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# Cadet Training Ship Krishna – India's Naval Indigenisation and L&T Shipbuilding's Strategic Role

19 February 2026

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# Cadet Training Ship Krishna — India's Naval Indigenisation and L&T Shipbuilding's Strategic Role

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## WHY IN NEWS

India launched the indigenously built **Cadet Training Ship (CTS) Krishna** at **L&T Shipbuilding, Kattupalli, Chennai** on February 19, 2026 — the first of three planned training vessels for the Indian Navy. The ship was launched by **Anupama Chauhan**, President of the Defence Wives Welfare Association (DWWA), marking another milestone in India's defence manufacturing indigenisation drive.

## WHAT IS A CADET TRAINING SHIP?

A **Cadet Training Ship (CTS)** is a dedicated naval vessel designed to train officer cadets in fundamental seamanship skills before they are posted to operational warships. Training covers:

**Navigation** (celestial, radar, electronic chart systems)

**Seamanship** (watchkeeping, line handling, boat operations, anchoring)

**Ship handling** (manoeuvring in ports and open seas)

**Engineering** (familiarisation with propulsion, damage control)

**Leadership and discipline** under real sea conditions

India's earlier cadet training was partly conducted aboard **INS Tir** (a decommissioned vessel re-purposed for training) and through time aboard operational ships. A dedicated modern CTS fleet significantly improves training quality and capacity.

## CTS KRISHNA — SPECIFICATIONS

Parameter	Specification
Length	<b>122 metres</b>
Displacement	<b>4,700 tonnes</b>
Maximum Speed	<b>20 knots (~37 km/h)</b>
Endurance	<b>60 days at sea</b>
Named after	<b>River Krishna</b> (India's 3rd longest river)
Total CTS planned	<b>3 ships</b>
Builder	<b>L&amp;T Shipbuilding, Kattupalli, Chennai</b>

The vessel is equipped with modern navigation aids, a full complement of training simulators, accommodation for cadets, and a hospital facility. The 60-day endurance allows extended blue-water training voyages — critical for developing offshore seamanship skills.

## L&T SHIPBUILDING — PRIVATE SECTOR IN DEFENCE

**Larsen & Toubro (L&T)** operates the **Kattupalli Shipyard** near Chennai — one of India's most modern private sector shipbuilding facilities. L&T Shipbuilding is part of the government's broader push to involve private sector shipyards in naval construction alongside established state entities like:

**Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd (MDL)** — Mumbai; P-75 submarines, destroyers

**Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE)** — Kolkata; frigates, corvettes, survey vessels

**Hindustan Shipyard Ltd (HSL)** — Visakhapatnam; repair, patrol vessels

L&T's Kattupalli yard received the CTS contract under India's **Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP 2020)**, which prioritises domestic procurement. The CTS programme is classified under '**Buy Indian-IDDm**' (Indigenously Designed, Developed and Manufactured) — the highest indigenisation category.

## NAVAL INDIGENISATION: INDIA'S STRATEGIC IMPERATIVE

India's defence procurement policy has undergone a major transformation since 2014. Key milestones:

### 2014–2026 progress:

**INS Vikrant** (Indigenous Aircraft Carrier-1): commissioned September 2022; built at Cochin Shipyard; 45,000 tonnes; first Indigenous Aircraft Carrier

**P-75 Scorpene Submarines (Kalvari-class):** 6 submarines built at MDL, Mumbai (with Naval Group, France); Project 75I (6 more with air-independent propulsion) in progress

**INS Visakhapatnam (P-15B):** First of 4 guided missile destroyers; commissioned November 2021; built at MDL

**Advanced Torpedo Defence System (ATDS):** Indigenous development by BEL

**Kavach Chaff Rocket System:** Indigenous electronic warfare, developed by DRDO/BEL

**CTS programme in context:** Previously India relied on ageing training ships and overseas training (at Royal Navy institutions and the Maritime Institute of Technology, France). The CTS programme ensures a **self-reliant naval training ecosystem** — 3 CTS vessels will provide dedicated training for ~250–300 officer cadets annually.

