

India's Coastal Artillery

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Naval Coast Batteries

Till 1964, coastal artillery was operated by the Indian Army (IA), when the units were transferred to the Indian Navy (IN) in September-October period of the same year.

IN's artillery is organized under a Naval Coast Battery (NCB) at the following known locations:

- Kolkota (Diamond Harbour)
- Vizag
- Chennai
- Kochi (INS Dronacharya)
- Mormugao
- Mumbai
 - Middle Ground Island
 - Oyster Rock Island
 - Colaba Point
- Okha

Artillery Equipment:

- Bofors L-60 (40 mm), commonly referred to as 40/60
- Bofors L-70 (40 mm), commonly referred to as 40/70
- OFB Indian Field Gun (105 mm)



*Open L-60 turrets at Middle Ground Coastal Battery.
They are dually useful for coastal and anti-aircraft defence. (via Panaramio.com)*



L-60 installation at NCB Mormugao (via [Panaramio.com](https://www.panaramio.com))



Training at INS Dronacharya, Cochin (Indian Navy)

INS Dronacharya

INS Dronacharya is the gunnery training establishment of the IN today. Before independence, the gunnery training for third-rate courses was being conducted at HMIS Himalaya on Manora Island, Karachi (now in Pakistan).

After the partition of India, no gunnery training could be conducted for a year. Hence the 3rd rate course was started in October 1948 at Kochi in an improvised building located at the site of present Command Parade Ground. Within four years, training of gunnery rates was shifted to its permanent premises viz Gunnery School in INS Venduruthy. Till then, training was imparted to junior classes only.

Origins:

- 1939: Naval Coast Battery at Cochin was raised with 4 x 60 pounders plus 2 x Coastal Artillery Search Lights (CASL).
- 1940: 3rd Heavy Battery RA raised consisting of 120 Madras, 50 British and Punjabi NCOs.
- 1941: 3 x 6" MK7, 1 x Mark 5/6 Mounting for counter bombardment role and 2 x 4.5" guns in coast defence and anti-air role (CD/AA) were installed in Cochin.
- 1943: 60 pounders withdrawn from service.
- 1945: Subsequently, 2 pounder anti-tank guns in NTB role and two 12 pounder heavy artillery (HA) guns in CO/AA role were installed at Cochin harbour and by the side of armoury quarters on the beach. These 2 pounder and 12 pounder guns were replaced with two 40/60 Bofors installed in AMTB role. On cessation of hostilities in 1945, these 40/60 Bofors along with CASLs were removed and the site was abandoned. However to cater for AA defence of Battery and the port, 3.7" AA guns were installed.
- 1946: In March 1946, the Coastal Regiment was disbanded with the exception of 5 Coast Battery, RIA (Royal Indian Army), for maintenance of the equipment.
- 1950: The coast maintenance batteries were also disbanded and the coastal batteries were taken over by 505 Coast Battery (Territorial Army) in November 1950.
- 1952: Consequent to removal of 3.7" AA guns from NCB in December 1952, a need for AA cover for the Battery and the Cochin port was felt giving rise to the construction of an AA Battery at the Southern end of NCB and was equipped with two 4" mountings, 20 mm hydraulically operated twin barrel mounting and three 40/60 MK 5 Bofors. These guns were also used for imparting practical training to gunnery sailors and officers undergoing courses at the erstwhile Gunnery School.

The Naval Coast Battery, Naval Battery and Gunnery School were merged and eventually shifted to a new premises in Fort Cochin on January 1, 1978 and was known as Naval Detachment - Fort Cochin. By the year-end, a full-fledged independent establishment was commissioned as INS Dronacharya.

References

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<http://www.irfc-nausena.nic.in/irfc/stninfo/kolkata/netaji.htm>

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[3] Posts by tsarkar at Bharat Rakshak Forum

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