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Russia Agrees to Service India's Soviet-Built Aircraft Carrier

By The Moscow Times

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India received the aircraft carrier for free in 2004, but agreed to pay Sevmash almost $1 billion to completely overhaul and modify the ship to New Delhi’s needs.

Russia's largest military shipyard, Sevmash, has agreed to continue providing technical assistance for the Indian navy's Soviet-built aircraft carrier, the shipyard said in a statement Wednesday.

The aircraft carrier's one-year manufacturer's warranty expired last year.

The INS Vikramaditya carrier is India’s biggest ship, and with little domestic experience servicing such a large vessel, India is looking to secure a long-term warranty from Russia. India has proposed a 40-year contract, Sevmash said in the statement.

The agreement, which covers repair work for various Russian-made hardware aboard the Vikramaditya, is the first step in a larger set of negotiations for a comprehensive long-term

warranty for the vessel.

The Vikramaditya is already an old ship. Originally named the Admiral Gorshkov when it was built by the Soviets in the 1980s, the vessel was mothballed in the 1990s after it was crippled by a boiler room explosion.

India received the aircraft carrier for free in 2004, but agreed to pay Sevmash almost $1 billion to completely overhaul and modify the ship to New Delhi's needs.

The project, which was supposed to take four years, ultimately stretched on for nine. By the time the vessel was handed over to the Indian navy in November 2013, the price of the project had grown to almost $3 billion.

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