDERABAD: Nuclear weapons-capable, medium range surface-to-surface Prithvi-II ballistic missile was successfully test-fired from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur, off the Orissa coast, on July 16, 2010. The missile was fired by the personnel of the Strategic Forces Command (SFC) from a mobile launcher at 6.50 a.m. as part of the user training exercise. Aided by a state-of-the-art navigation system, Prithvi-II achieved a high degree of accuracy as it splashed down within a few metres of the target in the sea after a six-minute flight. The trial met all the mission objectives

While the single-stage, liquid propelled missile is capable of striking targets at a maximum range of 350 km, it was tested for a lesser distance, an official of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) told TheHindu from the ITR. A number of radars, electro-optical and telemetry systems, located along the Orissa coast, monitored the trajectory of the missile and evaluated all parameters in real time. Two naval ships anchored near the target point tracked and witnessed the terminal event.

The nine-metre-tall Prithvi-II has already been inducted into the Air Force. It can carry payloads ranging from 500 kg to 1,000 kg and has features to deceive anti-ballistic missiles.

Its guidance system enables it to carry multiple payloads for multiple ranges. It can also carry different conventional warheads, including sub-munitions, cluster

munitions and pre-fragmented explosives. S.K. Vasudeva, Chief Controller, R & D (Strategic Systems); V.L. N. Rao, Programme Director, Air Defence; Avinash Chander, Director, Advanced Systems Laboratory; S.P. Dash, Director, ITR; and other senior officials from the DRDO and the SFC witnessed the launch.

V.K. Saraswat, Scientific Adviser to the Defence Minister, congratulated the DRDO scientists and armed forces personnel for the success of the mission. The Prithvi is the first of the missiles developed under the country's Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme. It now has two variants — Air Force version (Prithvi-II) and Naval (Dhanush) — both having a range of 350 km.

Source: <http://www.hindu.com/2010/06/19/stories/2010061964131500.htm>