

Navy completes four-month-long war exercise

Culmination of TROPEX-23 brings to end an intense operational phase for the Indian Navy that commenced in November 2022

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Every second year, the Indian Navy sails out to sea and conducts a major battle exercise to verify that it is ready in all respects for war. This year's exercise, called the "Theatre Level Operational Readiness Exercise for 2023" (TROPEX-23), culminated this week in the Arabian Sea after running for four months from November 2022 to March 2023.

Set in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), including the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal, the exercise extended approximately 4,300 nautical miles north to south upto 35 degrees South and 5,000 nautical miles from the Persian Gulf to the northern coast of Australia, extending over 21 million square nautical miles.

TROPEX-23 witnessed the participation of approximately 70 Indian Navy ships, six submarines

and over 75 aircraft.

These warships are from both the western and eastern naval fleets. One year, the western fleet sails to the Bay of Bengal to participate in TROPEX, while the eastern fleet sails to the Arabian Sea the following year. Part of the fleet is designated as the enemy "Red Force", which takes on the "Blue Force" — an Indian Navy component.

While transiting from the Arabian Sea to the Bay of Bengal, or vice versa, the fleet carries out various manoeuvres to ensure that it is "worked up", or battle-ready for TROPEX, when it begins.

The overall exercise includes a combat firing phase, in which warships fire torpedoes, depth charges, surface-to-air missiles and surface-to-surface missiles in order to ensure that the warships' ordnance is firing as it should.

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Exercise Sea Vigil; as well as an amphibious component, Exercise AMPHEX. These two exercises witnessed significant participation from the Indian Army, the Indian Air Force and the Coast Guard.

The culmination of TROPEX-23 brings to an end an intense operational phase for the Indian Navy that commenced in November 2022.

In the final Joint Phase of the exercise, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh spent a day at sea on Monday, on board India's first Indigenous Aircraft Carrier (IAC-1), INS Vikrant.

"He reviewed the Indian Navy's operational preparedness and material readiness wherein the Navy demonstrated operational manoeuvres and various facets of

combat operations, including deck operations of indigenous LCA and live weapon firings," stated the Ministry of Defence (MoD) on Thursday.

In an address to the Eastern and Western Naval Fleets, Rajnath lauded the navy's operational preparedness. He said the country relies on the Navy to ensure that the economic lifelines and military capabilities of our adversaries are disrupted to the extent where their warfighting endeavours can no longer be sustained.

"(Rajnath also said) the Indian Navy is wholly capable of safeguarding India's national interests in the maritime domain and will thwart the diabolical designs of any potential adversaries who seek to threaten India's peaceful existence," stated the Ministry of Defence.

Referring to the "Atmanirbhar Bharat" (self-reliant India) initiative, the defence minister complimented the Indian Navy for being at the forefront of the 'Make in India' initiative and for living up to its motto of "Combat Ready, Credible, Cohesive and Future Proof."

