

**DEFENCE****Where two new ships will figure in Navy's overall expansion plan**

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched two different types of surface ships, which will be inducted into the Navy later.

**What are the two ships?**

- Named **Surat and Udaygiri**, and both frontline vessels, the ships will go through rigorous sea trials before they can be commissioned into the Navy, after which they will add the INS prefix to their names.
- Surat is a Visakhapatnam Class guided-missile destroyer, which has the capability to attack other ships.
- Udaygiri is a Nilgiri Class frigate, which are usually faster and more manoeuvrable.

**Under what projects are they built?**

- Both ships are designed by the Directorate of Naval Design.
- Surat is the fourth ship built in India under Project 15B.
- The class gets its name from the first vessel commissioned under the Project, named INS Visakhapatnam, which was delivered to the Navy in October 2021.
- The second ship, **Mormugao**, is undergoing sea trials and the third, Imphal, is in advanced stages of outfitting and trials of various auxiliary equipment.
- Visakhapatnam Class destroyers draw their lineage from the P15 Delhi class destroyers. Three such warships inducted between 1997 and 2001, until then the largest naval ships built within the country.
- The second series of vessels were P15A, Kolkata Class destroyers, under which three ships were inducted between 2014 and 2016.
- Udaygiri is the second warship produced under Project 17A of the Nilgiri Class frigates. The first vessel under the project, INS Nilgiri, was launched in September 2019.
- The Nilgiri Class follows the production of three Shivalik Class frigates commissioned between 2010 and 2012, which are "multi-role frigates and are the first-of-its kind warships built in India incorporating stealth features".
- Ships under the P15B and P17A projects are being built at the Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd.
- At the moment three guided-missile destroyers, four stealth frigates and two submarines are under various stages of construction at MDL.

**What other shipbuilding projects of the Navy are ongoing?**

- At the moment, 39 ships and submarines are being built for the Navy, including 37 at various Indian shipyards, as per the Parliamentary Standing Committee's report submitted in March 2022.
- In addition, the Navy has got the Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) from the government for 43 ships and 111 Naval Utility Helicopters for to be built indigenously.
- The first warship constructed in India for the Navy was in 1960, and since then 130 warships and submarines have been made in India.
- India's first indigenously built aircraft carrier, which will be called INS Vikrant, is expected to be commissioned late 2022, and the Navy is trying to convince the government to approve the construction of a second one.
- The Navy's only aircraft carrier at present, INS Vikramaditya, commissioned in 2013, and is on lease from Russia.

**What kinds of capability does the Navy have?**

- Its present fleet includes more than 130 ships and submarines and over 230 aircraft.
- The Navy divides its combat capabilities under three large categories: Surface ships, Naval aviation; and sub-surface.
- Surface ships form the largest part of the Navy's fleet. It includes corvettes, frigates, destroyers; amphibious warfare vessels like landing platform docks, landing ship tanks; amphibious boats like landing craft utility; large offshore patrol vessels; several types of auxiliary ships; small fighting ships; fast attack craft; survey ships and training vessels.
- In aviation there are more than ten Naval Air Squadrons, flying aircraft and helicopters including MiG29K, Dorniers, surveillance and anti-submarine capable P-8I, Chetak, Dhruv, Seaking 42B and Kamov helicopters.

- In underwater capacity, the Navy has 16 conventional diesel-electric submarines, which are classified as SSKs, with two more Kalvari Class subs launched but yet to be commissioned. India also has two nuclear ballistic submarines, classified SSBN, but these are under the Strategic Forces Command.

**What future capabilities is it looking at?**

- The three main focus areas are unmanned aerial vehicles for surveillance, intelligence gathering and possibly even air dominance; unmanned underwater vehicles which are smaller unmanned submarines; and underwater domain awareness.
- The kinds of equipment and vessels the Navy is looking for include next-generation missile vehicles; fleet support ships; high- and medium-altitude long endurance remotely piloted aircraft systems; multi-role carrier borne aircraft; a second indigenous aircraft carrier; next generation corvettes, fast-attack vessels, destroyers; extra large unmanned underwater vehicle; and various categories of missiles for them.

