Defence & Security · GS - III

Assess the contribution of indigenous warship construction programmes to India's maritime security and strategic autonomy.

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MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Project 17A, INS Vindhyagiri, defence indigenisation, BrahMos, Barak-8, shipbuilding ecosystem, technology transfer, strategic autonomy, Indian Ocean Region

Model Answer

India's maritime interests are expanding with its growing trade dependence, energy imports and strategic presence in the Indian Ocean Region. Indigenous warship construction is therefore essential for strengthening naval capability and strategic autonomy.

Project 17A, comprising seven advanced stealth frigates, represents a significant milestone in India's naval modernisation. The commissioning of the final vessel, INS Vindhyagiri, reflects the country's growing domestic shipbuilding capacity.

Its contribution to national security includes:

1. **Enhanced combat capability:** Modern frigates equipped with systems such as BrahMos and Barak-8 improve India's ability to address surface, aerial and maritime threats.
2. **Stealth and surveillance:** Advanced radar, sensors and reduced-signature designs improve operational effectiveness.

3. **Strategic autonomy:** Indigenous manufacturing reduces dependence on foreign suppliers for critical defence platforms and equipment.
4. **Industrial development:** Shipbuilding programmes generate opportunities for domestic manufacturers, MSMEs and specialised technology firms.
5. **Technological advancement:** Collaboration among defence research institutions, shipyards and private industries strengthens indigenous engineering capabilities.

However, challenges remain in developing advanced propulsion systems, specialised materials, high-end electronics and critical components. Delays and cost overruns also require attention.

A sustained focus on research and development, private-sector participation, technology absorption and indigenous component manufacturing is necessary.

Thus, indigenous naval shipbuilding is not merely a defence procurement strategy; it is an important instrument of maritime security, industrial development and strategic independence.

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