

# Joint Military Exercises of India



## India's Joint Military Exercises with Other Countries

Military exercises are one of the most important topics covered in the General Awareness section of the CDS, AFCAT, Airmen Group X and Y, Indian Navy SSR, and AA exams.

It is also necessary for an aspirant who is appearing for an SSB interview to understand why these exercises are carried out. As a result, here is a list of Indian Military Exercises:

### **Military Exercises in India**

A military exercise or war game is a technique for training or performing drills of military operations, testing the quickness and real-time capabilities of warfare, and implementing strategies without actually engaging in combat.

The military exercise is a method of testing the performance of the armed forces without putting them to the test on the battlefield.

### **Why is military training necessary?**

- Military training has become an essential component of armed forces all over the world. They serve a variety of functions, including:
- It teaches soldiers how to act, think, and collaborate in times of conflict.
- The military exercise is a method of demonstrating one's power and might to other countries around the world.
- It also improves coordination and cooperation among the world's friendly militaries.
- It allows you to put weapons and devices through their paces.
- Natural Disaster & Humanitarian Relief Training.

### **Some Important Indian Joint Military Exercises**

#### **a) Exercise Desert Flag-VI**

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) took part in the **multinational exercise** 'Ex Desert Flag-VI'.
- The exercise was conducted at Al Dhafra airbase in the UAE from March 3<sup>rd</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> March 2021.
- The United Arab Emirates Air Force hosted the Exercise Desert Flag.
- The following countries are also taking part in the exercise: France, the United States (US), South Korea, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain.
- The exercise was observed by Greece, Jordan, Kuwait, and Egypt.

#### **b) Exercise Yudh Abhyas**

- The 16<sup>th</sup> 'Yudh Abhyas,' a joint military exercise between **India and the United States**, was held from February 8<sup>th</sup> to February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021.
- The joint military exercise between India and the United States took place at the Mahajan Field Firing Ranges in Rajasthan's Bikaner district.
- The exercise will involve approximately 250 military personnel from both countries.

- The Yudh Abhyas Indo-US military exercise will help to strengthen both countries' defence relations.

### c) Exercise Sampriti-IX

- The 'SAMPRITI-IX' joint military training exercise between **India and Bangladesh** was held in Umroi, Meghalaya, from the 3rd to the 16th of February, 2020.
- The exercise aims to construct, strengthen, and promote positive relationships between the Armies of India and Bangladesh.
- Both countries alternate hosting the exercise.
- Tangail in Bangladesh hosted the eighth edition of the exercise.

### d) Exercise Indradhanush

- The **Royal Air Force of the United Kingdom and the Indian Air Force** conduct a joint air force exercise known as Exercise Indradhanush. The goal of the exercise is to improve mutual operational understanding between the two air forces through close interaction. The exercise began in the year 2006 and has since had five editions.
- The 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the Exercise Indra Dhanush 2020 began on February 24<sup>th</sup>. A joint air force exercise between the Indian Air Force (IAF) and the Royal Air Forces of the United Kingdom (RAF) has begun at Air Force Station Hindan in Uttar Pradesh.
- During the exercise, both components of the air force will share and validate strategies and tactics for dealing with terrorist threats to their installations.
- Both forces will also take on a variety of missions such as airfield seizure, base defence, and anti-terror operations in the urban built-up zones.

### e) Exercise Ajeya Warrior

- A joint military exercise between **India's & UK's soldiers**. In 2013, the first military training took place. The Ajeya Warrior exercise was held for the second and third time in 2015 and 2017, respectively.
- The Ajeya Warrior 2021 is the most recent edition, which will take place in Chaubatia, Uttarakhand, in October 2021. The previous (fifth) edition was held in the United Kingdom in 2020.
- The Exercise's Goal:
  - Each army's soldiers are trained in counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency operations.
  - In order to strengthen strategic ties between India and the United Kingdom.
  - The purpose of the joint military training is to gain operational experience.

### f) Exercise MILAN

- India has invited **46 friendly foreign nations** in the multinational naval exercise Milan, which will take place in Visakhapatnam beginning 25<sup>th</sup> February 2022. This year's theme for Exercise Milan is camaraderie, cohesion, and collaboration. This exercise began in 1995 and is now held biennially with friendly navies.

- The professional competitions and conferences planned during this phase will set the operational tone for the Sea Phase, which will take place from 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> March 2022. This Phase would be used to consolidate the lessons learned during harbour interactions and to expand on the experience of working together at sea.
- Russia, the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom, Israel, Iran, Japan, France, South Korea, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Brazil, and the United Arab Emirates are among the countries that have been invited to participate.
- According to an official, India has increased its bilateral, trilateral, and multilateral naval engagements with friendly nations since 2018.

