

Agni-V flight test propels India into elite MIRV tech grouping

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India joined a select club of countries on Monday, with Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi announcing the first successful flight test of an Agni-V ballistic missile carrying multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles (MIRVs).

The PM congratulated scientists at the Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) for the flight test, named Mission Divyastra, which was carried out from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island in Odisha.

Various telemetry and radar stations tracked and monitored multiple re-entry vehicles. The mission accomplished the designed parameters.

Breaking the news on the micro-blogging site X, Modi posted, "Proud of our DRDO scientists for Mission Divyastra, the first flight test of the indigenously developed Agni-V missile

with MIRV technology."

A surface-to-surface, nuclear-capable ballistic missile, the Agni-V can strike targets at ranges up to 5,000 kilometre with a very high degree of accuracy. The Agni-V uses a three-stage, solid-fuelled engine and is a component of India's policy to have "credible minimum deterrence", which underpins New Delhi's commitment to "no first use".

Developed by DRDO, the range of Agni-V places it in the family of inter-continental ballistic missiles, or ICBMs, and it is meant to primarily provide nuclear deterrence against China.

According to agency reports, the MIRV system tested on Monday is equipped with indigenous avionics systems and high-accuracy sensor packages, ensuring that the re-entry vehicles reach their targets with the desired accuracy.

The MIRV technology was originally developed in the early 1960s.



Agni-V missile during rehearsal for the Republic Day parade, in New Delhi on January 23, 2013

FILE PHOTO: PIB

AGNI-V FAST FACTS

■ Surface-to-surface ballistic missile

■ Up to 5,000 km range

■ Nuclear capable warhead

■ Three-stage, solid-fuelled propulsion engine

■ Developed by Defence Research & Development Organisation

Source: PIB