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India's Project-76 Submarine Design to be Finalized Within a Year, Focus on Stealth and Missile Capabilities

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India is expected to finalize the design of its indigenous Project-76 submarines within the next year. The ambitious naval modernization program aims to deliver a new class of conventional attack submarines featuring advanced stealth, air-independent propulsion (AIP), and cruise missile strike capabilities.

Project-76 will produce 12 submarines in two batches of six. The first batch will share a common hull design, while the second batch is expected to incorporate upgrades in sensors, combat systems, and internal architecture. The submarines are projected to have a displacement of around 3,000 tons.

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is leading the design efforts in collaboration with the Indian Navy's Warship Design Bureau. A key focus is the integration of DRDO's indigenous AIP system, which will significantly enhance underwater endurance by allowing the submarines to remain submerged for extended periods without surfacing.

In addition to stealth and endurance, the submarines will also feature vertical launch systems for both long-range land-attack cruise missiles and supersonic anti-ship missiles. This dual capability will allow the Indian Navy to target both land-based and maritime threats with precision from under the sea.

Construction of the first submarine is expected to begin around 2030, with the first delivery projected by 2037. The new submarines will replace the aging Sindhughosh-class (Kilo-class) fleet, many of which are nearing the end of their service life. India's current conventional submarines lack AIP systems, while regional rivals such as China and Pakistan have already inducted more modern platforms.

Project-76 is also part of India's larger push for self-reliance under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative. The submarines are expected to feature up to 95 percent indigenous content, including sonar, combat systems, propulsion, and weapons. DRDO is aiming to ensure that key technologies are developed domestically to reduce dependence on foreign suppliers.

Analysts see Project-76 as a critical program for India to maintain undersea superiority in the Indian Ocean region. The move also comes amid increasing Chinese naval activity and submarine deployments in the area.

With its focus on stealth, endurance, and firepower, Project-76 is poised to significantly enhance India's maritime strike capability and strategic deterrence in the coming decades.