



Indian Navy's Submarine Arm

Why in news?

\n\n

The submarine arm of the Indian Navy is celebrating its golden jubilee this year

\n\n

How has the submarine arm progressed?

\n\n

\n

- The submarine arm of the Indian Navy has made notable accomplishments since its inception.

\n

- This is possibly due to the professionalism of the human resource that lies at its core.

\n

- India acquired its first submarine, the INS Kalvari, on December 8, 1967.

\n

- In the intervening decades, the Navy has progressed to designing and indigenously building SSBNs (Ship Submersible Ballistic Nuclear), the INS Arihant.

\n

- The Navy has also invested in building conventional boats in India through partnership programmes with foreign suppliers.

\n

- Notably, India is the first country in the world to move straight to SSBNs, without moving up the scale from conventional boats.

\n

- The combination of warship building, submarine building and finally the nuclear submarine building has supported a whole range of SME/MSME segments of industry in India.

\n

- Further the plans for acquisition in place and operationalising them would give India a very credible underwater capability.

\n

\n\n

What are the shortfalls?

\n\n

\n

- **DSRV** - Submarine arm is one of the most hazardous and high-risk military specialisation.

\n

- To prepare for any exigency, every submarine-operating navy also invests in a deep submergence rescue vessel (DSRV).

\n

- Or it supposedly has access to DRSV with navies that have such a capability.

\n

- Sadly, the Indian Navy does not have a dedicated DSRV even as it enters its 51st year.

\n

- This void is expected to be filled only later in 2018.

\n

- **Administrative** - The long-delayed DSRV acquisition symbolises the systemic incompetence of the Indian military machine.

\n

- The inability of the Indian higher defence management ecosystem has deprived the Navy's submarine arm of a critical rescue capability.

\n

- The complacency in decision-making and ineffectiveness in policy formulation have adversely affected the Indian military profile.

\n

- **Corruption** - It was attempted to build two of the most advanced design of the German HDW submarines under the 'buy and make' concept.

\n

- However, it had to be prematurely abandoned due to the infamous HDW scandal and allegations of financial impropriety in the deal.

\n

- Resultantly, the indigenous submarine programme was set back by three decades.

\n

- It has taken decades for the procurement procedures to be revised to address issues related to blacklisting and the role of agents.

\n

- **Manpower constraints** - Constraints related to recruitment significantly impacts the modernisation and acquisition process.

\n

- Decommissioning old platforms to compensate for the immediate requirement of new induction has its own challenges.
- A new platform demands trained manpower for operational needs.
- Very importantly, it requires a host of administrative, logistics and repair support facilities that are manpower-critical.

What is the way forward?

- The navy has to strategically overcome the challenge of balancing the short and long term implications on manpower.
- The core national security interests should be insulated from the vagaries of political/electoral compulsions.
- Beyond the ceremonial symbolism, the Indian Navy should be given due focus for its substantive policy-related issues.

Source: The Hindu



IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering
 A Shankar IAS Academy Initiative