

‘Mirage crash won’t affect indigenisation’

Coimbatore: Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Sunday accused the previous UPA government of doing “nothing” during its 10-year rule to upgrade Defence Public Sector Undertakings, two days after a Mirage-2000 crashed in Bengaluru during a sortie killing both the pilots.

She said the crash of the trainer aircraft after an upgrade under a programme being carried out by the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) on Friday was “not a setback for indigenisation”. “It is a fact that many things have to be improved in PSUs.” Sitharaman said in reply to a specific question on the crash and the reported statement of Air Chief Marshal BS Dhanoa, who was in Ben-



Nirmala Sitharaman

galuru on the day of the jet crash, that while indigenisation is important, it comes with a price.

“It was not a setback. For 10 years, they (UPA dispensation) did nothing to upgrade the DPSUs, whether it was HAL or BEL,” she said.

She said the NDA government is making efforts to upgrade the PSUs and also shipyards. —PTI