

India only country with supersonic cruise missile: Scientist

AHMEDABAD, Aug 29:

India is the only country to have a supersonic cruise missile, the BrahMos, while others are struggling to build one, said a top scientist associated with the development of the country's missile programme.

Out of the box thinking had seen India develop the missile in collaboration with Russia, chief controller (R&D), DRDO and CEO and MD of BrahMos Aerospace, Dr A Sivathanu Pillai, said here today as he delivered the 35th Dr Vikram Sarabhai Memorial Lecture.

"During the war of US with Iraq's Saddam Hussein, western countries used the Tomahawk cruise missile," Pillai said.

"On the first night of the war, the US launched more than 1,000 cruise missiles, destroying the air defence system of Iraq. Then the war was won after fighter planes were able to bomb that country at will," he said.

Tomahawk missiles are subsonic and cannot travel faster than sound, he said.

"We thought of doing something out of the box with the cruise missile and decided to have supersonic cruise missiles which can travel faster than the speed of sound. Russia was also working on it and we formed a joint venture. After years of hard work, we developed, tested and successfully produced the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile," he said.

"These have been inducted into our army and it is the only army in the world with such missiles. Other countries are still struggling to make a supersonic cruise missile," the scientist, who was involved with the development of the project, said.

Cruise missiles which travel at a low altitude and at supersonic speeds, are very dangerous for the enemy, he said.

The range of the missile is 300km and it is available in sea and land versions while another type was being developed for launch from fighter planes, he added. (PTI)

Par panel recommends flexible work timings for women

NEW DELHI, Aug 30:

Termining household responsibilities as one of the major reasons for attrition among women employees, a Parliamentary committee today recommended introducing "flexible timings" for them, especially young mothers, so that organisations can retain talent.

The panel also said that action taken on complaints of sexual harassment at workplace by various organisations it interacted was "not satisfactory."

This was stated in the latest report of the Standing Committee on Law, Personnel and Public Grievances on the 'Status of women in Government employment and in public sector undertakings with regard to the service conditions, protection against exploitation, incentives and other related issues' tabled in both Houses of Parliament.

On the issue of attrition among female employees, the panel said during its discussions with various organisations, it could infer that one of the major

reasons for women leaving a job is responsibilities within the household.

"The committee believes that adopting a policy of flexible timings for women and young mothers helps in ensuring better balance between work and home," it said.

The panel said it is of the view that if this factor responsible for attrition is "adequately addressed", it would help in retaining experienced and skilled staff, preserving commitment and loyalty and minimising the need for training and capacity building of fresh recruits.

"The committee recommends that the Ministry (of Personnel) may further explore the possibility of framing a policy on 'staggered working hours' or 'work at home' for women employees."

The panel said that in Government, percentage of women employees is 10.4 per cent, in railways 6.4 per cent and in defence civilian workforce

10.79 per cent. Only in banking and financial institutions, the representation of women is around 30 per cent.

On the issue of women's safety, the committee said organisations should ensure that proper transportation facilities are available, particularly to women employees when they commute beyond office hours.

On sexual harassment, it said merely transferring the delinquent employee to a different branch/station is not an adequate redressal and that strict disciplinary action should be taken in case the accused is found guilty. "The punishment has to be a deterrent for prospective offenders," the report said.

It said the Prevention of Sexual Harassment at Workplace Act, 2013 should be implemented in letter and spirit.

It asked the government to ensure that grant of maternity leave of 180 days be uniform in all the government departments and the organisations under their control. (PTI)

Youth should help build resurgent India: President

NEW DELHI, Aug 30:

Democracy not only gives rights but also entails responsibilities and India's youth have a vital role in building a resurgent India, President Pranab Mukherjee said today.

"India is a shining example of democratic polity and pluralistic society. Democracy not only gives rights but also entails responsibilities. Educated youth have to play a vital role in building a resurgent new India. The state and the community invest in the youth by providing facilities for education and self-development," he said in his maiden address via video conferencing to students of Central University of Odisha from here.

"The education you receive will bring you the opportunity to make a difference. This is the time to prepare yourself to engage with our beautiful, complex, and sometimes difficult and noisy democracy," he said while delivering the fourth foundation day lecture of the university.

