

Indian Navy commissions second MH-60R helicopter squadron INAS 335 at INS Hansa in Goa

प्रविष्टि तिथि: 17 DEC 2025 7:10PM by PIB Mumbai

Panaji, 17 December 2025

Marking a pivotal moment in the Indian Navy's continued efforts towards modernization and capability enhancement, the Indian Navy commissioned its second MH 60R helicopter squadron, INAS 335, the 'Ospreys', in the presence of Adm Dinesh K Tripathi, the Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS), at INS Hansa, Dabolim, Goa, today, 17 December 2025. The event follows the commissioning of the first MH-60R Naval Air Squadron in Kochi, Kerala, in March 2024.

The Commissioning Warrant for the unit was read out by Capt Dhirender Bisht, Commanding Officer (Desig). Thereafter, the Commissioning Plaque was unveiled by the CNS in the presence of VAdm Krishna Swaminathan, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command.

Addressing the gathering, Adm Dinesh K Tripathi, CNS, said that the induction of the versatile, multi-role MH60R helicopter on the Western Seaboard, as the first operational squadron, was an important milestone for the Navy. "The commissioning today also comes at a moment of great significance – 2025 marked 75 years since the Government of India approved the formation of a Fleet Air Arm, a decision that gave wings to Naval Aviation, thereby transforming our Navy into a potent multi-dimensional force, and giving us a decisive edge at sea," he said.

"It is a matter of even greater significance that, precisely 64 years ago, on the night of 17/18 Dec 1961, commenced Operation Vijay, wherein ships of the Indian Navy sailed into Goa, to liberate it from the Portuguese. There too, Naval Aviation played a part, with the erstwhile Vikrant and its integral air wing stationed just beyond the horizon, securing the approaches to Goa," the CNS said.

"While the 335 Squadron is being formally commissioned today here at Goa, the MH-60R helicopter has already proven its prowess across multiple missions during Operation Sindoor, TROPEX-25, and the recently concluded Tri-Services Exercise 2025. I am, therefore, happy to note that the Squadron being commissioned today is fully operational state, ready to deploy with the Fleet from Day One, reflecting our deep commitment to expeditious capability induction and integration," Adm Dinesh K Tripathi said.

The maritime environment around us, today, is more complex and contested than ever before. It is within this challenging and dynamic strategic context that India is undertaking its maritime voyage towards becoming Viksit Bharat by 2047, he added.

The ceremony was marked by a scintillating multi-aircraft flypast and a traditional water cannon salute to mark the historic day.

The event was attended by VAdm Rahul Vilas Gokhale, Chief of Staff, Western Naval Command; RAdm Ajay D Theophilus, Flag Officer Commanding Goa Naval Area and Flag Officer Naval Aviation; Adm Karambir Singh (Retd), former Chief of the Naval Staff; other senior naval officers, veterans, and distinguished guests.

These helicopters will significantly augment the Indian Navy's integral aviation capabilities on the Western Seaboard. The advanced weapons, sensors and avionics suite make the helicopter a versatile and capable asset for the Indian Navy, offering enhanced capabilities to address conventional as well as asymmetric threats. The aircraft has been fully integrated with fleet operations and has proven its worth on numerous occasions. The Indian Navy will receive a significant fillip in its integral aviation capabilities with the commissioning of the squadron.

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