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INS Vikrant

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Why is in news? French Minister of Armed Forces visits Indigenous Aircraft Carrier INS Vikrant

A high-level delegation led by the French Minister of Armed Forces Sebastien Lecornu visited the Indigenous Aircraft Carrier INS Vikrant.

The discussions ranged from **enhancing cooperation in areas of mutual interest to maritime challenges in the Indian Ocean Region**. The French Minister acknowledged India's indigenous potential and self-reliance.

INS Vikrant:

From the first indigenous warship **INS Ajay** in 1960, to the first indigenous frigate **INS Nilgiri** in 1968, the commissioning of the first indigenously designed and built aircraft carrier, **INS Vikrant**, is a significant punctuation in India's pursuit of self-reliance (Aatmanirbhar Bharat).

Vikrant (which means courageous) is named after **India's first aircraft carrier, bought from the UK** and commissioned in 1961.

The first INS Vikrant was a major symbol of national pride and played an important role in several military operations including the 1971 Indo-Pak War before being **decommissioned in 1997**.

Now India's **first homemade aircraft carrier** will carry the name of her illustrious predecessor.

It is especially important amid India's bid to be a net security provider in the Indian Ocean region where it faces China, whose navy is focused on aircraft carriers and has already inducted two vessels.

With the commissioning of INS Vikrant, India will have **two operational aircraft carriers** (the other one is **INS Vikramaditya**), which will bolster the maritime security of the nation.

INS Vikrant (IAC-I) is the **first aircraft carrier** built in India and the **first Vikrant-class aircraft carrier** built by Cochin Shipyard (CSL) in Kochi, Kerala for the Indian Navy.

The motto of the ship is "**Jayema Sam Yudhi Sprdhah**" which is taken from Rig Veda and is translated as "**I defeat those who fight against me**".

The carrier is 262 m long, 62 m at the widest part and with a depth of 30 m minus the superstructure. There are 14 decks in all, including five in the superstructure.

Up to 26 MiG-29K fighter jets along with 4 Kamov Ka-31 helicopters or 2 HAL Dhruv NUH utility helicopters or 4 MH-60R multi-role helicopters will fly from INS Vikrant.

Vikrant is the sport a **gender-sensitive living environment** and infrastructure, with provision to accommodate eight women officers. The ship will then accommodate 1,645 personnel in all, including 196 officers.

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An aircraft carrier is a command platform epitomising 'dominance' over a large area, 'control' over vast expanses of the ocean and all aspects of maritime strength.

It makes **India only the fifth country** after the **US, Russia, Britain and France** to have such capabilities of developing indigenous aircraft carriers.