The university was established in 2009 in Koraput which has a significant tribal population and it offers PG courses in languages, social sciences, basic sciences and development studies.

He said the need of the hour is that the Universities produced men and women of character and integrity. "To build the country of our dreams, we need competent and committed individuals. Our universities must produce men and women of character and integrity. Without these values, it is impossible to achieve anything worthwhile



in life. Along with academic proficiency our universities must lay great emphasis on character-building," he said.

The President said high economic growth was an integral part of the country's development strategy.

"Achieving it will depend on our ability to mobilise the knowledge economy. It has to be built on the edifice of a sound higher education system," he said.

He stressed that India needs quality educational institutes and need that none of the Indian varieties figure in the top 200 institutions of the world.

"An international survey has ranked not a single Indian university amongst the top 200 universities in the world. Our ancient academic system had world class universities like Takshshila, Nalanda, Vikramashila, Valabhi, Somapura and Odantapuri," he said.

"It ran on the strength of efficient management. There is no reason why we cannot regain our leadership position in higher education. A culture of excellence has to be created. A flexible approach

and innovative strategies need to be adopted in our higher education system to meet the challenges of tomorrow," the President said.

He said universities should harness the power of technology for students to get better knowledge.

"Many bright students are prevented by geographic location or economic difficulty from seeking higher education. Our universities must use technology solutions like e-education to address the problems of accessibility, quality, affordability and faculty shortage.

"Accessibility and affordability will result in greater inclusion. It will improve the enrolment rate and enhance the quality of graduates produced," he said.

Mukherjee told the students that innovations is the need of the hour.

"Innovation will be a determining factor of growth in the future. Our academic system must encourage innovation activity. The Science, Technology and Innovation Policy, unveiled this year calls for mentoring grassroots innovation," he said.

He also had a word for the universities and their academic heads. "The value erosion in our society has to be arrested. Our academic institutions have a duty to mould the minds of our youth and inculcate in them the essential civilisational values of love for motherland, performance of duty, compassion for all, tolerance for pluralism, respect for women, honesty in life, self-restraint in conduct, responsibility in action and discipline," he said. (PTI)

Cong says its track record in tackling terror good

NEW DELHI, Aug 30:

With the arrest of Indian Mujahideen founder Yasin Bhatkal, Congress today claimed the party-led Government's "track record" in tackling terrorism is far better than that of any other government.

However, the opposition ridiculed the claim, saying Intelligence Agencies, working independently, should be given credit for their "excellent" job in nabbing the most wanted terrorist.

Talking to reporters outside Parliament House, both Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kamal Nath and his deputy Rajeev Shukla said the Congress-led government was successful than non-Congress Governments in tackling the menace of terrorism.

"Of course," Nath said when asked whether the prize catch of Bhatkal proves that Congress-led Government could effectively tackle terrorism.

"...In combating terrorism and dealing with these issues the Congress (Government's) track record is far better than any other governments. Action and deeds spell that out very clearly," Nath said.

Shukla also spoke on similar lines and sought an apology from BJP for saying that Congress-led government was soft on terror.

Asked about the Minister's claim, CPI leader Gurudas Dasgupta said, "Indian intelligence has done excellent work. It has nothing to do with the Government...Colour of the Government."

"Is he (Rajeev Shukla) working with intelligence agencies? ...It is not (for) the Government to decide the way of intelligence. If he says so, he is a fool," Dasgupta said.

He asked Shukla to tackle "corruption" in BCCI in which he is an office bearer.

Bhatkal, wanted in around 40 blast cases and carrying a reward of Rs 35 lakh, was arrested from Indo-Nepal border by intelligence agencies on Wednesday night. (PTI)

Defence lawyer collapses in midst of arguments

NEW DELHI, Aug 30:

Proceedings in the December 16 gangrape-cum-murder trial before a fast track court here were interrupted today when the lawyer for two of the accused in the case collapsed in the courtroom.

Advocate A P Singh, appearing for accused Vinay Kumar and Akshay Singh, swooned in the middle of defence arguments.

