

Indigenous Naval Might: GRSE Launches Final Anti-Submarine Warfare Ship for Indian Navy



In a significant boost to India's maritime defense capabilities and its "Atmanirbhar Bharat" (Self-Reliant India) initiative, Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE) on Monday, July 21, 2025, officially launched "Ajay," the eighth and final Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW SWC) constructed for the Indian Navy. This milestone marks the completion of GRSE's commitment under a crucial project aimed at bolstering the Indian Navy's ability to counter underwater threats in coastal and shallow waters.

The launch ceremony, held at GRSE's facility in Kolkata, was attended by Vice Admiral Kiran Deshmukh, Chief of Materiel of the Indian Navy, and other senior officials. In keeping with naval tradition, Mrs. Priya Deshmukh, wife of Vice Admiral Deshmukh, formally launched the ship. The "Ajay" is the culmination of years of indigenous design and construction efforts, reflecting India's growing self-sufficiency in defense manufacturing.

These 77.6-meter-long ASW SWCs are specifically designed for comprehensive subsurface surveillance in coastal waters, as well as search-and-attack missions against enemy submarines. They are poised to replace the Indian Navy's aging Abhay-class corvettes, which have been in service since the late 1980s. Each vessel is equipped with an advanced anti-submarine suite, including a hull-mounted sonar, a low-frequency variable depth sonar (LFVDS), lightweight torpedoes, anti-submarine rockets, and mine-laying capabilities. Powered by diesel engines and waterjets, these ships are highly maneuverable and possess a shallow draft of just 2.7 meters, allowing them to operate effectively in littoral zones where larger warships might struggle.

The "Arnala" class, named after the lead ship INS Arnala, which was commissioned in June 2025, represents a significant leap in indigenous content, boasting over 80% Indian-made components. This high level of indigenization underscores the success of collaborations between public sector undertakings like GRSE and private shipyards, such as L&T Kattupalli, demonstrating a robust public-private partnership model in defense production.

The project for 16 ASW SWCs was awarded in April 2019, with GRSE constructing eight and Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL) building the remaining eight. The successful launch of "Ajay" by GRSE signifies the timely progress of this vital program. With the increasing presence of submarines in the Indian Ocean Region, including those from China and Pakistan, these new ASW SWCs will play a critical role in safeguarding India's extensive coastline, strategically important ports, and island territories, enhancing the Indian Navy's overall underwater domain awareness and ensuring maritime security.