

# India's Missile Arsenal: an overview



*The Agni V ICBM on parade in New Delhi*

On 18 January 2018, personnel of the Indian armed forces test-fired the 5,000-km-plus Agni-5 Interim Range Ballistic Missile (IRBM). The test, conducted from Kalam Island in the Bay of Bengal, achieved all the mission parameters that had been stipulated. The last test of Agni-5 had been conducted on 26 December 2016. After additional user trials over the next twelve to eighteen months, the nuclear-capable Agni-5 missile will be inducted into India's Strategic Forces Command (SFC). Normally, five to seven tests are carried out, including technical trials and user trials, before a missile is inducted into the arsenal. After operationalisation of Agni-5, all targets in China will come within range of India, with the Chinese reportedly concerned at this development.

The 4,000-km Agni-4 IRBM had been successfully test-fired by personnel of the SFC from the same launch facility on 2 January 2017. After these two tests, the credibility of India's nuclear deterrence has received a boost.



*A Prithvi SRBM launch*

Under the aegis of its Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP), which was approved by the Government on 26 July 1983, India has achieved considerable success in ballistic missile development. The Prithvi Short Range Ballistic Missile (SRBM) (1-metre diameter, 150 km to 350 km range, liquid-fuelled) and multiple models of the Agni IRBM (800 km to 5,000 km range, solid-fuelled) have provided India with an assured retaliation capability. Though exact details are not known in the public domain, DRDO spokespersons have shared sufficient information to allow for an assessment of the missiles' capabilities. While the Agni-5 is still under development, the Agni-4 is reported to be ready for deployment. According to a Ministry of Defence press release, "Agni-3 was inducted to strengthen India's strategic might and joined Agni-1, Agni-2, Prithvi-2 and Dhanush (the naval version of Prithvi capable of being launched from ships even under extreme sea conditions)."