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(Online)

## Missile woman Tessy Thomas ready to launch summit address

Hyderabad: Tessy Thomas, the 'missile woman of India', who was project director (mission) for India's much celebrated nuclear-capable intercontinental ballistic missile Agni-V, will address 1,800 participants at Global Entrepreneurship Summit (GES), which is scheduled to be held from November 28-30 in the city.

From the list of speakers announced so far, 54-year-old Tessy Thomas is perhaps the only person based in Hyderabad who has made it to the panel of GES speakers. Tessy Thomas is currently the director of Advanced Systems Laboratory (ASL) of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) at Hyderabad.

The 'Agni Putri' may not really talk about missiles at the Global Entrepreneurship Summit but from the introduction that has been given about her, it would be about how she mentored and nurtured scientists.

"As project and technology leader, she has played a major role in mission design and infrastructure development. She has developed production teams from various industries for process and product development," introduction about Tessy Thomas reads. Tessy Thomas has been described as a person who carried out continuous nurturing and mentoring of scientists and ensured a collective learning atmosphere and also created a knowledge sharing platform.



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## Come Up With Indigenous Solutions for Modernisation Of Defence Forces: Sitharaman To Industry

By Anupama Airy

### Snapshot

- *Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is batting for indigenous solutions for the defence forces.*
- *She assured the industry that on issues pertaining to other ministries, she was happy to take up their cases with the concerned ministers.*

In a big encouragement for the Indian defence industry, Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday (18 November) asked the industry to come out with indigenous solutions for the defence forces and assured that teams from the three services (Army, Navy and Air Force) along with Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Ordnance Factories would visit across regions to interact with the industry on their requirements for both the short and the long term.

Sitharaman was in Chennai on Saturday and met with a host of defence companies including L&T, Reddy Group, MRF, TVS, LMW, EEYES, besides several micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) at an event organised by the Confederation of India Industry (CII) in Chennai.

She assured that the Defence Ministry was open to ideas and indigenous solutions for modernisation of the defence forces.

Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers (SIDM) shall facilitate the meeting of industries with the services, DRDO and the Defence Public Sector Undertakings. The Principal Adviser of CII has been asked to prepare a report on research and development projects of the academia (Indian Institutes of Technology and academic institutions like Amrita University and others) that could be potentially commercialised by the defence industry.

India has been looking at expanding its defence manufacturing base under the Make in India programme, and small and medium scale industry has been identified as a special component under it.

The Defence Minister said that MSMEs can play a big role in providing solutions, and asked SIDM to look at opportunities for MSME besides simplification of processes for the MSME to be able to contribute meaningfully.

While stressing on the need for indigenisation of military hardware, Sitharaman assured the industry that on issues pertaining to other ministries, she was happy to take up their cases with the concerned ministers and, if required, even go along with the delegation to address these issues.

Further, in order to push defence manufacturing under the 'Make in India' initiative of the government, the Sitharaman spoke about the government initiative over according faster approvals on issuance of industrial licenses that are needed to start production.

These licences would be considered as "deemed approved" if security clearance from the Home Ministry is not received in a "reasonable" amount of time. Simply put, if a licence remains pending for two months, or any decided period after its due date for approval has passed, it will be considered as "deemed approved" in certain cases.

In addition, another measure being undertaken by the ministry to push defence manufacturing is over creation of a master list of defence technologies developed by the DRDO and that can be commercialised by giving it to the government or private sector companies for manufacturing and exports.

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