#### **g) Exercise Eastern Bridge**

- The **Indian Air Force (IAF)** is taking part in the joint bilateral exercise EX EASTERN BRIDGE V alongside the Royal Air Force of Oman (RAFO).
- The most recent version of the exercise was held in 2019 at the Air Force Base Masirah in Oman.
- The Indian Air Force's contingent consists of MiG-29 and C-17 aircraft. The MIG-29 fighter aircraft participated in an international exercise outside of India for the first time in 2019.
- The most recent EX EASTERN BRIDGE-IV exercise took place in Jamnagar, India, in 2017.

#### **Military exercises are divided into three main categories:**

1. Domestic Exercise
2. Bilateral Exercise
3. Multilateral Exercise

#### **1. Domestic Exercise:**

They are intended to improve internal engagement among various departments. Depending on the nature and application, they can be inter-services or intra-services.

#### **a) Exercise Gandiv Vijay**

- **Chetak Corps of the Indian Army's South Western Command** conducted military exercise Gandiv Vijay in Rajasthan's Mahajan field firing ranges.
- The exercise lasted two months and ended on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2018 to validate Chetak Corps' operational plans.
- Gandiv Vijay Military Workout The central role was the focus of the Gandiv Vijay military exercise.

#### **b) Exercise Vajra Prahar**

- In March 2021, the **Special Forces of India and the United States of America** conducted the joint military exercise 'VAJRA PRAHAR 2021' in Himachal Pradesh.

- This was the 11<sup>th</sup> edition of the exercise, which was held at the Special Forces Training School in Bakloh, Himachal Pradesh. The 10<sup>th</sup> edition of VAJRA PRAHAR was held in Seattle, USA, in 2019.
- The joint exercise by both countries' Special Forces is alternately held in India and the United States.
- Special Forces are specialized units of a country's armed forces that conduct covert, counter-terrorist, and other operations.
- Aim: To share best practises and experiences in areas such as joint mission planning and operational tactics, as well as to improve interoperability among both nations' Special Forces.

### C) Exercise Paschim Lehar (XPL-2022)

- The **Indian Navy's Western Naval Command** completed the joint maritime exercise Paschim Lehar (XPL-2022) off the West Coast.
- The exercise lasted 20 days and was designed to improve inter-service synergy among the Indian Navy, Indian Air Force, Indian Army, and Coast Guard.
- The Western Naval Command (HQ- Mumbai) is one of the Indian Navy's three command-level formations. Eastern Naval Command (HQ- Visakhapatnam) and Southern Naval Command are the other two (HQ- Kochi).
- During the exercise, a variety of weapon firings in a realistic tactical scenario, as well as the validation of operational missions and tasks in varying settings, were carried out.
- The exercise gave all participating forces a chance to work together under realistic conditions in responding to contemporary maritime challenges across the Command's domains of responsibility.

### d) Exercise Vayu Shakti

- On 5<sup>th</sup> March 2022, the **Indian Air Force's largest war exercise**, Vayushakti-2022, will be held at the Pokhran field firing range. The drill will involve approximately 140 planes, including 100 fighter planes. Previously, the exercise was scheduled for 10<sup>th</sup> February 2022.
- Exercise Vayu Shakti-2019, a mega exercise involving 140 fighter jets and attack helicopters in a firepower demonstration, was held near the border with Pakistan in Pokhran, Rajasthan.
- The mega exercise, EXERCISE VAYU SHAKTI-2019, demonstrated the Indian Airforce's might:
- The Indian Air Force (IAF) demonstrated the firepower capability of indigenously developed platforms such as the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas and the efficacy of the Akash surface-to-air missile and the Astra air-to-air missile.
- The ALH and the Akash were used in a military exercise for the first time.
- This mega exercise involved 137 aircraft, including Sukhoi-30s, Mirage 2000s, Mig-29, Jaguars, Mig-21 Bison, Mig-27, IL78, Hercules, and AN-32s.

## **2. Bilateral Exercise:**

### **Indian Army**

#### **a) Exercise Hand-in-Hand**

- It is a military exercise conducted jointly by **the Indian and Chinese armies**.
- The most recent Hand-in-Hand exercise took place in 2019 from the 7th to the 20th of December at Umroi (Meghalaya)
- The Hand-in-Hand exercise's goal is to:
  - Practicing collaborative planning
  - Counter-terrorism exercises are being carried out.
  - Hold training exercises in semi-urban areas.
- Hand-in-Hand exercises include the following activities:
  - Lectures
  - Drills for dealing with counter-terrorism operations
  - Firearms instruction
  - Specialized Helicopter Operations
  - Case studies of various other military operations conducted in a counter-terrorism context

#### **b) Exercise Surya Kiran**

- The 15<sup>th</sup> **India-Nepal Joint Military Training Exercise**, dubbed 'Surya Kiran,' took place on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2021. It took place in Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand.
- The main goal of the exercise is to conduct counter-terror drills and disaster relief operations.
- The exercise will also improve interoperability between India's and Nepal's militaries.
- Both nations' infantry battalions will conduct training to share expertise in counter-terrorism disaster relief operations, and to improve interoperability.

