

**Defence Minister Speech at
Aero India 2011 International Seminar
On February 07, 2011**

**Raksha Rajya Mantri, Shri. Pallam Raju,
Air Chief Marshall P V Naik,
Secretary, Defence Production, Shri R K Singh,
Scientific Advisor, Dr V K Saraswat,
CC, R&D, Dr Prahlada,
Dr K Tamilmani,
Friends and speakers from various countries,
Dear students,
Delegates,**

“ I am really glad to be in your midst for the inauguration of this international seminar. Over the next three days, various aspects of aerospace technologies will take centre stage in the seminar’s deliberations.

This is the 8th seminar in the series and over the years it is gaining in popularity. It owes this popularity to high quality speakers and the importance and relevance of topics chosen by the speakers and the organizers. The choice of the theme at this seminar - “Success through Global cooperation in aerospace technologies” is extremely relevant to our times.

Co-operation at every level - local, national or global is an absolute necessity for the progress in technology, specially defence technology. DRDO has evolved various models of cooperation, with our international partners and hope that such cooperation will be taken to even higher levels. At this edition of Aero India, there will be a bright gathering of engineers, managers and business leaders. Scientists, academicians and intellectuals will be sharing their knowledge with each other.

DRDO has crossed some significant milestones in aeronautics over the last two years and has more such milestones to cross in the next two years. I am confident that this conference will provide a fertile ground to all the participants to share and learn from each other's experience.

For more than 50 years, DRDO has been developing advanced technological products for the Indian Armed Forces. It has had its own moments of success and failure. However, success in all endeavours is to a large extent based on mutual interaction and cooperation between several institutions.

The recent release of the Initial Operational Clearance of the Light Combat Aircraft, Tejas was a proud moment for DRDO, HAL and many other institutions. Tejas is a system of systems product and it just cannot be developed in isolation – or manufactured without help from others.

Tejas has often been criticized for long delays. In developing Tejas, we have tried to make a world-class combat aircraft. As you all know, in most parts of the world, technology development precedes product development. The desired product is developed, once the right technologies are available and can be put together. However, in the case of LCA Tejas, we attempted both at the same time. The reasons are not far to seek. Due to denial of some necessary technologies, we had to find solutions the hard way. Despite all such odds, the engineers and technologies of DRDO and HAL finally handed over the aircraft to the Indian Air Force. Given the technology and time constraints, this has been accomplished in a reasonable time-frame, particularly in comparison to other similar class of combat aircraft in developed world. The Air Force wants some more improvements to be incorporated and I am sure DRDO will address those concerns too.

I wish to strongly reiterate that opportunities exist for all of us to forge closer links with our national and international institutions. Such linkages are a must for laying down the foundation for sustainable technological progress and growth.

While the success stories of LCA Tejas, Akash missile system and unmanned aircraft - Nishant, pilotless target aircraft Lakshya and varieties of airborne Early Warning systems are a cause for satisfaction, a lot more needs to be done to meet the needs of our Armed forces. DRDO and our Armed Forces need to step up the quality and pace of interactions to develop latest technologies and the best products. Through constant dialogue, they will also be able to appreciate better each other's requirements and concerns. In the years to come, DRDO must be in a position to significantly enhance the percentage of indigenous systems for the use of our Armed Forces. This is not to say that we do not need any help. We have examples of realizing the successful aerospace products in shorter time-frames through global cooperation and such efforts should be stepped up. I am sure that with combined efforts and experience, different models of collaboration in development and production ventures will be deliberated and attempted in the near future.

India has chalked out for itself a challenging roadmap to develop many challenging aerospace programmes like Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft, Aerostats, Unmanned Combat Aircraft, Airborne Early Warning and Control System, Medium Altitude Long Range Unmanned Aircraft, Rustom and our own Gas Turbine Engine - Kaveri. I am confident that there are great opportunities, not only for all indigenous institutions and industries, but also for our partners and friends around the globe.

This three-day seminar would surely lead to quality interaction amongst top professionals, along with exchange of information and ideas. You will deliberate upon many facets of aerospace technologies. I have been told that there are sessions on innovation and technology enabling technologies, airborne surveillance, EW systems, unmanned vehicles, flight testing and a session on civil aircrafts too. The wide canvas of the issues at this seminar will surely have a positive impact on the way we realize our new aerospace systems.

This gathering includes academicians from universities across the world, as well as CEOs and technologists from abroad and within the country. I extend my wholehearted and best wishes to all the speakers and others who would be presenting papers.

I am particularly happy to see that 130 students are participating in this seminar as delegates. The organizers deserve applause such a large participation of students. This seminar is an ideal platform where the students can get a bird's eye view, as well as a rich, practical experience of aerospace technology. I am sure they will find this Seminar interesting and stimulating and will also benefit a lot by attending it.

Before I conclude, I must congratulate Dr V K Saraswat and the entire team of organizers for organizing this seminar. I have no doubt at all that the technical content of this seminar and the deliberations will be of a very high order.

I wish the delegates at the seminar the very best and look forward to the result of your deliberations.

Thank You and Jai Hind”.