

The world's first tidal dock is believed to have been built at Lothal around 2300 BC during the Harappan Civilisation, near the present day Mangrol harbour on the Gujarat coast. Between the fifth and tenth centuries AD, the Chola and Kalinga kingdoms of southern and eastern India had established their rule over Malaya, Sumatra and Western Java (Indonesia). The Andaman and Nicobar Islands then served as an important midway point for trade between the Indian peninsula and these kingdoms, as also with China.



Indian maritime interests witnessed a remarkable resurgence in the late seventeenth century, when the Siddis of Janjira allied with the Moghuls to become a major power on the West Coast. This led to Chhatrapati Shivaji raising his own fleet, commanded by able Admirals like Sidhoji Gujar and later Kanhoji Angre. This Maratha fleet along with the legend of Kanhoji held sway over the entire Konkan Coast, keeping the English, Dutch and Portuguese at bay.

The Indian navy grew rapidly after independence. As of now it is undergoing modernization with new ships being added to the fleet. The Indian Navy has all types of warships to include aircraft carriers and submarines.



Role of the Indian Navy

○ **Military Role:** There are two types of roles of the Indian Navy.

A) Offensive operations: The application of maritime power against enemy forces territory and trade.

B) Defensive operations: The application of maritime power to protect own forces, territory and trade.

○ **Diplomatic Role.**

The larger purpose of the navy's diplomatic role is to favorably shape the maritime environment to promote India's national interest and national security objectives.

○ **Constabulary Role.**

The protection and promotion of India's maritime security is one of the prime responsibilities of the Indian Navy. After the terrorist attacks on Mumbai on 26 November 2008, the overall responsibility for coastal security has been mandated to the Indian Navy, in close coordination with the Indian Coast Guard, State marine police and other central/state government and port authorities.

○ **Command & Control:** The Navy is headed by the Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS), he is located at the Integrated Headquarter of the Ministry of Defence (Navy) (also known as the Naval Headquarters) in New Delhi.

Naval Commands.

Three Naval Commands based on geographic areas of responsibility function under the Naval Headquarters.

A) Western Naval Command.

Headquarters located in Mumbai, with ships of the fleet based in various Naval Stations at ports in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa and Karnataka.

B) Eastern Naval Command.

Headquarters located in Vishakhapatnam, with ships of the fleet based in various Naval Stations at ports in Bengal, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

C) Southern Naval Command.

Headquarters located in Kochi, with ships of the fleet based in various Naval Stations at ports in Kerala and Lakshadweep.

D) Andaman & Nicobar Command: To protect Andaman and Nicobar Islands is the responsibility of this command.

This is also a command but it includes a large number of troops and aircraft from Army and Air Force besides the Naval Ships. It therefore classified as a tri service command, it is commanded in rotation between Army, Navy and Air Force. Its headquarter is located in Port Blair.

Types of Ships in Service with the Indian Navy

Aircraft Carrier: An aircraft carrier is a warship with a full-length flight deck and facilities for carrying, arming, deploying and recovering aircraft, acting as a seagoing airbase.



Destroyer: A destroyer is a fast, heavily armed, maneuverable yet long-endurance warship. It is designed to escort larger vessels in a fleet like an aircraft carrier, troop carriers, supply ship or merchant ships forming part of a convoy or battle group and defend them against smaller, powerful, short-range attackers. They are also capable to carry out anti-submarine, anti-air, and anti-surface operations. A guided missile destroyer is a destroyer

designed to launch guided missiles on enemy ships and coastal defences in support of amphibious operations.

Frigate: It is a warship smaller in size than a destroyer. It is armed with guided missiles and used as an escort for aircraft carrier. It is also used for shore bombardment and other combat functions.



Corvette: It is a fast, lightly armed warship which is smaller than a frigate and larger than a coastal patrol craft often armed for antisubmarine operation.



Mine Countermeasure Vessel: Also known as a minesweeper is a small naval warship designed to counter the threat posed by naval mines. Minesweepers keep waterways clear for shipping.

Landing Ship: It is a naval vessel which is used to transport large number of vehicles, cargo and troops directly to the shore where there are no port facilities.



Patrol Vessel: These are the small naval vessels which are used for patrolling the coastal area.

Submarines: A submarine is a watercraft capable of operating autonomously underwater. Submarines are capable of approaching enemy ships undetected and destroy them by launching torpedoes or missiles while remaining submerged under the surface of the sea.



Auxiliary Ship: An auxiliary ship is a naval ship which is designed to operate in any number of roles supporting combatant ships and other naval operations.

Research Vessels: A research vessel is a ship designed and equipped to carry out research at sea..



Training Ship: It is used for training Cadets and Officers for war.

Indian Navy also has aircraft operating from land, helicopters and patrol aircraft.

Activities

1. Discuss the importance of Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep Islands in the context of the Indian Navy. Write the points below.

2. Contribution of Kanhoji Angre in developing the Maratha navy. Write the points below.

