

The NMRH and NUH



The SeaKing with tail rotor folded (photo: Simon Watson)

Vital helicopter augmentation for the Indian Navy

All major maritime forces across the globe are highly dependent on navalised helicopters and aircraft for a wide range of operations including the utility and strike roles (both on surface and underwater). Naval helicopters are tasked to tackle most threatening and high-risk of such missions in adverse sea conditions. These airborne vehicles, powered by modern turboshaft engines are capable of operating from small decks (offshore vessels, corvettes, frigates) but also from destroyers and aircraft carriers as advanced scouts. The new modular mission-specific systems allow the same helicopter type to be assigned diverse naval operations.

The Indian Navy, now fifth-largest in the world, currently operates a combined fleet (fixed wing and rotary) of some 240 aircraft, of which about half are rotary-wing. The Indian Navy presently has a fleet of 140 warships including one aircraft carrier, ten guided-missile destroyers, over a dozen frigates, 22 corvettes and several offshore vessels. These frontline assets are however facing acute shortage of naval utility and

multi-role helicopters and consequently, these surface vessels could be vulnerable to enemy submarines in the absence of

efficient shipborne ASW assets and this handicap could well impact on the Navy's basic operational capabilities.



Kamov Ka-28 (photo: Simon Watson)