50 Years of Maritime Reconnaissance

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Why in news?

The Indian Navy, on November 18, 2026, marked 50 years of its Long-Range Maritime Reconnaissance (LRMR) operations.

- **50 years of its LRMR operations** – It is commemorating five decades of airborne surveillance and maritime security missions across the Indian Ocean Region.
- **Golden Jubilee of Albatross** – The Indian Navy informed that the milestone coincides with the Golden Jubilee of Indian Naval Air Squadron (INAS) 312, known as the 'Albatross', which was commissioned on November 18, 1976.
- The Golden Jubilee also recognises the contribution of generations of naval aviators, mission crews, maintenance personnel and support staff who have built and sustained the Navy's long-range maritime reconnaissance capability over the past 50 years.
- **Birth of India's maritime surveillance capability** – The establishment of the Navy's dedicated long-range maritime reconnaissance capability followed the 1971 war.
- It underscored the need for shore-based maritime patrol aircraft operating in coordination with ships and helicopters.
- Accordingly, INAS 312 was commissioned at INS Hansa in Goa with five Lockheed Super Constellation aircraft transferred from the Indian Air Force.
- **Progressive strengthening** – Over the years, the Navy progressively strengthened its maritime surveillance and anti-submarine warfare capabilities through the induction of advanced aircraft.
- A major technological leap came in 2013 with the induction of the Boeing P-8I aircraft at INS Rajali in Arakkonam.
- Equipped with advanced sensors and mission systems, the aircraft enhanced the Navy's capabilities in wide-area intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, anti-submarine warfare and maritime strike operations.
- **Support & Contribution** – Over the past five decades, the Navy's LRMR aircraft have played a significant role in several military operations, including Operations Cactus, Vijay, Parakram and Sindoor.
- They have also supported anti-piracy operations and search and rescue missions, contributing to maritime domain awareness and the protection of India's maritime interests.
- At present, P-8I aircraft operating from INAS 312 at INS Rajali, Arakkonam, and INAS 316 at INS Hansa, Goa, maintain surveillance across the Indian Ocean and beyond.



Reference

[The Hindu | Indian Navy marks 50 years of long-range maritime reconnaissance operations]

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