

Extended-range BrahMos missile costs under \$5 mn

AJAI SHUKLA

New Delhi, 25 September

For the first time, evidence from the Ministry of Defence (MoD) reveals that the latest and most advanced variant of one of India's most closely-guarded weapon systems — the indigenous, dual-role, extended-range BrahMos cruise missile — works out to about ₹34 crore (\$4.85 million) each.

On Thursday, the MoD announced that the Navy had ordered the ship-borne version of the supersonic BrahMos “at an overall approximate cost of ₹1,700 crore under the Buy-Indian category”.

The announcement revealed that the BrahMos

missile systems being acquired were “dual role capable,” meaning that they could destroy targets on land, while also having the ability to strike enemy warships.

The MoD did not reveal the number of missiles procured through the latest contract. However, this information was inadvertently revealed through an official MoD photograph that accompanied the announcement.

The photograph of the contract document stated that it was an “agreement between (Brahmos Aerospace and the MoD) for supply of 35 combat and 3 practice Brahmos missiles for two Project-15B ships.”

The two Project-15B



Officials of Ministry of Defence and BrahMos Aerospace sign a contract for the acquisition of additional dual-role capable surface-to-surface BrahMos missiles

warships that will receive these BrahMos systems are being built in Mazagon Dock, Mumbai (MDL). They are the destroyers, INS

Visakhapatnam, and INS Mormugao.

Approximately ₹200 crore would be spent on each destroyer's missile launchers,

command centre, and radar, reveal sources in BrahMos Aerospace (BAPL) — the Indo-Russian joint venture (JV) that builds the BrahMos missile. That leaves about ₹1,300 crore for 38 BrahMos missiles, putting the cost of each missile at about ₹34 crore (\$4.85 million).

This is significantly higher than earlier estimations that the Army and Navy paid about \$3.2–3.5 million for each of their BrahMos missiles. However, those earlier missile variants had ranges of just 295 kms, while INS Visakhapatnam and INS Mormugao will be armed with longer-range missiles that can strike targets out to 400 kms.

The range of earlier versions of the BrahMos was

kept below 300 kms, since the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) places this range restriction on sales involving a non-MTCR country. India was admitted into the MTCR only in 2016, after which Brahmos could legitimately build missiles with ranges above 300 kms.

A costlier BrahMos variant is the air-launched cruise missile (ALCM), which is carried in an under-belly pod by the Sukhoi-30MKI fighter. Developed by the IAF, Hindustan Aeronautics (HAL) and the Defence R&D Organisation (DRDO), this is half a tonne lighter than the regular BrahMos and shorter by about 50 centimetres.

More on business-standard.com