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INS Mahendragiri Delivered — Project 17A's Sixth Nilgiri-Class Stealth Frigate

4 May 2026

SECURITY & DEFENCE

GS3

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INS Mahendragiri Delivered — Project 17A's Sixth Nilgiri-Class Stealth Frigate

4 May 2026 · 3 min read · 1 tag

WHY IN NEWS

On **April 30, 2026**, **Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL)**, Mumbai, handed over **INS Mahendragiri** (hull Y-12654) to the **Indian Navy** — marking the delivery of the **sixth Project 17A stealth frigate** overall and completing MDL's quota of four ships under the project. This also marks the **100th vessel milestone for the Warship Design Bureau (WDB)**, the Navy's in-house design organisation. Project 17A's three GRSE-built ships remain on track.

PROJECT 17A (NILGIRI-CLASS FRIGATES) — OVERVIEW

Project 17A is a follow-on to Project 17 (Shivalik-class frigates) and represents India's most advanced indigenous warship construction programme.

ATTRIBUTE	DETAIL
Class	Nilgiri-class stealth frigates
Project	Project 17A
Total ships	7 (4 from MDL + 3 from GRSE)
Design authority	Warship Design Bureau (WDB), Indian Navy
Lead ship	INS Nilgiri
Classification	GS-guided missile stealth frigates
Stealth features	Reduced radar cross-section (RCS), angled superstructure, radar-absorbent material
Key systems	BrahMos supersonic cruise missile, Barak-8 SAM, Advanced Torpedo Launch System, hull-mounted sonar, towed array sonar
Propulsion	COGAG (Combined Gas and Gas)

P17A Delivery Status

SHIP	BUILDER	DELIVERED
INS Nilgiri (Y-12651)	MDL	December 20, 2024
INS Himgiri (Y-12652)	MDL	2025
INS Udaygiri (Y-12653)	MDL	2025
INS Mahendragiri (Y-12654)	MDL	April 30, 2026
INS Dunagiri (Y-12655)	GRSE	On trials
INS Vindhyagiri (Y-12656)	GRSE	On trials
INS Taragiri (Y-12657)	GRSE	Under construction

Note: GRSE = Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers, Kolkata

INS MAHENDRAGIRI — KEY DETAILS

- **Named after:** Mahendragiri mountain peak in the **Eastern Ghats, Odisha** (altitude ~1,501 m; one of the highest peaks in Odisha)
- **Hull number:** Y-12654
- **Builder:** Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL), Mumbai
- **Delivery:** April 30, 2026
- **Significance:** Completes MDL's Project 17A quota; 100th vessel milestone for Warship Design Bureau

MAZAGON DOCK SHIPBUILDERS LIMITED (MDL)

PARAMETER	DETAIL
Location	Mumbai, Maharashtra
Ownership	Government of India (Ministry of Defence); listed PSU (IPO: 2020)
Category	Defence Public Sector Undertaking (DPSU)
Major products	Frigates (P17/P17A), Destroyers (P15A/P15B), Submarines (Scorpène — P75)
Current projects	P17A (frigates), P75 Scorpène submarines (6 delivered), P75I (future submarine)
Shipyard area	~51 hectares; wet basin capacity for simultaneous construction

WARSHIP DESIGN BUREAU (WDB)

- **Parent organisation:** Indian Navy
- **Role:** Indigenous design of warships — from concept to final design — reducing dependence on foreign design houses
- **100th vessel milestone:** INS Mahendragiri is the 100th vessel built to WDB designs, spanning frigates, destroyers, corvettes, and auxiliary vessels
- Successor to the **Directorate of Naval Design**, elevated to Bureau status to reflect expanded role

INDIA'S NAVAL INDIGENISATION — CONTEXT

India's warship indigenisation has progressed significantly under **Aatmanirbhar Bharat** in defence:

PROGRAMME	SHIPS	SIGNIFICANCE
Project 15B (Visakhapatnam-class destroyers)	4 ships	Most advanced destroyers; guided missile
Project 17A (Nilgiri-class frigates)	7 ships	Current programme; stealth frigates
Project 28 (Kamorta-class corvettes)	4 ships	Anti-submarine warfare
Project 75 (Scorpène submarines)	6 submarines	MDL + DCNS (France); all delivered by 2024
Project 75I (future submarines)	6 submarines	AIP-equipped; vendor selection ongoing
INS Vikrant (IAC-1)	Carrier	First indigenous aircraft carrier; commissioned Sept 2022

UPSC RELEVANCE

PAPER	ANGLE
GS3 — Security	Naval modernisation, Project 17A, indigenisation
GS3 — Economy	Defence PSUs, MDL as listed DPSU, Aatmanirbhar Bharat in defence
GS2 — Governance	DPSUs, defence procurement policy

Mains Keywords: INS Mahendragiri, Project 17A, Nilgiri-class frigates, Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders (MDL), Warship Design Bureau, stealth frigate, naval indigenisation, Aatmanirbhar Bharat, BrahMos missile, Garden Reach Shipbuilders (GRSE)

Prelims Facts Corner

ITEM	FACT
INS Mahendragiri	6th P17A ship; MDL's 4th; delivered April 30, 2026
Class	Nilgiri-class stealth frigates (Project 17A)
Named after	Mahendragiri mountain, Eastern Ghats, Odisha
Total P17A ships	7 (4 MDL + 3 GRSE)
Lead ship	INS Nilgiri; delivered December 20, 2024
Warship Design Bureau	100th vessel milestone; Indian Navy's design arm
MDL	Mumbai; Defence PSU; listed (IPO 2020)
Project 75	Scorpène submarines; 6 delivered; MDL + DCNS
INS Vikrant	First indigenous aircraft carrier; commissioned Sept 2022

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