Press release

Thales and Bharat Dynamics Limited bringing STARStreak Air Defence System to India

New Delhi, January 14, 2021: Thales and Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL), a Government of India enterprise, have signed a Teaming Agreement to work in partnership on the STARStreak Air Defence system with the support of both the Governments of India and the United Kingdom.

The Teaming Agreement was signed by Thales and BDL in the presence of UK and Indian Government representatives in a virtual ceremony on January 13th 2021.

The representatives from the UK who witnessed the signature included Jeremy Quin (Minister for Defence Procurement) and Mark Goldsack (Head of UK Defence & Security Exports). From India, the Director General Army Air Defence and representative from Army Design Bureau, Indian Army, witnessed the ceremony.

N P Diwakar, Director (Technical), BDL, Alex Cresswell, CEO Thales in the UK and Emmanuel de Roquefeuil, VP and Country Director, Thales in India, signed the agreement in the presence of Commodore Siddharth Mishra (Retd), Chairman and Managing Director, BDL.

UK Defence Minister Jeremy Quin said: “Co-operation between the UK and India continues to develop at pace with much closer ties within our defence equipment programmes and systems.

“Today’s signing marks the start of the next-generation of missile systems for the Indian Army and reinforces our commitment to work with international partners.”

Through the agreement, BDL will become a part of the STARStreak global supply chain, providing the opportunity for export of Indian manufactured components to existing and future STARStreak Air Defence customers, including the UK Armed Forces.

BDL was established in Hyderabad in 1970 as a manufacturing base for guided missiles and allied defence equipment. In 2017, Thales and BDL had signed a Memorandum of Understanding to assess the opportunity for the transfer of technology for STARStreak. The signing of this teaming agreement confirms a positive outcome from that exploration process.

Today’s agreement will also provide the opportunity for BDL to offer a ‘Make in India’ STARStreak solution to the Indian Government, with a capability that will match the immediate air defence needs of the Indian Army and Air force, and with 60% of the system manufactured in India.

It also represents an opportunity for further UK and Indian Industrial co-operation and will cement the ambition for closer collaboration and co-development between our two
nations, supporting the ambitions of our governments’ recently signed Defence Technology and Industrial Capability Cooperation MoU.

Alex Cresswell, CEO of Thales in the UK said: “Today’s signing is a significant milestone for all parties concerned and I look forward to Thales and BDL developing a close working relationship. This is good news for our business in Belfast in Northern Ireland, for the strong supply chain of UK SMEs with whom we work and for our teams in India. The UK and India have a strong tradition of industrial partnership in defence, innovation and sharing technology and we are thankful to both the Governments for their strong support to this excellent initiative.”

Commodore Siddharth Mishra (Retd), Chairman and Managing Director, Bharat Dynamics Limited, in his address stated that “partnership between Thales and BDL in this project with Transfer of Technology for STARStreak will create a new business opportunity for BDL and its Supply Chain Partners in India. BDL will be able to enhance its footprints in the export market in addition to domestic market with this new business opportunity. The Government of India’s ‘Make in India’ programme, the ‘ease of doing business’ and recent ‘Atmanirbhar Bharat’ initiatives have created a congenial ecosystem for the foreign OEMs to tie up with Indian Industries like BDL to establish the production facility in India,” he added.

The STARStreak missile system is in service in the British Army and has been procured by defence forces worldwide. The fastest missile in its category, STARStreak is unique due to its three laser-guided darts, which cannot be jammed by any known countermeasure. It has the capability to defeat any air target – even armoured helicopters – as the last line of defence.

About Bharat Dynamics Limited: Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL), a Government of India enterprise, was established in Hyderabad in 1970 as a manufacturing base for guided missiles and allied defence equipment.

About Thales: Thales (Euronext Paris: HO) is a global high technology leader investing in digital and “deep tech” innovations –connectivity, big data, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and quantum technology – to build a future we can all trust, which is vital to the development of our societies. The company provides solutions, services and products that help its customers – businesses, organisations and states – in the defence, aeronautics, space, transportation and digital identity and security markets to fulfil their critical missions, by placing humans at the heart of the decision-making process.

With 83,000 employees in 68 countries, Thales generated sales of €19 billion in 2019 (on a basis including Gemalto over 12 months).

About Thales in India: Present in India since 1953, Thales is headquartered in Noida, Uttar Pradesh and has other operational offices and sites spread across Delhi, Gurugram, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, and Mumbai, among others. Over 1,800 employees are working with Thales and its joint ventures in India. Since the beginning, Thales has been playing an essential role in India’s growth story by sharing its technologies and expertise in Defence, Transport, Aerospace and Digital Identity and Security markets. Thales has two engineering competence centres in India - one in Delhi NCR focused on digital identity and security business and the other one in Bengaluru
focused on hardware, software and systems engineering capabilities for both the civil and defence sectors, serving global needs.

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