The doctors from the dispensary within the court complex were then called.

By the time the doctors arrived, which took more than half-an-hour, the court staff and Singh's associates managed to stabilise his condition to some extent.

Singh, who was by then a bit in control of himself, could be seen telling his associates about the first aid he needed.

After the doctors examined him, he was taken in a wheelchair to an ambulance which ferried him to his doctor in northwest Delhi.

Earlier, during the proceedings, Additional Sessions Judge Yogesh Khanna also noticed Singh's discomfiture and advised the lawyer to be seated while advancing his arguments.

However, Singh refused to be seated and continued with his arguments between which he would stop to take glucose to maintain his sugar level. (PTI)

DA case: SC notice to K'taka on Jayalalithaa's plea

NEW DELHI, Aug 30:

The Supreme Court today issued notice to Karnataka Government on a plea of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa against the removal of Special Public Prosecutor in a disproportionate assets case against her and said no fresh appointment of public prosecutor be made in the case.

A bench headed by Justice B S Chauhan also issued notice to Bhavani Singh, who had been removed recently from the case as special public prosecutor, and fixed the matter for further hearing on September 4.

Earlier, the court had agreed to hear Jayalalithaa's plea in which she had said the decision to remove the prosecutor needed to be reversed.

The Karnataka government had, on August 26, issued a notification withdrawing the appointment of Singh as SPP.

"The appointment of senior advocate Singh as SPP to conduct the disproportionate case against Jayalalithaa and others in the special court is hereby withdrawn with immediate effect," the notification said.

The AIADMK chief is accused of amassing Rs 66.65 crore between 1991 and 1996 when she was the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu.

The case was transferred by the apex court from Chennai to Bangalore in 2003 during her earlier tenure as the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu to ensure a fair and free trial.

She had alleged that the case was foisted against her by the previous DMK Government for political reasons.

She had earlier recorded her statement under Section 313 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) before the trial court. (PTI)

Education adds value to actor's performance, feels Big B

MUMBAI, Aug 30:

Megastar Amitabh Bachchan feels education and general knowledge help an actor in his performance.

"If I have to study a character which I am playing and requires a great deal of understanding, knowledge and reading then yes a certain amount of general knowledge and education works," Bachchan said in an interview here.

Bachchan also seems surprised with the scripting done in Roman Hindi in today's time.

"I find a lot of scripting done today in Roman Hindi and I find it not appropriate. If you are speaking Hindi then write in Devnagari script and not English. May be this generation has grown up that way. I cannot express myself well enough," he said.

The megastar says he uses it hastily to write on twitter or blog but that is for convenience of others to read.

"If I have to write in Devnagari then I have to get out of the medium and go to Google to translate it and get back to the medium, it's a long process, it takes 30 seconds but in today's life 30 seconds means like 30 hours."

"Knowing the language is important in our profession as the way you speak, the pronun-



ciplarity of the show, I have nothing to do with it. The most important thing is the show itself, it is a very well constructed show. The show was designed by a scientist, who had knowledge...So it is not just simple question and answer thing. There is a deep research gone to construct the show," he said.

The show is running in 127 countries and Bachchan is hosting the Hindi version of the show. The show is also running in seven regions of India.

"There are different hosts in different versions and all are doing well. There is an intrinsic value in the show," he said.

The veteran actor says he likes other actors also who have turned hosts on TV, from Salman Khan to Shah Rukh Khan to Aamir Khan to Akshay Kumar.

At the same time, Bachchan also feels that it is tough to bring variety as a host on small screen than in films.

"I think it is lot more tough to bring variety as a host, as TV is impromptu. While in films the dialogues and story is written by others, you just have to follow someone's vision and speak. Here you are in direct contact with audience, everything is impromptu. You have to talk to contestants on the show. It is said that two seconds of silence is bad television," he added. (PTI)

CBI books UBI DyGM, 5 others in fraud case

NEW DELHI, Aug 30:

CBI has booked three former senior officials of Union Bank of India (UBI) and as many directors of a Nagpur-based private company for allegedly causing a loss of over Rs four crore to the bank, the agency officials said here today.