**Why is modernisation of the Navy important right now?**

- While the Navy has always had a significant role for India, its importance is bound to grow in the coming years because of the over 7,500-km long coastline and the wide expanse of the Indian Ocean Region that it needs to look after to defend itself.

**Reasons**

- First, India is largely dependent on the Indian Ocean for most of its international trade, which includes getting oil and gas.
- The second is the modernisation of the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) by China.
- According to a report on China's military might released by the US Department of Defense in November, China has "numerically the largest navy in the world with an overall battle force of approximately 355 ships and submarines, including approximately more than 145 major surface combatants".
- It noted that as of 2020 the PLAN is "largely composed of modern multi-role platforms" and in the near term it will have the capability to conduct "long-range precision strikes against land targets from its submarine and surface combatants using land-attack cruise missiles". It noted that China is also enhancing its anti-submarine warfare capabilities and competencies to protect the PLAN's aircraft carriers and ballistic missile submarines.
- In comparison, as mentioned, the Indian Navy has just over 130 ships and submarines. As China develops a more aggressive stance, it is bound to increase its presence in the Indian Ocean, both military and civil. Strengthening of maritime capabilities in the Indian Ocean Region will bring China in the direct threat perception for India.
- While the Indian Navy had earlier planned to have 170 ships, that number is likely to come down, given financial constraints, along with the gains made in technology.
- Along with the direct threat from China, the Navy's role is also bound to grow as India projects itself as a preferred security partner in the Indian Ocean Region for countries such as the US, Japan, Australia, France, etc.
- All these nations have deep interests in the Indian Ocean Region, but none can have the presence that India has for a large swathe of that area.
- As most of these countries try to contain China's increasing global footprint, India has to build its naval capability so that it can be responsible for the region from Malacca Straits in the east to Sudan in west. The navies are working together and conduct regular joint exercises to increase interoperability.

**The two ships**

**Surat**

- Length: 163 m
- Width: 17.4 m
- Weight: 7383 tonnes
- Speed: Over 30 knots
- Engine: Propelled by four gas turbines

**Teeth:**

- Will have state-of-the-art weapons, sensors, an advanced action information system, an integrated platform management system.

- It will be fitted with supersonic surface-to-surface missile system; vertical launch and long-range surface-to-air missile system for air defence.
- Four 30 mm rapid-fire guns, Super Rapid Gun Mount (SRGM) gun for effective naval gunfire support.
- Indigenously developed twin tube torpedo launchers and rocket launchers will add punch to the ship's anti-submarine capability.

#### **Udaygiri**

- Length: 149.02 m
- Width: 17.8 m
- Weight: 6670 tonnes
- Speed: Over 28 knots
- Engine: Propelled by two gas turbines

#### **Teeth:**

- State-of-the-art weapons, sensors, an advanced action information system, an integrated platform management system. Supersonic surface-to-surface missile system.
- The ship's air defence capability, designed to counter the threat of enemy aircraft and anti-ship cruise missiles will revolve around the vertical launch and long-range surface to air missile system.
- Two 30 mm rapid-fire guns and an SRGM Gun
- Indigenously developed triple tube light weight torpedo launchers and rocket launchers will add punch to the ship's anti-submarine capability.

### **IMPORTANT FACTS FOR PRELIM**

#### **1. Ramgarh Vishdhari Wildlife Sanctuary**

The Ramgarh Vishdhari Sanctuary in Rajasthan was recently notified as India's 52nd tiger reserve. This is Rajasthan's fourth tiger reserve after Ranthambore, Sariska and Mukundra.

