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HISTORIC TRIPLE COMMISSIONING OF NAVAL PLATFORMS

- **Unprecedented Event:** On January 15, Prime Minister Narendra Modi officiated the commissioning of three naval platforms—INS Surat, INS Nilgiri, and INS Vagsheer—in Mumbai, marking a historic milestone in India's defense capabilities.
- **Focus on Atmanirbharta:** This event highlights India's growing emphasis on self-reliance in defense manufacturing and the advancement of indigenous capabilities.

Indigenous Development: Progress and Challenges

- **High Indigenous Content:** INS Surat, a guided missile destroyer under the P15B project, has 75% indigenous content, showcasing progress in domestic shipbuilding.
- **Critical Component Dependency:** Despite advancements, key components like ordnance packages are still imported, underscoring the need for self-reliant critical technologies.
- **Path to True Atmanirbharta:** Achieving genuine self-reliance requires greater investment in R&D, technological innovation, and enhanced manufacturing efficiency.

India's Global and Regional Naval Standing

- **Global Comparison:** India ranks seventh globally in naval capability, far behind the U.S. and China, as indicated by True Value Rating (TrV) metrics.
- **Budgetary Allocations:** With only 17-18% of its defense budget allocated to the navy, India lags behind the higher proportions seen in the U.S. and China.
- **Need for Investment:** To bridge this gap, India must prioritize sustained funding and focus on advancing naval technology.

Indo-Pacific Dynamics: Challenges and Opportunities

- **Strategic Importance:** In the Indo-Pacific region, India faces significant competition from China's naval dominance.
- **SAGAR Initiative:** Modi's 2015 SAGAR initiative provides a strategic framework for enhancing security and growth in the Indian Ocean region.
- **Future Pathways:** Scaling up shipbuilding technology, improving operational efficiency, and fostering regional partnerships are vital for countering China's influence.



Shipbuilding Efficiency: Key Gaps

- **Construction Timelines:** The 31-month construction period for INS Surat contrasts sharply with China's rapid timelines, such as a 4.5-month completion for a 4,000-ton frigate.
- **Technological Prowess:** Disparities in design and production capabilities highlight the need for significant advancements in shipbuilding technology.
- **Potential for Growth:** Indigenous achievements like the BrahMos missile indicate promise, but a comprehensive push for R&D is crucial to achieving India's maritime goals.

Significance of the Vessels

- **Indigenous Construction:** All three vessels are Made in India, reinforcing India's self-reliance in defense capabilities.
- **Strategic Assets:** These platforms bolster India's naval strength and its strategic maritime presence in the Indian Ocean Region and beyond.
- **Development Timeline:** The commissioning reflects a long-term investment in naval infrastructure, with timelines spanning 10 to 15 years.

Dual Military and Economic Impact

- **Military Strength:** The addition of these vessels enhances India's defense capabilities, deterring regional threats and strengthening its naval posture.
- **Economic Significance:** These advancements position India as a critical player in global maritime security while supporting domestic industries and innovation.

Conclusion: Aspirations vs. Reality

- **Ambitious Vision:** India's goal of becoming a major maritime power is evident through its naval initiatives and focus on atmanirbharta.
- **Bridging the Gaps:** To transform aspirations into reality, systemic inefficiencies must be addressed, and investments in indigenous technology and strategic planning must be accelerated.
- **Sustainable Growth:** By aligning policy actions with strategic goals, India can ensure that its naval advancements translate into substantive, sustainable growth in maritime capabilities.

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