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Headway in advanced technology must for India to deal with emerging threats related to cyber & space: Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh to research institutes during 12th convocation of DIAT, Pune

Calls for new innovations beneficial for both defence sector & civil use

"Government resolute to achieve 'Aatmanirbharta' in defence; import dependency can become a hindrance to strategic autonomy"

"Without self-reliance, independent decisions on global issues cannot be taken"

"World has become a global village; self-reliance does not mean isolation; it means catering to our own needs, while fulfilling the requirements of friendly countries"

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh has exhorted research institutes to speed up activities in advanced technology and achieve progress to make India fully capable of dealing with emerging threats related to cyber and space. Addressing the 12th convocation ceremony of Defence Institute of Advanced Technology (DIAT), Pune in Maharashtra on May 15, 2023, Shri Rajnath Singh shared insights on the continuously changing political and economic equations among nations in the current global scenario.

The Raksha Mantri stated that Science & Technology and methods of warfare are evolving at a rapid pace and there is a need to make fast progress in advanced technology to deal with non-kinetic or contactless warfare, which the world today is witnessing, in addition to the conventional methods. "If our adversary possesses more advanced technologies, it can be a cause of concern for us in the future. There is an urgent need to move fast towards technological advancements in line with the changing times. This responsibility lies with our institutions. Defence sector is not a stagnant lake, but a flowing river. Just as a river, we need to keep surging ahead overcoming obstacles," he said.

Highlighting the deep connection between cutting edge technologies and defence research, Shri Rajnath Singh also called upon the institutions such as DIAT to come up with new innovations which are not only useful to the defence sector, but equally effective for civilians as well.

Elaborating on the Government's vision to achieve 'Aatmanirbharta' in defence, the Raksha Mantri termed it as the most crucial component, which is essential for strengthening the security apparatus of the country. He, however, clarified that self-reliance does not mean isolation from the world. "Today, the world has become a global village and isolation isn't possible. The aim of self-reliance is to meet the needs of the Armed Forces by building necessary equipment/platforms with our own capacity while fulfilling the security requirements of our friendly countries," he said.

Shri Rajnath Singh emphasised that dependence on import of defence equipment can become a hindrance to India's strategic autonomy, which is the main reason the Government, led by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, is making all-out efforts to achieve self-reliance in the sector. "Without self-reliance, we cannot take independent decisions on global issues in line with our national interests. More equipment we import; more adverse impact it will have on our Balance of Trade. We aim to become a net exporter instead of net importer. It will not only strengthen our economy, but increase employment opportunities," he said.

The Raksha Mantri listed out a number of steps taken by the Ministry of Defence to promote self-reliance, including promulgation of four positive indigenisation lists for Armed Forces comprising 411 systems/equipment. In addition, fourth positive indigenisation lists for DPSUs have been issued, comprising a total of 4,666 strategically-important Line Replacement Units/Sub-systems/Spares & Components. He termed these steps as a testament to the steadfast commitment of the Government to attain 'Aatmanirbharta' in defence.

Shri Rajnath Singh also threw light on the special emphasis being laid by the Government in the field of innovation. He pointed out that today India is the second largest hub for start-ups and the Ministry of Defence is constantly receiving innovative ideas. "Over 6,000 applications were received in the last seven editions of the Defence India Start-up Challenge, which indicates that Indian start-ups are contributing significantly in the pursuit of self-reliance in the defence sector. Now more patents are being filed, which is a sign of the innovative prowess," he added.

On the visible results being witnessed due to the Government's efforts, the Raksha Mantri stated that today India is manufacturing rifles, BrahMos missiles, Light Combat Aircraft and indigenous Aircraft Carrierson its own. He added that defence exports have increased manifold in recent years to approx. Rs 16,000 crore in Financial Year 2022-23 from Rs 900 crore in 2014. India is exporting defence equipment to many countries, with many showing interest and faith in the country's manufacturing capabilities, he

said.Shri Rajnath Singh called for harnessing the country's full potential to realise the Prime Minister's dream of a strong, prosperous, self-reliant and developed India by 2047,

During the convocation, the Raksha Mantri, who is also the Chancellor of DIAT, awarded degrees to 283 students, including 261 M.Tech./M.Sc. students and 22 Ph.D. students from various disciplines. A total number of 20 gold medals were awarded. Shri Rajnath Singh also witnessed laboratory demonstrations of various frontier research activities carried out in DIAT including free-space entanglement distribution demonstration, biomedical health-care device developed by a start-up in DIAT, Nuclear-Diamond battery, Drone interception and combat technology, Tera-Hz applications and space to undersea communication.

Secretary, Department of Defence R&D, Chairman DRDO & Chairman Governing Council (DIAT) Dr Samir V Kamat; Scientific Advisor to the Raksha Mantri Dr G Satheesh Reddy; Vice Chancellor, DIAT, Dr CP Ramanarayanan; Directors General and Directors of various DRDO labs attended the event.

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