

MoD inks ₹1,070 crore contract with Mazagon Dock to acquire 14 FPVs

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With the growing activities of international pirates off the Gulf of Aden driving up the costs of freight and shipping, the government has moved to build more armed vessels to keep open the international shipping lanes that carry much of the world's trade through this war-torn region.

In the last 20 years, the Indian Navy has taken upon itself the role of “net security provider” in the Indian Ocean, with the aim of ensuring a “free and open Indo-Pacific” that is not dominated by China’s rapidly growing navy. This requires building or purchasing the warships needed for discharging this role.

On Wednesday the Ministry of Defence (MoD) signed a contract with Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd (MDL), Mumbai for acquiring 14 Fast Patrol Vessels (FPVs) for the Indian Coast Guard (ICG). The value of the contract is ₹1,070 crore.

“These multi-role FPVs will be indigenously designed, developed and manufactured by MDL under the ‘Buy (Indian-IDDM)’ acquisition category and will be delivered in total 63 months,” announced the MoD in a media release.

“Along with several high-tech features and equipment, these FPVs will be equipped with multipurpose drones, wire-



lessly controlled remote water rescue craft, lifebuoy and AI capability, enabling greater flexibility and operational edge to the ICG to face new age multidimensional challenges,” stated the MoD.

Noting that the acquisition of these FPVs is aimed at boosting ICG’s capability and reinforcing the government’s focus on maritime security, the MoD statement said: “These modern FPVs will play a critical role in enhancing fisheries protection and monitoring, control and surveillance, anti-smuggling operations, search and rescue operations including in shallow waters, assistance to ship/craft in distress, towing capabilities, assistance and monitoring during marine pollution response operations, anti-piracy operations.”

In line with the government’s Atmanirbhar Bharat or ‘self-reliant India’ policy, the contract is expected to boost

the nation’s indigenous shipbuilding capability, bolstering maritime economic activities and fostering the growth of ancillary industries, especially the MSME sector, said the MoD.

Ammunition cum torpedo cum missile (ACTCM) barges

The launch of the fifth “Ammunition Cum Torpedo Cum Missile Barge” was carried out on Wednesday at the MSME shipyard Suryadipta Projects Pvt Ltd, Thane.

The contract for building 11 ACTCM barges was signed between the MoD and Suryadipta Projects on March 5, 2021. These barges are essential for carrying out the navy’s logistical and operational commitments by facilitating transportation, embarkation and disembarkation of articles/ammunition to the navy’s warships, while they are in harbour.