

India's first indigenous aircraft carrier begins another phase of sea trials

STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: India's first indigenous aircraft carrier (IAC) Vikrant began another set of sea trials on Sunday to carry out complex manoeuvres in high seas ahead of its planned induction in August.

The 40,000-tonne aircraft carrier, the largest and most complex warship to be built in India, successfully completed a five-day maiden sea voyage in August and underwent 10-day sea trials in October.

"The IAC now sails to undertake complex manoeuvres to establish specific readings of how the ship performs in various conditions," Navy spokesperson Commander Vivek Madhwal said, adding various sensor suites of the ship would also be tested.

The warship has been built at a cost of around Rs 23,000 crore and its construction propelled India into a select group of countries having capabilities to build state-of-the-art aircraft carriers.

President Ram Nath Kovind and Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu visited the ship recently in Kochi.

"Both dignitaries, having reviewed the progress, had conveyed their satisfaction and expressed their best wishes to all the stakeholders involved in the project," he added.

While the maiden sea trials were to establish propulsion, navigational suite and basic operations, the second sea trial witnessed the ship being put through its paces



heading out for the next set of sea trials," Commander Madhwal said.

"Both dignitaries, having reviewed the progress, had conveyed their satisfaction and expressed their best wishes to all the stakeholders involved in the project," he added.

While the maiden sea trials were to establish propulsion, navigational suite and basic operations, the second sea trial witnessed the ship being put through its paces

in terms of various machinery trials and flight trials.

"The ship in fact was out for 10 days proving its sustainability in the very second sortie. Various seamanship evolutions were also successfully cleared during the second sortie," the Navy official said.

Several scientists from the Naval Science and Technological Laboratory, a DRDO facility based at Visakhapatnam, are witnessing the third phase of sea trials of Vikrant.

The warship will operate MiG-29K fighter jets, Kamov-31 helicopters, MH-60R multi-role helicopters.

It has over 2,300 compartments, designed for a crew of around 1700 people, including specialised cabins to accommodate women officers.

Vikrant has a top speed of around 28 knots and a cruising speed of 18 knots with an endurance of about 7,500 nautical miles, officials said.

The IAC is 262 metres long, 62 metres wide and it has a height of 59 metres. Its construction began in 2009.

The warship has been built by Cochin Shipyard Limited(CSL).

India currently has only one aircraft carrier -- INS Vikramaditya.

The Indian Navy has been focusing on significantly bolstering its overall capabilities in view of China's growing efforts to increase its military presence in the Indian Ocean Region.

The Indian Ocean, considered the backyard of the Indian Navy, is critical to the country's strategic interests.

"That the ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

Iran offers to assist India in transportation of aid to Afghanistan

STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Iran has offered to assist India in the transportation of wheat, medicines and coronavirus vaccines to Afghanistan which has been reeling under a serious humanitarian crisis.

The offer was made by Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian during a telephonic conversation with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Saturday, according to the Iranian foreign ministry.

In the conversation, Amir-Abdollahian also called for the formation of an inclusive government in Kabul, the Iranian foreign ministry said.

"Regarding Afghanistan, Amir-Abdollahian stressed the need to form an inclusive government in the country. He also referred to India's humanitarian aid to Afghanistan, announcing measures and cooperation by the Islamic Republic of Iran to transfer this aid in the form of wheat, medicine and COVID-19 vaccine to the country," it said in a statement.

Iran and Afghanistan share a nearly 920 km-long border. India has already sent three separate consignments of life-saving medicines and COVID-19 vaccines to Afghanistan. While the first consignment was sent on a special charter flight that brought 104 people to New Delhi from Kabul, the subsequent aid was sent to Kabul via a flight of Iran's Mahan Air.

However, India is yet to deliver 50,000 tonnes of wheat it had pledged to supply to Afghanistan as modalities

for transporting the aid to the war-torn country through Pakistan are yet to be thrashed out with Islamabad.

There is an option for India of sending aid to Afghanistan via the Chabahar port in Iran. Located in the Sistan-Baluchestan province on the energy-rich Iran's southern coast, the Chabahar port is being developed by India and Iran to boost trade ties.

The freezing of non-humanitarian funding by major donors to Afghanistan following its takeover by the Taliban in August has led to a severe economic crisis that deepened the humanitarian crisis. "A wide-ranging conversation with my Iranian colleague, FM @AmirAbdollahian discussed the difficulties of Covid, challenges in Afghanistan, prospects of Chabahar and complexities of the Iranian nuclear issue," Jaishankar tweeted on Saturday.

The Iranian foreign ministry said Jaishankar also referred to his country's assistance to Afghanistan and that India's policy on that country remained the same.

India has been in touch with Iran over the developments in Afghanistan following its takeover by the Taliban on August 15.

The Iranian National Security Advisor had attended a regional conclave hosted by India two months back on the Afghan crisis. The conclave was also attended by NSAs of Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and

Uzbekistan.

The Iranian foreign ministry said Amir-Abdollahian exchanged views with Jaishankar on key bilateral, regional and international issues.

"In response to the Indian foreign minister's question about the latest situation in the fight against the coronavirus in Iran, Amir-Abdollahian referred to the good trend of the nationwide vaccination in the Islamic Republic," it added.

It noted that the Iranian foreign minister "positively assessed" the fight against COVID-19 in Iran and said, "We have been able to properly contain the virus, and so far 89 per cent of people have been vaccinated and are receiving a third dose of vaccine." On the Vienna talks over lifting the sanctions on Iran, the Iranian foreign minister stressed that the discussions are going in the "right direction". "We have the necessary will to reach a good agreement in good faith, and if the Western side also has this goodwill and determination, we can reach a good agreement," the Iranian foreign ministry quoted Amir-Abdollahian as saying.

The Iranian nuclear deal was finalised in 2015 between Tehran and several world powers including the EU. It was aimed at curbing Iran's nuclear ambitions. The US had withdrawn from the deal in May 2018 and reimposed sanctions on Iran. There have been fresh efforts now to restore the deal.

The Iranian foreign ministry said Jaishankar also referred to India's fight

against the pandemic and noted that though the number of cases was rising, vaccination was moving at a good speed.

"He expressed pleasure with the forthcoming visit of Iran's top diplomat to India and called it a very good opportunity to develop bilateral cooperation," it added.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with the project are upbeat and committed to meet the timeliness," he said.

"The ship has been able to carry out basic flying operations from its very first sortie itself is a landmark in Indian warship construction history," Commander Madhwal said.

"Despite surging COVID cases in the country and the resultant challenges, the combined teams from multiple organisations associated with