## RIVER KRISHNA — WHY NAMED AFTER IT?

India's naval vessels follow naming conventions:

**Aircraft carriers:** Named after historical rulers (Vikrant, Vikramaditya)

**Destroyers and Frigates:** Named after elements (Shivalik, Shakti, Sahyadri)

**Submarines:** Named after rivers and sea creatures (Kalvari — swordfish; Vagsheer — tiger shark)

**Support vessels:** Named after rivers (*Deepak, Shakti, Jyoti*) or geographic features

**Training ships:** Often named after rivers

**River Krishna** is the **3rd longest river** in India (after Ganga and Godavari); originates at **Mahabaleshwar, Maharashtra**; flows through Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh; empties into the **Bay of Bengal**. Length: ~1,400 km. Major tributaries: Tungabhadra, Bhima, Musi.

## INDIA'S NAVAL CADET TRAINING SYSTEM

**Naval Academy at Ezhimala (Kerala):** India's premier naval officers' training academy; established 2009; produces officers for the Indian Navy and Coast Guard; one of Asia's largest naval academies. Cadets undergo 3 years of training including academic and physical training before onboard sea training.

**Indian Naval Academy (INA), Ezhimala** was built to replace the erstwhile INS Zamorin (previously Kochi Naval Base). Sea training aboard a modern CTS after INA graduation completes the basic officer training pipeline.

## UPSC RELEVANCE

*CTS Krishna — L&T Kattupalli, 122 m, 4,700 tonnes, 20 knots, 60-day endurance, River Krishna (3rd longest in India); DAP 2020 (Defence Acquisition Procedure); Buy Indian-IDDMM category; INS Vikrant (September 2022); P-75 Scorpene submarines; MDL, GRSE, HSL (defence shipyards); Naval Academy Ezhimala, Kerala. **Mains GS-3:** India's defence manufacturing; role of private sector (L&T, Tata Defence, Mahindra); DAP 2020 and indigenisation; defence exports (target \$5 billion by FY2025); naval shipbuilding as strategic capability. **Interview:** "India has been indigenising its naval fleet for decades, yet still imports critical systems. Is 'Make in India' defence truly self-reliant, or strategically dependent on imported components?"*

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**CTS KRISHNA — CORE DATA:**

Launched: **February 19, 2026** | Builder: **L&T Kattupalli, Chennai**

Length: **122 m** | Displacement: **4,700 tonnes** | Speed: **20 knots** | Endurance: **60 days**

Named after: **River Krishna** (3rd longest in India; originates Mahabaleshwar, Maharashtra)

Total CTS planned: **3 ships**

**INDIAN NAVAL SHIPBUILDERS:**

**MDL (Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders), Mumbai** — P-75 Scorpene submarines, P-15B destroyers

**GRSE, Kolkata** — Frigates, corvettes, LCUs

**HSL, Visakhapatnam** — Repair, patrol vessels

**CSL (Cochin Shipyard)** — INS Vikrant (IAC-1)

**L&T Kattupalli** — CTS, Coast Guard vessels

**NAVAL INDIGENISATION MILESTONES:**

INS Vikrant: Commissioned **September 2, 2022** | 45,000 tonnes | First Indigenous Aircraft Carrier

INS Visakhapatnam (P-15B): Commissioned **November 21, 2021**

Scorpene submarines (P-75): 6 of 6 commissioned (Kalvari, Khanderi, Karanj, Vela, Vagir, Vagsheer)

**RIVER KRISHNA DATA:**

Originates: **Mahabaleshwar, Maharashtra** (at 1,337 m altitude)

Length: **~1,400 km** | Flows through: Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh

Drains into: **Bay of Bengal** (near Hamasaladeevi, Andhra Pradesh)

Major tributaries: Tungabhadra, Bhima, Musi, Mallaprabha, Ghataprabha

**NAVAL ACADEMY:**

Location: **Ezhimala, Kerala** | Established: **2009** | India's premier naval officer training institution

**OTHER RELEVANT FACTS:**

DAP 2020: Defence Acquisition Procedure — prioritises 'Buy Indian-IDD', 'Buy Indian', 'Buy and Make Indian' over foreign procurement

Defence indigenisation target: 68% of defence capital outlay to domestic industry

Defence exports: India achieved **~₹21,083 crore** (~USD 2.5 billion) in FY2023-24; target USD 5 billion by 2028

Sources: PIB, AffairsCloud

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