

NAVY TO TAKE PART IN FLEET REVIEW IN CHINA

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Fleet tanker INS Shakti as seen from the R.K. Beach in Visakhapatnam C.V. Subrahmanyam

The Indian Navy has sent two ships to take part in the International Fleet Review to be held in Qingdao, China, later this month as part of the 70th anniversary celebrations of the People's Liberation Army Navy. The ships are stealth destroyer INS Kolkata and fleet tanker INS Shakti.

Surprisingly, Pakistan's Navy is not taking part in the event.

"The ships are likely to sail in the evening of April 22 to participate in the Naval Parade scheduled to be reviewed by Chinese President Xi Jinping on April 23," the Navy said in a statement on Friday.

The visit of the Navy's most potent destroyer and versatile fleet support ship showcases India's prowess, reach and sustainability, besides indigenous ship-building capability, the Navy said. The Indian delegation is being led by the Chief of Staff of the Visakhapatnam-based Eastern Naval Command, who is of the rank of Rear-Admiral.

As a reciprocal gesture and as part of the efforts to promote military cooperation, China has agreed to send its ships on port calls to India, a Navy source said.

"In a big surprise, Pakistan's Navy is not participating in the event by its all-weather friend," the Navy source said.

The Indian Navy had last held an International Fleet Review in February 2016, in which 50 navies of different countries took part with nearly 100 warships.

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