



INS Viraat to be Scrapped

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The Union Ministry of Defence has decided to scrap **INS Virat** after consultation with Indian Navy.

- The Navy has been incurring expenditure on its upkeep such as the provision of electricity and water, and repairs till date.
- The Navy has stated that it cannot keep Viraat indefinitely as it would block space in the already crowded Mumbai dockyard.
- Efforts to keep it intact by converting it into a museum or other means have not been successful.
- Ministry stated that INS Viraat could not be handed over to any State Government because of non-receipt of a self-sustaining financially complete proposal.
- There had been demands from various quarters to not let Viraat go the INS Vikrant way, India's first carrier that was eventually scrapped.
- **INS Vikrant, a Centaur class**, was maintained by the Navy in Mumbai for 17 years as various proposals to convert it into a museum went back and forth unsuccessfully before the ship was eventually sent to a scrapyard in 2014.
 - Andhra Pradesh submitted a proposal in 2016 for the conversion of Viraat as an aircraft museum, including tourist and hospitality components on a commercial basis through a joint venture with the Union government.
 - But the Defence Ministry rejected the proposal.
 - In 2018, the Maharashtra Cabinet approved a proposal to convert the carrier into a museum and hospitality center on a public-private partnership (PPP) basis, but there were no takers.

INS Viraat

- Viraat, a Centaur class aircraft carrier weighing 27,800 tonnes, had served in the **British Navy as HMS Hermes** for 25 years from 1959 to 1984.
- The Centaur class was the light fleet carrier designs built for the Royal Navy (British Navy) in the closing years of the Second World War.
- After refurbishment, it was commissioned into the Indian Navy in May 1987.

- It was decommissioned from the Navy in March 2017 at Naval Dockyard, Mumbai.
- It is the **longest serving warship in the world**. It holds the Guinness Books of record for this.
- Viraat has played a major role in Operation Jupiter in 1989 in the Sri Lankan peacekeeping operation.
- It has been instrumental in sharpening the art of flying operations from a carrier deck in the Navy, which resulted in the seamless induction of INS Vikramaditya.