Some countries funding and supporting terrorism against India: Naidu

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India wants friendly relations with all its neighbours but some countries are funding and supporting terrorism against India and some harbour expansionist tendencies, Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu has said.

Because of this, security and safety of the borders was very important for the peace and prosperity of the nation, he said on Friday.

Addressing scientists and engineers of Hindustan Aeronautical Limited and Aeronautical Development Agency at HAL complex, Bengaluru, he stressed that
India has "never been expansionist" in its outlook.

The country's approach is of peaceful coexistence and to deter the forces of terror and disruption, he explained. “India wants to become strong for the progress and development of its people,” he said.

Drawing attention to multiple security challenges faced by the country due to a highly complex geopolitical environment, the Vice President lauded the security forces for their exemplary courage and professionalism.

“It is our duty to ensure that our armed forces are fully equipped to handle any challenge and repel any security threat firmly”, he said.

According to VP Naidu, indigenous products will play a key role in leapfrogging India as an Aerospace and Defence powerhouse in the coming years.

He noted India’s capability to manufacture the state-of-the-art missiles, satellites and space vehicles, but pointed out, “the paradox remains that we are still among the largest arms importers in the world”.

Referring to several policy initiatives by the Government to promote indigenization and self-reliance in defence manufacturing, Naidu underlined the need to involve private partners in defence projects for fruitful results.

“We will have to depend on strategic partnerships, technology sharing and teamwork to ensure that we build competitive products which are comparable with the best from across the globe”, he said.

He said that measures such as an increase in the FDI limit for the defence sector, the decision to set up two defence corridors in UP and Tamil Nadu and notification of two positive indigenization lists by the Ministry of Defence offer a great opportunity to the Indian defence industry.

Praising the involvement of a large number of Indian companies with the HAL in the recently concluded deal for 83 Tejas fighter jets by the Indian Air Force, the Vice President said that such projects have the potential to transform the Indian aerospace manufacturing ecosystem into a vibrant Atmanirbhar-self-sustaining one.

Noting that the innovation process in the Aerospace industry involves high levels of risk and costly investments, he opined that this process can be accelerated through active collaboration between the industry and researchers.

During his address, the Vice President stressed on the need to attract the brightest minds in R&D in the aerospace and defence sectors.

He called for creating a synergy between academia and industry for developing an ‘Aerospace Hub’. “This would promote innovation and address the issue of skills shortage in this key sector,'' he said.

Earlier in the day, the Vice President visited HAL’s LCA Tejas manufacturing facility.

The Vice President also went around HAL’s helicopter facility which showcased indigenously developed Advanced Light Helicopter, Dhruv, Light Combat Helicopter and a Light Utility Helicopter that will replace Cheetah/Chetak helicopters. (India News Network)