The agency has filed a charge sheet in the special court in Nagpur against the then Deputy General Manager, Assistant General Manager at that time, the then Chief Manager of UBI and three directors of a Nagpur-based private firm under charges of criminal conspiracy to cheat and provisions of Prevention of Corruption Act, an CBI spokesperson said.

"It was alleged that officials of UBI had sanctioned and released credit facility to the company and committed criminal breach of trust in respect of the funds of the bank over which they had dominion and cheated the bank," the spokesperson said in a statement.

During CBI investigation, it came to light that the UBI officials and directors of the company were in criminal conspiracy

and had allegedly sanctioned the account of the said private credit limit of Rs three crore to the company which was enhanced subsequently.

"The loan amount sanctioned was diverted/siphoned-off for the other than business activity from

the account of the said private firm and transferred to the accounts of its sister concern, which resulted in a non performing asset with an outstanding amount of Rs 4.58 crore," the statement said. (PTI)

IT, infrastructure needed to reduce pending court cases: Sibal

NEW DELHI, Aug 30:

Anticipating that pending court cases might rise five-fold to 15 crore in coming years, Law Minister Kapil Sibal today said more use of information technology and infrastructure creation could help.

"Pendancy of court cases is three crore today and this is going to rise in coming years to 15 crore...This requires financial support, infrastructure and planning...Around 30-35 per cent pending cases could be easily resolved with use of IT," he said during Question Hour in Rajya Sabha.

Noting that the government was a litigant in many cases, he said of the three crore pending cases, 18 per cent relate to Negotiation of Instruments (NI) Act like cheque bounce, 10 per cent are regarding disputes on motor vehicle claims and 5-7 per cent relating to Electricity Act.

Sibal said such cases accounting for 33-35 per cent of the all pending cases could be resolved with the use of IT.

He said 26 per cent of the pending cases are over five years old and 40 per cent are more than one year old.

Sibal said there was need for creating more infrastructure to deal with the pendancy and added that there were plans to double the population to court ratio in the next five years from 10 lakh people to 15 courts now. (PTI)

India's first military satellite launched

BANGALORE, Aug 30:

India's first exclusive defence satellite aimed at enhancing coastal surveillance for the Indian navy, GSAT 7 was hauled into space by a heavy lift Ariane 5 launcher from Kourou in French Guiana in the early hours of today.

The satellite aims to significantly beef up the country's maritime security and intelligence gathering in a wide swathe on both the coasts of the Indian Ocean region.

In a text book launch, the Indian satellite was the second to be popped into the space by the ariane launcher 34 minutes after take off. It had been placed precisely in the intended geosynchronous transfer orbit, ISRO said in a release.

In a post-launch address at Kourou, ISRO Satellite Centre Director S.K. Shivakumar said

the satellite would be functionally readied by September-end. Scientists at the Master Control Facility in Hassan, about 100 km from Bangalore, unfurled the power-generating solar panels of the satellite within a few minutes of its being placed in space.

Dr. Shivakumar said payload operations would begin in a week.

ISRO Chairman K. Radhakrishnan is at Hassan for the first of the three orbit manoeuvres around 2 a.M. on Saturday.

"Initial checks have indicated normal health of the satellite. The present orbit will be gradually increased to an altitude of 36,000 km and placed in a geostationary [Earth-fixed] orbit by September 4," ISRO said.

Built to the Navy's multiple-band requirements as a plat-

form to safely link up its ships, submarines, aircraft and command from

land in real time, GSAT 7 is also the country's first full-fledged

military communication satellite. Until now the defence forces have used minuscule capacities on ISRO's various INSAT/GSAT satellites.

For the Navy, this is part of a long-term modernisation plan involving the use of satellites and information technology. In recent years successive Chiefs of Naval Staff have identified space-based communications as the core of the Navy's futuristic network-centric operations.

ISRO is also planning more dedicated military satellites with the next one aimed to be sent to space next fiscal. The estimated cost of GSAT 7 was around Rs.850 crore. (UNI)

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Sd/-
(I.D Singh)
Commandant (Rectt)

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30 July, 2013