

BrahMos deal with Vietnam final, soon with Indonesia too

THE PHILIPPINES, WHICH signed a contract worth nearly \$375 million in 2022, was the first foreign buyer of the BrahMos missile system from India. Indonesia had said in March that it had entered into an agreement with India to procure the BrahMos missile system.

Earlier this month, there were news reports that suggested Vietnam was close to signing a BrahMos missile deal with India. But Singh's comments on Saturday came as the first official word on this in public domain. However, the values of the Vietnam and Indonesia deals have not been officially disclosed yet.

Referring to the broader

issue of sharing advanced defence technologies, Singh said countries generally sold sophisticated weapons systems and platforms to nations they regarded as friendly partners. "Obviously you share technology with people you trust," he said. He further said that India has a strong commitment to the ASEAN nations, "and we treat all of you as 'friendly foreign countries' with whom we can share advanced defence technologies". Singh told delegates at the event that India was ready to work with partners across the region and beyond to build resilient supply chains, trusted defence partnerships, secure maritime commons and innova-

tion cooperation. "Today, resilience has become one of the defining strategic requirements of our time."

The defence secretary also said India had undertaken major reforms in defence production, innovation and exports over the past decade. The country had opened the sector to greater private-sector participation, encouraged startups and small industries, strengthened indigenous design and manufacturing and expanded collaboration with global partners, he said. India was not only modernising its armed forces but was also emerging as a dependable defence manufacturing and maintenance hub, Singh said.