#### **About Ramgarh Vishdhari Sanctuary**

- Located in the Bundi district of Rajasthan.
- The area had been declared a sanctuary in 1982 through the Rajasthan Wildlife and Bird Protection Act, 1951.
- The state government had sent the proposal to develop the Ramgarh Vishdhari sanctuary for tigers which was approved by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA).
- It is a statutory body under the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change constituted under enabling provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
- Biodiversity: It is home to a large number of wild animals such as the Indian Wolf, leopard, striped hyena, sloth bear, golden jackal, chinkara, nilgai and fox.
- Important Historical and cultural sites around this Sanctuary are Bhimlat, Ramgarh palace, etc.

#### **Significance of creation of Ramgarh Vishdhari tiger reserve**

- While Ramgarh doesn't have a high tiger population, it plays a critical role in the movement of tigers.
- The newly created tiger reserve will connect the Ranthambore Tiger Reserve in Sawai Madhopur district in the northeast with the Mukundra Hills Tiger Reserve in the Kota district on the southern side.
- This reserve will also help control overpopulation and the consequent effect of overcrowding in Ranthambore.

#### **2. Thomas Cup**

India defeated the 14-time champions Indonesia to win the Thomas Cup for the first time. The tournament was held in Bangkok (Thailand).

#### **About Thomas Cup**

- It is also referred to as World Men's Team Championships, is an international badminton competition among teams representing member nations of the Badminton World Federation (BWF), the sport's global governing body.
- The cup was donated in 1939 by Sir George Thomas for a series of men's international team competitions to be managed by the International Badminton Federation (IBF), of which Thomas was then president.
- It runs parallel with the Uber Cup, the global women's team championship.

- It was first held in 1948–1949 and it used to be once in a three-year event. The first tournament was held in 1948–49 and won by Malaya.
- The championship has been a biennial event since 1982.

**Just six nations have lifted the Thomas Cup since 1948–1949. They are:**

- Indonesia (14 victories)
- China (10 victories)
- Malaysia (5 victories)
- Japan (1 victory)
- Denmark (1 victory)
- India (1 victory)

**3. Govt flagged low score in World Bank's governance index**

In an analysis of the World Bank's World Governance Indicators, a key input for India's sovereign ratings, a presentation by the Ministry of Finance's Economic Division found that India's scores were "much below" its peers on all counts. It also said factors noted in the Freedom House report also led to the country receiving the largest score decline among the world's 25 largest democracies in 2020.

- The World Bank's World Governance Indicators provide a ranking of 215 countries territories based on six dimensions of governance: 'Voice and Accountability'; 'Political Stability and Absence of Violence'; 'Government Effectiveness'; 'Regulatory Quality'; 'Rule of Law' and 'Control of Corruption.'
- Principal Economic Adviser's presentation showed the government felt there was a danger India may witness a drop in WGI scores "due to the latest negative commentary on India by think tanks, survey agencies and international media."
- The presentation noted India's WGI score is much below the BBB Median on all six indicators.
- While BBB is an investment-grade rating issued by global rating agencies such as S&P and Fitch, a WGI score below BBB Median would suggest that India falls below the middle when the scores of countries are arranged in a descending order.
- A sovereign credit rating is an independent assessment of the creditworthiness of a country or sovereign entity. It can give investors insights into the level of risk associated with investing in the debt of a particular country, including any political risk.
- To understand this, the government analysed all 15 data sources whose ratings have the maximum impact on India's overall WGI scores including the Economist Intelligence Unit, Varieties of Democracy Project, Freedom House and Heritage Foundation Index of Economic Freedom among others.
- It noted that the Freedom House Report 2020 mentions "alarming setbacks in the world's largest democracy" and highlighted that "a series of actions by India's Hindu nationalist government in 2019 violated democratic rights in India and Indian Kashmir".
- It also noted that Kashmir went from "partly free" since 2017 till 2019 to "not free" in 2020 scoring 8 (out of 40) in Political Rights, 20 (out of 60) in Civil Liberties. Its total score was 28 (out of 110) compared with 50 (out of 100) in 2017, 49 in 2018 and 49 in 2019.
- The Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU) showed India's rank in the EIU's democracy index fell from 27 in 2014 to 51 in 2019.
- In the Bertelsmann Transformation Index (BTI), the government noted that under 'Political Transformation': "From being in the top category of 'Democracies in consolidation' in 2014 we have fallen to 'Defective Democracy'".

