

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY AND INDIAN NAVY COMMENCE BILATERAL EXERCISE – ‘AUSINDEX’

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: India - Australia

Indian Navy Task Group comprising *IN* Ships *Shivalik* and *Kadmatt*, under the Command of Flag Officer Commanding, Eastern Fleet, Rear Admiral Tarun Sobti, VSM is participating in the 4th edition of AUSINDEX from 06 to 10 Sep 21. Royal Australian Navy (RAN) Anzac Class Frigate, HMAS *Warramunga* which participated in Exercise MALABAR along with the *IN* units is also part of the exercise. This edition of AUSINDEX includes complex surface, sub-surface and air operations between ships, submarines, helicopters and Long Range Maritime Patrol Aircraft of the participating Navies.

The participating Indian Naval Ships *Shivalik* and *Kadmatt* are the latest indigenously designed and built Guided Missile Stealth Frigate and Anti-Submarine Corvette respectively. They form part of the Indian Navy's Eastern Fleet based at Visakhapatnam under the Eastern Naval Command.

Commenced in 2015 as a bilateral *IN*-RAN maritime exercise, AUSINDEX has grown in complexity over the years and the 3rd edition of the exercise, held in 2019 in the Bay of Bengal, included anti-submarine drills for the first time.

In the Fourth Edition, the surface units of both the countries will be exercising with HMAS Rankin, a Collins Class Australian Submarine, Royal Australian Air Force P-8A and F-18A aircraft, along with integral helicopters of both the Navies. The exercise will provide an opportunity for both Navies to further bolster inter-operability, gain from best practices and develop a common understanding of procedures for Maritime Security Operations.

The exercise is a true representation of Joint Guidance signed by the Chief of the Naval Staff, *IN* and Chief of Navy, RAN on 18 Aug 21. This important document is aligned to the '2020 Comprehensive Strategic Partnership' between the two nations and aims to further consolidate shared commitment to regional and global security challenges promoting peace, security and stability in the Indo-Pacific region. The conduct of this exercise despite COVID restrictions is also a testimony of existing synergy between the participating Navies.



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