

Dr. Tessy Thomas

Vice Chancellor, NICHE Kanyakumari, Tamilnadu

***Distinguished Scientist, Former Director General (DG) of Aeronautical Systems,
Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)***



Dr. Tessy Thomas, FNAE, currently serves as the **Vice Chancellor of NICHE, Kanyakumari**. She is a **Distinguished Scientist** and former **Director General of Aeronautical Systems, DRDO**, recognized nationally and internationally for her contributions to missile technology and aerospace systems.

Dr. Thomas's academic journey reflects her deep technical expertise. She earned her **B.Tech in Electrical Engineering** from Government Engineering College, Trichur (Calicut University) in 1985, followed by an **M.E in Guided Missiles** from the Institute of Armament Technology (IAT), Pune, in 1986. She later pursued an **MBA in Operations Management** from IGNOU, New Delhi, in 2007, and a **Ph.D in Missile Guidance** from JNTU, Hyderabad, in 2014. In recognition of her outstanding contributions, she has been awarded **14 Honoris Causa degrees**, including Doctor of Science from IIT Kharagpur and IIT Kanpur, and Doctor of Literature from Symbiosis International University.

Dr. Thomas began her professional career at **IAT, Pune**, as a faculty member in Guided Missiles in 1986 and joined **DRDL, Hyderabad**, in 1988. She played a pivotal role in the **Agni Programme** from its developmental flights, designing guidance schemes for long-range missile systems and underwater weapon systems. She introduced India's first energy management guidance scheme for all-solid long-range systems, earning the **Agni Self-Reliance Award in 2001**. Over her 34-year career, she has made significant contributions in guidance, control, inertial navigation, trajectory simulation, and mission

design. As **Project Director for AGNI-IV and AGNI-V**, she led the development of composite rocket motor casings and advanced avionics, achieving world-class missile performance.

In her leadership roles at DRDO, including **Director of Advanced Systems Laboratory** and **Director General of the Aeronautical Systems Cluster**, Dr. Thomas oversaw the development of UAVs, manned and unmanned aircraft, aero gas turbine engines, airborne surveillance systems, and lighter-than-air systems. Her work significantly advanced India's strategic aerospace and defense capabilities. She currently serves as **Vice Chancellor of NICHE**, Kanyakumari, guiding the institution's academic and research initiatives.

Dr. Thomas is a distinguished member of multiple scientific societies. She is a **Fellow of the Indian National Academy of Engineering (FNAE), Telangana Academy of Sciences (FTAS), Institution of Engineers India (FIE), Aeronautical Society of India (FAeSI), and Astronautical Society of India (FASI)**. She has served in prestigious positions as a member of the **IIT Council** and as a member of the **Scientific Advisory Committee to the Cabinet (SAC-C), the Board of Governors of IISER Thiruvananthapuram, and NIT Warangal**.

Throughout her illustrious career, Dr. Thomas has received numerous awards and accolades for her scientific achievements and leadership. Notable recognitions include the **Lifetime Achievement of the Year Award (ET NOW, 2025), The Hindu Excellence in Education, Science & Technology Award (2025), Women in Aviation India Lifetime Achievement Award (2023), First Ladies Award – First Missile Woman of India (2018)**, as well as multiple national awards from DRDO, the Indian government, and scientific societies, reflecting her pioneering role in missile technology and aerospace engineering.

To know more, click the link:

<https://www.niuniv.com/vicechancellor.php>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tessy_Thomas