

## Indigenous Air Shield: India's Akash Prime Proves Potency at 15,000 Feet



The Indian Army recently achieved a significant milestone in its air defense capabilities, successfully testing the Akash Prime missile system at an altitude exceeding 15,000 feet in the challenging Ladakh sector. During the trials conducted on July 16, the indigenously developed surface-to-air missile precisely intercepted and destroyed two high-speed unmanned aerial targets, demonstrating its operational readiness in high-altitude, low-temperature conditions.

The tests, carried out by the Army Air Defence in close coordination with officials from the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), highlight India's advancing self-reliance in defense technology. The Ministry of Defence confirmed the success, stating that "India has achieved a significant milestone by successfully destroying 2 Aerial High Speed Unmanned targets at high altitude in Ladakh Sector on 16th July by Akash Prime, which is the upgraded variant of Akash Weapon System for the Indian Army."

Akash Prime is an advanced version of the existing Akash missile system, specifically customized for operations in extreme environments, such as those found above 4,500 meters (approximately 14,760 feet). Key upgrades include an indigenous active Radio Frequency (RF) seeker, which significantly enhances target accuracy, along with modifications to ensure reliable performance in cold temperatures and thin air. The ground system has also been adapted from the earlier Akash version to support these specialized operations.

This successful trial is particularly crucial given the strategic importance of high-altitude regions like Ladakh. The ability of Akash Prime to effectively neutralize aerial threats at such elevations provides a vital boost to India's air defense posture along its northern frontiers. The system is

designed to intercept hostile aircraft, helicopters, and drones within a range of approximately 25 to 30 kilometers.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh commended the Indian Army, DRDO, and industry partners for this achievement, calling it "a significant boost to India's air defence capabilities, particularly for meeting high-altitude operational requirements." The Akash Prime system is slated for induction into the third and fourth regiments of the Army's Akash air defence units, adding to the two existing regiments already in service. This deployment is expected to enhance India's layered air defense network, contributing to greater security in strategically sensitive areas. The successful tests underscore India's ongoing commitment to developing robust and reliable indigenous defense solutions.