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DRDO Flight-Tests Pinaka Long Range Guided Rocket at 60 km

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Source: ujjyari.com — researched, fact-checked & UPSC-mapped

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WHY IN NEWS

On July 8, 2026, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully flight-tested the Pinaka Long Range Guided Rocket (LRGR) to a user-defined minimum range of 60 km at the Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur, Odisha.

THE TEST AND WHAT IT DEMONSTRATED

The trial was conducted at the **Integrated Test Range at Chandipur** in the Balasore district of Odisha. The Pinaka Long Range Guided Rocket was fired from the **Army's in-service Pinaka multi-barrel rocket launcher (MBRL)**, and the rocket executed all its in-flight manoeuvres before striking the target with precision at the user-defined minimum range of **60 km**.

A crucial systems point emerged from the test: different variants of the Pinaka family can be **fired from the same launcher without modification**. This **interoperability** (<https://ujjyari.com/terms/interoperability/>) is a significant logistics advantage. A single fielded launcher can deliver both the older unguided rockets and the newer long-range guided rockets, simplifying training, maintenance and battlefield supply.

EVOLUTION OF THE PINAKA SYSTEM

Pinaka is a multi-barrel rocket launcher developed by DRDO's **Armament Research and Development Establishment (ARDE)**, Pune. It is named after "**Pinaka**," the bow of Lord Shiva. The original **Pinaka Mk-I** had a range of about 38 to 40 km with **area-saturation** (<https://ujjyari.com/vocab/saturation/>), unguided rockets. Successive guided variants have extended range while adding precision through onboard navigation and control, transforming the system from an area weapon into a precision-strike asset.

VARIANT	CHARACTER	APPROXIMATE RANGE
Pinaka Mk-I	Unguided, area saturation	About 38-40 km
Guided / Extended Range	Precision guided	Extended with accuracy
Long Range Guided Rocket (LRGR)	Precision guided, tested July 8, 2026	60 km (user-defined minimum)

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The test is part of India's drive for **indigenous artillery modernisation** under **Atmanirbhar Bharat** in defence. Long-range precision rocket artillery gives the Army greater standoff reach and reduces dependence on imported systems. The commonality of the launcher across variants also lowers life-cycle costs and eases scaling of production for domestic use and potential exports.

ANALYSIS AND WAY FORWARD

The 60 km demonstration confirms that Pinaka has matured from a Cold-War-style saturation system into a family of guided, launcher-compatible munitions. The next steps are full user trials with the Army, series production of the guided variants, and further range extension. Sustained indigenous production strengthens both operational readiness and the defence-manufacturing ecosystem.

UPSC RELEVANCE

GS Paper 3: Defence technology and **indigenisation** (<https://ujiyari.com/vocab/indigenisation/>); achievements of Indians in science and technology; developments and their applications in everyday life.

Prelims pointers:

- Pinaka is a multi-barrel rocket launcher developed by DRDO's Armament Research and Development Establishment (ARDE).
- The system is named after "Pinaka," the bow of Lord Shiva.
- The original Pinaka Mk-I had a range of about 38-40 km.
- The Integrated Test Range (ITR) is located at Chandipur, Odisha.
- DRDO functions under the Department of Defence R&D, Ministry of Defence.

Mains question: "Indigenous precision artillery such as the Pinaka rocket system illustrates the goals and the challenges of Atmanirbhar Bharat in defence. Discuss." (15 marks, 250 words)

FACTS CORNER

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Pinaka: A DRDO-developed multi-barrel rocket launcher named after the bow of Lord Shiva.

LRGR: The Pinaka Long Range Guided Rocket, tested to a 60 km range on July 8, 2026.

ARDE: The Armament Research and Development Establishment, the DRDO laboratory that develops Pinaka.

ITR Chandipur: The Integrated Test Range in Balasore district, Odisha, used for missile and rocket trials.

Atmanirbhar Bharat (defence): India's self-reliance drive to indigenise defence design, development and manufacturing.

Sources: Ministry of Defence (<https://www.mod.gov.in/>), Press Information Bureau (<https://pib.gov.in/>), DRDO (<https://www.drdo.gov.in/>)

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