Indian Navy takes delivery of Diving Support Craft 'DSC A21'

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News

'DSC A21' (Yard 326), one of five indigenous Diving Support Craft (DSC) being built for the Indian Navy, was delivered to the Navy at the Naval Dockyard, Mumbai, on 20 November 2026, the Defence Ministry said (PIB). It was designed and built by Titagarh Rail Systems Limited (TRSL), Kolkata. Its catamaran (twin) hull gives greater stability, a larger deck area and good sea-keeping, and it carries modern diving equipment. It was built to the naval rules of the Indian Register of Shipping (IRS); the Naval Science and Technological Laboratory (NSTL), Visakhapatnam, did the hydrodynamic analysis and model testing during design. It will support diving in harbours and coastal waters, underwater inspection and salvage assistance. The contract for the five craft (Yards 325–329) was signed on 12 February 2021; the first, DSC A20, was delivered in September 2025 and commissioned at Kochi in December 2025. The Ministry said earlier (Aug 2026) that about 70% of the main and auxiliary equipment of these craft comes from Indian makers.

Key facts for the exam

Point	Details
Craft	DSC A21 (Yard 326) – Diving Support Craft
Delivered	20 Nov 2026, Naval Dockyard, Mumbai
Builder	Titagarh Rail Systems Ltd (TRSL), Kolkata

Point	Details
Hull	Catamaran (twin hull)
Rules	Indian Register of Shipping (IRS) naval rules
Model testing	NSTL (DRDO), Visakhapatnam
Contract	5 craft – 12 Feb 2021
First craft	DSC A20 – commissioned at Kochi, Dec 2025
Roles	Diving, underwater inspection, salvage aid

Background

- Naval divers inspect ships' hulls, clear explosives in harbours, recover sunken objects and carry out underwater repairs. A DSC serves as their floating base, carrying equipment and support facilities such as a recompression chamber.
- When breathing under high pressure at depth, nitrogen dissolves in the blood and tissues. If a diver surfaces too fast it comes out as bubbles, causing 'decompression sickness' (the bends); treatment is recompression in a chamber followed by slow decompression.
- A catamaran joins two parallel hulls with a deck, reducing roll and giving a wide working deck. The English word 'catamaran' itself comes from the Tamil 'kattumaram' (tied logs).
- Indian Navy commands: Western (Mumbai), Eastern (Visakhapatnam) and Southern (Kochi – training). Self-reliance in shipbuilding and orders to Indian firms are part of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'; Titagarh, a rail-wagon maker, has also moved into shipbuilding.

Tamil Nadu link: DSC A21 has no direct Tamil Nadu link. But the word 'catamaran' comes from the Tamil 'kattumaram'. Chennai hosts the Tamil Nadu & Puducherry Naval Area headquarters under the Eastern Naval Command, and the shipyard at Kattupalli, Thiruvallur district, builds and repairs naval vessels.

Frequently asked questions

What is this news about?

'DSC A21' (Yard 326), one of five indigenous Diving Support Craft (DSC) being built for the Indian Navy, was delivered to the Navy at the Naval Dockyard, Mumbai, on 20 November 2026, the Defence Ministry said (PIB).

What are the key facts to remember for the exam?

Craft: DSC A21 (Yard 326) – Diving Support Craft; Delivered: 20 Nov 2026, Naval Dockyard, Mumbai; Builder: Titagarh Rail Systems Ltd (TRSL), Kolkata; Hull: Catamaran (twin hull).

What is the background to this news?

Naval divers inspect ships' hulls, clear explosives in harbours, recover sunken objects and carry out underwater repairs.

Practice questions (with answers)

1. What is the basic design feature of a 'catamaran' vessel such as DSC A21?

A) A single deep hull

B) Two parallel hulls

C) Three hulls

D) An air cushion

Answer: B – Explanation: Two parallel hulls – less roll, wider deck. The word comes from the Tamil 'kattumaram'; three hulls make a trimaran.

2. NSTL, the DRDO laboratory that did hydrodynamic analysis and model tests for the DSC design, is in which city?

A) Visakhapatnam

B) Kochi

C) Pune

D) Hyderabad

Answer: A – Explanation: Visakhapatnam – the Naval Science and Technological Laboratory works on underwater weapons (torpedoes) and ship hydrodynamics.

3. The Hooghly, on whose bank Titagarh's shipyard stands, is a distributary of which major river?

A) Brahmaputra

B) Damodar

C) Mahanadi

D) Ganga

Answer: D – Explanation: The Ganga – it branches near Farakka and reaches the Bay of Bengal as the Hooghly. The Damodar is a tributary of the Hooghly.

4. DSC A21 was built to the rules of the Indian Register of Shipping (IRS). What kind of body is the IRS?

A) A port authority

B) A shipbuilding PSU

C) Classification society

D) A naval command

Answer: C – Explanation: A classification society – it certifies the design and build standards of ships; set up in 1975, headquartered in Mumbai.

5. 'The bends' (decompression sickness), suffered by divers who surface too fast, is caused by bubbles of which gas in the blood of a diver breathing compressed air?

A) Oxygen

B) Carbon dioxide

C) Nitrogen

D) Helium

Answer: C – Explanation: Nitrogen – it dissolves under high pressure at depth and bubbles out on a sudden pressure drop. Treated by recompression in a chamber.

Sources: PIB (Ministry of Defence), 20 Nov 2026 – Delivery of DSC A21 (Yard 326); Indian Navy – indiannavy.nic.in (launch of DSC A21, 30 Oct 2023; contract 12 Feb 2021); News On AIR, Aug 2026 (DSC A24 launch; ~70% indigenous equipment). © Shanmugam IAS Academy.