**DAILY ANSWER WRITING PRACTICE**

**Q1. France and India have shared a common belief in the importance of multilateralism and have a common respect for international rules and regulations. These shared beliefs can form the basis for a cooperation agenda. Analyse. (250 words)**

**Introduction**

India and France have traditionally close and friendly relations. In 1998, the two countries entered into Strategic Partnership which is based on three pillars of defence cooperation, space cooperation and civil nuclear cooperation. In the recent years, there have been increasing convergences between both the countries.

**Body**

**India-France: Convergences and shared common beliefs**

- **Partnership in the Indian Ocean:** France was the first European country to launch an Indo-Pacific strategy and India is a key pillar in that strategy.
- Thus, the relationship between India France has grown beyond bilateral to focus and includes intensified maritime and naval cooperation in Indian Ocean and more broadly the Indo Pacific.
- France has specific interests in the Indian Ocean due to its overseas territories (Reunion Island and Mayotte) home to over a million French citizens, and more than 10% of the Indian Ocean's surface.
- **Strategic convergence:** On the regional front, France is as concerned as India at the rising Chinese profile in the Indo-Pacific. Both would like to work to offer credible alternatives to Chinese economic and military assistance in the region.
- On the international front, both are deeply concerned about the breakdown of the rules based global order.
- **Global cooperation:** After their joint efforts to limit climate change and develop the International Solar Alliance, India and France have turned to more ambitious ideas. In this direction, both countries issued the road map on cybersecurity and digital technology.
- France's support on international platforms: France is among the countries that have consistently supported India's permanent membership to UNSC.
- Also, France has offered unstinted support for India on targeting the sources of violent extremism in Pakistan and helped limit the international backlash against India's effort to rewrite the rules of engagement in J&K.
- **Nuclear Cooperation:** After the nuclear tests in May 1998 when India declared itself a nuclear weapon state, France was the first major power to open dialogue and displayed a far greater understanding of India's security compulsions compared to other countries. Both signed, civil nuclear cooperation agreement in 2008.
- "Industrial Way Forward Agreement" was signed in 2018, between France and India for the construction of six nuclear reactors at Jaitapur.
- **Defence Cooperation:** France remains a vital source of arms supply to India. Defence cooperation with France began in the 1950s when India acquired the Ouragan aircraft and continued with the Mystères, Jaguar, Rafale, Scorpène submarines, etc.
- Both countries also signed reciprocal logistics support agreement to receive logistical support, supplies and services from each other during authorised port visits, joint exercises, etc.
- Cooperation in Space and Technology has continued since the 1960s when France helped India set up the Sriharikota launch site, followed by liquid engine development and hosting of payloads. Currently, other projects include joint satellite mission – TRISHNA (for eco-system stress and water use monitoring) and also accommodation of French instrument on India's OCEANSAT-3 satellite.
- **Counter terrorism:** Terror strikes in France by home-grown terrorists provide much scope for counterterrorism cooperation, in terms of both intelligence-sharing and de-radicalisation strategies.
- **Urban planning:** Given its expertise in the sphere of urban planning France is also helping in the Smart Cities Mission. The three such smart cities are Chandigarh, Nagpur and Puducherry.

#### Way Forward

- Even though above specified areas provided a robust basis for engagement, it remained primarily at a government-to-government level.
- In recent years, it was clear that for a wider partnership, strengthening business-to-business and people-to-people relationships was essential.
- Also, the trade between India and France, although growing, is yet to reach its potential. • By leveraging the potential of convergences, France can be India's gateway to Europe and India France's first strategic partner in Asia.
- The underpinnings of global geopolitics are being rapidly altered with China's rise, the West being consumed by internal problems and Russia, the "America First" priorities of the US Administration, and growing threats to globalization.
- With such background, France and India have a shared interest in developing a coalition of middle powers with a shared commitment for a rule-based multipolar world order.

