

22 – 11 – 2021

News: 6th edition of Indo-France joint military exercise Ex SHAKTI 2021 commences at Draguignan, France

- The **Sixth Edition of Indo - France joint military exercise Ex SHAKTI 2021** has commenced at the Military School of **Draguignan, France**.
- The training so far has focused on aspects of **joint planning, mutual understanding of conduct of operations and identification of coordination aspects required for jointly operating in a Counter-Terrorism environment under United Nations mandate**.
- The participating contingents have also been put through paces of **combat conditioning and tactical training** which included firing drills and battle hardening work sessions.

News: Defence Minister commissions INS Visakhapatnam at naval dockyard in Mumbai; Says, India's defence sector is becoming more self reliant

Project-15B

- Project-15B is the **Destroyer series of Vishakhapatnam class of stealth guided missile destroyers constructed using indigenous steel DMR 249A**.

- It is amongst the largest destroyers constructed in India.
- India's indigenous Destroyer construction programme commenced in the late 1990s with the three Delhi class (P-15 class) warships and this was followed by three Kolkata class (P-15A) destroyers commissioned a decade later.
- Presently, under the P-15B (Visakhapatnam Class), a total of four warships are planned (Visakhapatnam, Mormugao, Imphal, Surat).
- The Destroyers come next only to an Aircraft Carrier (INS Vikramaditya) in terms of their reach and endurance.

Project-15B

- Four Guided missile Destroyers of Project 15B (P 15B) are under construction at M/s Mazagaon Dock Shipbuilders Limited, Mumbai. The contract for construction of these four ships was signed in 2011.
- These ships are amongst the most technologically advanced Guided Missile Destroyers of the world, with state-of-the-art weapon/sensor package, advanced stealth features and a high degree of automation.
- Of these, first ship of the class INS Vishakhapatnam, has been commissioned to the Indian Navy on 21st November 2021.

Features of the P-15B Ships

- These ships are equipped with BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles and long range Surface-to-Air Missiles (SAM).
- The ship has several indigenous weapons systems like medium range Surface-to-Air Missile (SAMs), indigenous torpedo tube launchers, anti-submarine indigenous rocket launchers and 76-mm super rapid gun mount.

Other Three Ships of Project 15B

- The second ship of P15B Mormugao was launched in 2016 and is being readied for harbour trials.
- The third ship (Imphal) was launched in 2019, and is at an advanced stage of outfitting.
- The fourth ship (Surat) is under block erection and will be launched within this current financial year (2022) .

Role of P-15B

- The Indian Navy's responsibilities to safeguard a large coastline of 7516 Kms and about 1100 offshore islands along with 2.01 million km² Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) have been enhanced in the present geopolitical scenario.

- Destroyers like the P-15B class shall play an important role in the larger oceans of the Indo-Pacific, making the Indian Navy a potent force.
- The **guided missile Destroyers are deployed for various responsibilities like escort duties with the Carrier Battle Group to protect the Naval fleet** against any air, surface and underwater threats.

News: ₹15 lakh compensation for kin of forest guard killed by tigress

- A day after a **woman park ranger was mauled to death by a tigress in the core area of the Tadoba –Andhari Tiger Reserve (TATR)** in Chandrapur district of Maharashtra, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Sunday announced an ex gratia compensation of ₹• 15 lakh for the family of the deceased.

Taboda National Park

- Tadoba **National Park cum Tiger Reserve** is located in the Chandrapur district of **Maharashtra**.
- **Indravati Tiger Reserve** is located in east of the reserve.
- It is the **largest tiger reserve in Maharashtra**.
- Recent studies found the **presence of 115 tigers & 151 leopards in the reserve**.
- It also hosts wild animals, such as leopard, wild dog, Bloth Bear, Sambar and the rarely spotted Ratel.

- The 2018 Tiger Census has shown an increase in the number of tigers here.
- Even though tiger population is being up, population density (number of tigers per unit area) shows a decline.