

# COAST GUARD SQUADRON IN PORBANDAR

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The newly commissioned Advanced Light Helicopter Mk-III squadron at the ICG Air Enclave in Porbandar.PTI

The Coast Guard on Tuesday commissioned the 835 Squadron (CG) of indigenous Advanced Light Helicopter-Mk- IIIs at the air enclave in Porbandar.

“So far, 13 ALH Mk-III helicopters have been inducted in a phased manner and four of these are positioned at Porbandar. Since the induction, the squadron has flown over 1,200 hours and conducted numerous operational missions, including the maiden night SAR mission off Diu coast,” the Coast Guard said in a statement.

The ALH helicopters have been indigenously manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. (HAL). They feature state-of-the-art equipment, including advanced radar and electro-optical sensors, the Shakti engine, a full glass cockpit, a high-intensity searchlight, advanced communication systems, an automatic identification system and search and rescue (SAR) homer, the Coast Guard said.

“The features enable them to undertake maritime reconnaissance as well as carry out SAR at extended ranges even while operating from ships during both day and night,” the Coast Guard said.

The aircraft has the ability to switch roles from an offensive platform with heavy machine gun to that of a benign one carrying a medical intensive care unit to facilitate transfer of critically ill patients, it stated.

The 835 Sqn (CG) is commanded by Commandant Sunil Dutt.

## Stealth frigate

In a separate development, the keel of the last of Project-17A stealth frigates for the Navy was laid at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd. (MDL), Mumbai.

The keel for the seventh stealth frigate was ceremoniously laid by Rear Admiral G.K. Harish, Director-General, Naval Design (Surface Ship Group) at MDL. The ceremony was performed in the presence of senior officials of the Indian Navy and MDL. Keel Laying is a major milestone activity in the construction of ships, symbolising formal commencement of the erection process of warships on the building berth.

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