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We've now completed whole spectrum of tests: Ramanna



Raja Ramanna

BANGALORE: Nuclear scientist Raja Ramanna has said India appears to have completed the "whole spectrum" of nuclear tests with two more underground nuclear explosions in the Pokhran range on Wednesday.

"It appears that they have completed the whole range of tests and I think there will not be further tests," Mr Ramanna, who had

played a very important role in India's first nuclear test at Pokhran in 1974, said.

On sanctions against India in the wake of the nuclear tests carried out on May 11 and on Wednesday, a confident Ramanna said: "Our country will survive whatever happens."

Mr Ramanna had hailed Monday's tests, saying the world should realise that India's nuclear technology is very advanced.

Mr Ramanna had complimented the scientists for "doing an excellent job of a very difficult assignment". — PTI

Homi Bhabha was denied *Bharat Ratna*: Ramanna

New Delhi, May 15: As the nation exults over its underground nuclear test triumphs at Pokhran this week, comes the revelation of how a former government refused to award *Bharat Ratna* to Homi Bhabha, the Father of India's Nuclear Programme.

The reason the Government in 1966 "refused" to give a *Bharat Ratna* to Bhabha after his death was that "he was not big enough", Raja Ramanna, former Chairman of Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) and one of the key brains behind India's first nuclear test at Pokhran in 1974, told a private television channel in an interview telecast on Thursday night.

"When he (Bhabha) died, we went and said he had done so much for the country uniquely that he should be given a *Bharat Ratna*, Ramanna said.

But the Government refused, Ramanna said, adding "most of these things were being given to political people at that time".

Asked specifically whether it was during Indira Gandhi's tenure, Ramanna said yes, "but probably she was not consulted at that time".

Ramanna lauded Bhabha's contributions not only in visualising the need for building nuclear power plants and research facilities in India, but also his excellence in administration and training.

Reminiscing on the first Pokhran test, Ramanna dismissed criticism from some quarters that India cannot afford to conduct such expensive tests.

Many of the equipment needed for Pokhran were by-products of the nuclear industry itself, Ramanna pointed out.

They are not as expensive as people make them out to be, unless "you are going to make an armoury" of nuclear devices.

Ramanna also described as an "unfortunate paraphrase" the code "Buddha is smi-

ling" to indicate that the 1974 test was a success.

"I have great respect for Buddha," he said, adding that the code was not his idea.

Ramanna who was among the only five persons to know about the top-secret 1974 Pokhran mission, said no one had a clue to what was in the offing.

Scientists only knew about the task or project they were assigned to.

Secrets usually do not leak out of labs, he added. Ramanna also emphasised that embargoes would not work on a big country like India.

"In the last few years all our power reactors are working at full power. And that means the embargo does'nt play any part," he said.

"There is no point in putting embargo on a big country like India. They can gradually do these things themselves."

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