#### DAILY QUIZ

Q1. With reference to the Thomas Cup, consider the following statements:

1. It is an international tennis competition held annually in the UK.

2. The United States is the country with the maximum registered wins in the history of the tournament. Which of the statements given above is/are not correct?  
(a) 1 and 3 only (b) 2 only (c) **1 and 2 Both** (d) only 1
- Q2. Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding the newly created Ramgarh Vishdhari Tiger Reserve?  
1. It is located in the Rajasthan state and is India's 52nd Tiger Reserve.  
2. The Tiger Reserve will act as a buffer between Ranthambore and Sariska Tiger Reserves.  
Select the correct answer using the code given below:  
(a) Neither 1 nor 2 (b) 2 only (c) **1 and 2 Both** (d) only 1
- Q3. Consider the following statements regarding Endosulfan:  
1. It is a snow-white coloured pesticide that occurs naturally in the environment.  
2. Newborns may suffer from congenital anomalies like cerebral palsy due to exposure to their parents.  
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?  
(a) Neither 1 nor 2 (b) **2 only** (c) 1 and 2 only (d) only 1
- Q4. With reference to the Arctic Council, consider the following statements:  
1. It is an intergovernmental forum for sustainable development and environmental protection of the Arctic.  
2. It is a treaty-based international legal entity for the allocation of resources to the member states.  
3. India enjoys the status of an 'Observer' in the Council.  
Which of the given above statements is/are correct?  
(a) **1 and 3 only** (b) 2 and 3 only (c) 1 and 2 only (d) 1, 2 and 3
- Q5. Recently, the "Seoul Declaration" was in the news. What is the aim of this declaration?  
(a) Neglected Tropical Diseases eradication programme  
(b) Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Human Rights  
(c) Women's rights  
(d) **Worldwide forest-related and environmental problems**
- Q6. Choose the incorrect statement about Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) in India  
a) **There is no legal support for EIA in India**  
b) Environmental Impact Assessment Authority (EIAA) constituted under the Environment Protection Act, 1986  
c) UNEP defines Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)  
d) Category A projects require mandatory environmental clearance
- Q7. Which of the following pollutant/s is/are included in National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)  
1. Ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) 2. Carbon Monoxide (CO) 3. Arsenic(As) 4. Nickel (Ni)  
Choose the correct answer  
a) 1 and 2 only (b) 2 and 3 only (c) 3 and 4 only (d) **All of the above**
- Q8. World bank's World Governance Index indicators are include which of the following  
1. Voice & Accountability 2. Political Stability & Absence of Violence  
3. Government Effectiveness 4. Regulatory Quality  
5. Rule of Law 6. Control of Corruption  
7. Ease of Doing Business  
Choose the correct answer using the codes  
a) 1,2,3,4, and 5 only (b) 2,3,4,5, and 6 only  
c) **1,2,3,4,5, and 6 only** (d) 1,2,4,5, 6, and 7 only
- Q9. Under National Air Quality Monitoring Programme which of the following pollutants have been identified for regular monitoring.  
1. Sulphur Dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>)  
2. Oxides of Nitrogen as NO<sub>2</sub>  
3. Respirable Suspended Particulate Matter (RSPM / PM<sub>10</sub>)  
4. Fine Particulate Matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>)  
Select the correct answer using the codes  
a) 1 and 3 only (b) 2 and 4 only (c) 2 and 3 only (d) **All of the above**
- Q10. Which of the following is Indian Navy's only Air Craft Carrier at present  
a) INS Surat (b) **INS Vikramaditya** (c) INS Vikrant (d) INS Udayagiri