

# Indian Scientist

# Tessy Thomas

## Padma Shri (2012)



(Born On April 1963)

**Dr Tessy Thomas**, popularly known as the **"Missile Woman of India,"** is a distinguished Indian scientist from Alappuzha, Kerala. Inspired by nearby rocket launches, she pursued Electrical Engineering, followed by an M.Tech in Guided Missile Technology from DIAT, Pune, and a PhD in Missile Guidance from JNTU, Hyderabad.

**Agni Missile Program:** Served as Project Director for Agni - IV and Associate Project Director for Agni - V, leading the development and successful testing of India's long - range ballistic missiles.

**Guidance & Navigation:** Advanced missile guidance, control, navigation, and re - entry technologies, significantly improving missile accuracy and reliability.

**Propulsion Systems:** Contributed to the development of indigenous solid propulsion systems, strengthening India's missile technology.

**Strategic Defence:** Played a key role in enhancing India's self - reliance in missile technology and strengthening its strategic defence and nuclear deterrence capabilities.

## Major Awards and Recognitions

- Padma Shri (2012) for contributions to India's missile technology.
- DRDO Scientist of the Year Award (2008) for leadership in missile development.
- Lal Bahadur Shastri National Award (2012) for excellence in science and public service.
- Dr Paulos Mar Gregorios Award (2025) for contributions to missile technology and women's empowerment.
- IEEE Women in Engineering Award and INAE Fellowship for scientific excellence.
- Space Pioneer Hall of Fame (2014) - First Indian woman inducted for contributions to missile science.

## Other Honors

Recognised globally as a role model for women in STEM, featured by the **BBC** and **UN Women**, and frequently invited to deliver keynote addresses at international aerospace and defence conferences.



## Legacy and Inspiration

Dr Tessy Thomas broke gender barriers in defence science, strengthened India's self - reliance in missile technology, and continues to inspire young scientists, especially women, to pursue careers in engineering and research.