

# *Ships, sub, aircraft: 4-nation naval wargame Exercise Malabar concludes*

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The 27th edition of Exercise Malabar concluded on the east coast of Australia, off Sydney, on Monday.

The four-nation exercise witnessed the participation of ships, submarines, and aircraft from the Indian Navy, Royal Australian Navy (RAN), Japan Maritime Self Defence Force (JMSDF), and the US Navy (USN).

The exercise was conducted in two phases — a harbour (or planning) phase from August 11 to 15, and a sea phase from August 16 to 21, which saw the four navies actually implementing the plans that they had made. The Indian Navy was represented by the indigenously built guided missile destroyer, INS Kolkata, the multi-role stealth frigate INS Sahyadri, and P-8I Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft.

Other participating warship units included RAN ships HMAS Choules and HMAS Brisbane, US Navy warships USS Raphael Peralta, and the Japanese warship JS Shiranui. There was also a strong aircraft presence, including fighter aircraft, maritime patrol aircraft, and shipborne helicopters.

While the ships sailed out for the sea phase from Sydney harbour, the airborne assets operated from RAAF Amberley, in Brisbane, where the P-8I Poseidon detachments, involving crews from the Indian Navy, RAAF, and US P-8 were stationed.

“The sea phase of Exercise Malabar



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PHOTO: PTI

witnessed complex and high intensity exercises in air, surface and undersea domains, weapon firings and cross deck helicopter operations,” the government said in a statement.

“The joint exercises at sea honed the war-fighting skills and enhanced interoperability between the four navies to undertake advanced maritime operations. The seamless integration of air assets also showcased the exceptional coordination and interoperability between the Indian, Australian, and US maritime patrol aircraft units,” the statement said.

According to New Delhi, Exercise Malabar reaffirmed the ability of the four navies to operate together as an integrated force, while also highlighting their

shared commitment to maritime security and regional stability through collaborative training and mutual understanding.

“At the culmination of five days of multifarious exercises, Exercise Malabar vividly showcased the strong cooperation, shared values, and the collective ability of the four participating nations to ensure a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific, promoting peace and security for all,” said a joint statement.

China has made it clear to the four participating countries that it sees Malabar as an inimical military grouping. After Malabar 2007, China conveyed its displeasure in writing, seeking to know whom the exercise was directed against. Since then, the number of participating navies has doubled from two to four.

