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India's Most Advanced Missile Test Signals Strategic Intent to Match China's Military Capabilities

July 23, 2025

– Categories: Defence & Security



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India's recent successful test of its most advanced hypersonic missile has captured global attention, with international defense analysts interpreting the move as a clear signal of India's growing intent to counterbalance China's expanding military capabilities in the Indo-Pacific region.

The missile, developed under the Defence Research and Development Organisation's (DRDO) classified Project Vishnu, reportedly features cutting-edge hypersonic cruise technology. Capable of reaching speeds up to Mach 8 and striking targets over 1,500 kilometers away, the weapon is seen as a breakthrough in India's long-range strike capabilities. The test was conducted from the Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha.

International media reports have widely described the missile as India's most advanced to date. Defense experts from the United States, United Kingdom, and Asia have noted that the system's design, which includes a scramjet engine, enhanced maneuverability, and high survivability against current air defense systems, positions it as a serious contender in the global race for hypersonic weaponry.

Defense Minister Rajnath Singh hailed the trial as a "historic moment," stating that India had now entered the elite group of nations capable of developing and deploying hypersonic systems. The other countries currently operating such technologies include the United States, Russia, and China.

The international reaction has largely focused on the strategic implications of the test. Analysts have highlighted China's recent advancements in similar technology, particularly the DF-21D and DF-ZF hypersonic glide vehicles. India's successful test is viewed by many observers as a direct response to Beijing's military modernization and assertiveness in regional matters.

"This marks a significant step forward for India's deterrence capability," said a report by a leading global security think tank. "It reinforces New Delhi's commitment to maintaining strategic balance in Asia."

Further development of the hypersonic missile system is expected, with future variants likely to include naval and air-launched versions. DRDO is also expected to conduct additional trials throughout the year to ensure full operational readiness.