



INS Viraat

 [drishtias.com/printpdf/ins-viraat-1](https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/ins-viraat-1)

Why in News

Indian Naval Ship (INS) Viraat **will be scrapped** at a ship breaking yard at Alang in Gujarat soon.

The **decision** to scrap INS Viraat was taken in **2019**.

Key Points

- INS Viraat holds the **Guinness World Record** for being the **longest serving warship of the world**.
- Viraat, a **Centaur class aircraft carrier** weighing 27,800 tonnes, served in the **British Navy as HMS Hermes for 25 years** from November 1959 to April 1984. It was **commissioned into the Indian Navy in May 1987** after refurbishment.
The Centaur class of aircraft carriers of the Royal Navy was the **last of the light fleet carrier designs** started during the closing years of **World War II (1939-45)**.
- Viraat played a major role in **Operation Jupiter** in 1989 during the Sri Lankan Peacekeeping operation. It also saw action during **Op Parakram** in 2001-2002, post the terrorist attack on Parliament.
- The indigenous Advance Light Helicopters '**Dhruv**' and the Russian twin rotor **Kamov-31** have also operated from the ship.
- It was **decommissioned in March 2017**, and the **Navy had been incurring expenditure** since then on its upkeep, such as the provision of electricity and water, and repairs. It was also **taking up space in the crowded Naval dockyard**.
- There had been demands from various quarters to not let Viraat go the way of **Vikrant, India's first carrier** that was eventually scrapped.
In 2014, **INS Vikrant**, which played a role in the 1971 war with Pakistan was broken down in Mumbai.

- However, several attempts by the Navy to preserve the carrier, by converting it into a museum or by other means, failed.

The **vessel could not be handed over to any state government** because of lack of “self-sustaining financially complete” proposal to preserve it. The state governments of Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh had planned to preserve the aircraft carrier (in the form of a museum).
- India is currently doing with only the **44,500-tonne INS Vikramaditya**, the refurbished Admiral Gorshkov inducted from Russia in November 2013.
 - The trials of the first indigenous aircraft carrier (**IAC-I, to be named as INS Vikrant**) being built at the Cochin Shipyard have been derailed by the pandemic.
 - The government’s approvals for a third carrier, the 65,000-tonne **IAC-II (tentatively christened INS Vishal)** has been pending since May 2015.
 - India needs aircraft carriers to secure the seas of the Indo-Pacific, to maintain peace, secure trade routes, and provide security to the region.

Source: TH