

# RUSSIA SUCCESSFULLY TESTS HYPERSONIC MISSILE

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

Mission accomplished: Top officials overseeing the launch of the Avangard missile in Moscow on Wednesday. APMikhail Klimentyev

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday hailed final tests of a hypersonic missile, which he had earlier said would render existing missile systems obsolete.

“On my instructions, the Ministry of Defence prepared and conducted a final test of this system. This has just been completed with absolute success,” Mr. Putin said, during a televised meeting with members of the government.

“Russia has a new type of strategic weapon,” he said, adding that the intercontinental “Avangard” system would be ready for use from 2019. The Kremlin told Russian news agencies that the test had taken place in far eastern Kamchatka. Mr. Putin had unveiled features of the Avangard during his annual address in March, which he said would be part of a new generation of “invincible” weaponry.

The hypersonic missile could fly at 20 times the speed of sound and manoeuvre up and down, meaning that it could breach defence systems, he had said at the time.

The final test comes after U.S. President Donald Trump announced plans to pull out of a key Cold War-era nuclear weapons pact, the three-decade-old Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF). Mr. Putin has laid out plans to develop missiles banned under the deal if the U.S. abandons it.

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