Vindhyagiri Delivered: All Seven Project 17A Frigates Now with the Navy

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Prelims: Defence, Project 17A and indigenous shipbuilding



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Why in News

Vindhyagiri (Yard 3024), the seventh and final frigate of Project 17A, was delivered to the Indian Navy at Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Ltd (GRSE), Kolkata, on 27 November 2026. With this, deliveries of all seven Project 17A frigates stand complete. [1]

Key Facts

The basics: A frigate is a medium-sized warship built to fight threats from the air, the sea surface and under water.

The Nilgiri class: The seven advanced stealth frigates built under Project 17A form the Nilgiri class. The first, INS Nilgiri, was delivered on 20 December 2024; all seven ships were delivered within 23 months of it. [1] [3]

Who built them: The class comprises Nilgiri, Himgiri, Udaygiri, Dunagiri, Taragiri, Vindhyagiri and Mahendragiri. Four were built by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders (Mumbai) and three by GRSE (Kolkata). Vindhyagiri is GRSE's third ship of the class. [1] [2]

Design: The ships were designed by the Navy's own Warship Design Bureau (WDB), with construction overseen by the Warship Overseeing Team (Kolkata).

Faster construction: The first ship took 84 months to build; learning from earlier ships cut Vindhyagiri's build period to 68 months. [1]

Indigenisation: The project has 75% indigenous content, involved over 200 MSMEs, and generated employment for about 4,000 people directly and over 10,000 indirectly. [1]

Name and Legacy

The ship is named after the Vindhyagiri mountain range in Karnataka. It reincarnates the earlier INS Vindhyagiri, a Leander-class frigate that served the Navy for 31 years, from 8 July 1981 to 11 June 2012. [1]

Vindhyagiri was launched into the Hooghly river at GRSE by President Droupadi Murmu on 17 August 2023. A launch is a ship's first entry into water; delivery is the shipyard handing the finished ship over to the Navy. [2]

Technical Features

Propulsion: The ship uses CODOG (Combined Diesel or Gas) propulsion, which pairs a diesel engine for cruising with a gas turbine for high speed. Each shaft drives a Controllable Pitch Propeller (CPP), allowing speed and reversing control without changing shaft rotation.

IPMS: The Integrated Platform Management System automates monitoring and control of the ship's machinery, reducing the crew's workload.

Weapons and sensors: Compared with the earlier Project 17 (Shivalik class), these ships carry a more advanced suite of weapons and sensors and can fight across anti-surface, anti-air and anti-submarine domains. [1]

Exam Perspective

Scale of self-reliance: Design, construction and 75% content are all domestic. This is a concrete example of Aatmanirbhar Bharat in defence production, drawing in MSMEs and employment.

Delivery tempo: Delivering seven advanced frigates in 23 months shows the maturity of Indian shipyards. The build period shrinking from 84 to 68 months reflects institutional learning.

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Limits: Commissioning into active service is still ahead; only then will the ship be called INS Vindhyagiri. The distinction between delivery and commissioning matters for the exam.

Way Forward

The next steps are Vindhyagiri's commissioning and operational deployment. The longer-term challenge is to raise the share of indigenous sensors and weapon systems and to compress build time and cost further for next-generation warships.

Prelims Practice Questions

Q1. With reference to Project 17A, consider the following statements:

Statement 1: All seven frigates built under it belong to the Nilgiri class.

Statement 2: Vindhyagiri is the final frigate of the class, built by GRSE, Kolkata.

Statement 3: All seven ships were delivered within 23 months of the delivery of the first ship.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 2 and 3 only

(c) 1 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

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▼ **Answer and explanation**

Answer: (d)

Statement 1 is correct: all seven Project 17A frigates form the Nilgiri class.

Statement 2 is correct: Vindhyagiri is the seventh and final ship, and the third of the class built by GRSE.

Statement 3 is correct: deliveries ran from INS Nilgiri (20 December 2024) to Vindhyagiri (27 November 2026), a span of 23 months.

Q2. The frigate Vindhyagiri is named after:

(a) The Nilgiri hills of the Western Ghats

(b) The Vindhyagiri mountain range in Karnataka

(c) The Doon valley of Uttarakhand

(d) The Pir Panjal range

▼ **Answer and explanation**

Answer: (b)

The ship is named after the Vindhyagiri mountain range in Karnataka. It also reincarnates the earlier Leander-class frigate INS Vindhyagiri (1981-2012).

Sources:

- [1] https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleseDetailm.aspx?PRID=2342700&lang=1&reg=3
- [2] https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1949974&lang=1&reg=3
- [3] https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2086668

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Vindhyagiri?

It is the seventh and final advanced stealth frigate of Project 17A (Nilgiri class), delivered to the Indian Navy at GRSE, Kolkata, on 27 November 2026.

How many ships were built under Project 17A and by whom?

Seven frigates in all. Four were built by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders (Mumbai) and three by GRSE (Kolkata), to a design by the Navy's Warship Design Bureau.

What is the difference between delivery and commissioning?

Delivery is the shipyard handing the finished ship to the Navy. Commissioning is the formal ceremony after which the ship enters active service with the INS prefix.

How did the project benefit industry and employment?

It involved over 200 MSMEs, generated about 4,000 direct and over 10,000 indirect jobs, and achieved 75% indigenous content.

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