#### **c) Exercise Sampriti**

- The Sampriti Exercise is a bilateral defence cooperation exercise between **India's and Bangladesh's armies**. It is regarded as a component of Indo-Bangladesh defence cooperation. Sampriti has nine editions, the most recent being Sampriti-IX, which took place in Meghalaya from February 3 to February 16, 2020.
- Both countries alternate hosting the Sampriti exercise. In 2019, it was held in Bangladesh, and in 2020, it was held in India.
- Command Post Exercise (CPX) and Field Training Exercise (FTX) was held in Sampriti-IX.
- The Sampriti exercise includes training and exercises set in such simulated environments as defined by the UN Charter.

#### d) Exercise Mitra Shakti

- The Mitra Shakti exercise is a bilateral joint military exercise between **Indian and Sri Lankan armies**. The exercise is also known as the Joint Training Exercise. Mitra Shakti-VIII, the most recent edition of the Mitra Shakti exercise, took place in Sri Lanka from October 4<sup>th</sup> to October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021. India-Sri Lanka
- The following are the objectives of this bilateral exercise:
  - To encourage defence cooperation.
  - To foster goodwill between the Indian and Sri Lankan armies.
- Mitra Shakti is a training exercise for subunits in counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism operations.
- Under the United Nations (UN) mandate, training for counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism operations is conducted in urban and rural settings.
- The Mitra Shakti exercise is designed in such a way that it incorporates the dynamics of UN peacekeeping operations.

#### e) Exercise Harimau Shakti

- In November, the sixth edition of the **Indo-French Shakti 2021** (bilateral joint training exercise) was held in Frejus, France.
- It will concentrate on counter-terrorism operations in semi-urban terrain under a United Nations mandate, with the goal of improving military cooperation and interoperability between the two armies.
- The biennial exercise between the two countries' armies began in 2011.
- It was alternately held in India and France.
- The most recent Shakti exercise took place in Rajasthan in 2019, where "counter-terrorism operations in semi-desert terrain were practised."

#### f) Exercise VINBAX

- The **India-Vietnam** Bilateral Army Exercise (VINBAX-2018) was held in Madhya Pradesh's Jabalpur.
- The first military exercise between the two countries was VINBAX-2018. The six-day military exercise (from January 29<sup>th</sup> to February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018) was held as part of the Indian Army's joint training with friendly foreign countries.
- VINBAX-2018 was a Table Top Exercise to train for Peace Keeping Operations under the auspices of the United Nations (UN).
- It was undertaken by 15 officers from the Indian Army and the Vietnam People's Army. The joint exercise was specifically designed to enable and train Vietnamese officers for UN Peace Keeping Operations. Both armies interacted and shared experiences during the joint exercise.

### g) Exercise Ekuverin

- The 11<sup>th</sup> edition of Exercise EKUVERIN-21, a joint exercise between **India and the Maldives**, was held on Kadhdhoo Island in the Maldives. In the Dhivehi language, Ekuverin means "Friends." It is the language of Indo-Arya. It is spoken in India, the Lakshadweep Islands, and the Maldives.
- The exercise improves synergy and interoperability between both nations' Armed Forces in terms of understanding transnational terrorism on land and at sea, conducting Counter-Terrorism and Counter-Insurgency Operations, and sharing best military practices and experiences.
- Since 2008, India and the Maldives have been conducting the exercise. The exercise was held in Pune, Maharashtra, in 2019, and in the Maldives in 2018.

### h) Exercise CORPAT

- The Indian Ocean region hosted the 36<sup>th</sup> CORPAT (Coordinated Patrol) exercise between **India & Indonesia**.
- Maritime Patrol Aircraft from both countries took part in the exercise.
- The 36<sup>th</sup> edition of COPAT was held in a non-contact, at-sea mode in accordance with the pandemic COVID-19 norms.
- The CORPAT's goal is to keep the Indian Ocean Region safe and secure in terms of commercial shipping, international trade, and maritime activities.
- The exercise aided in the improvement and understanding of interoperability between navies, and thus the partnership between the two nations.
- Since 2002, India and Indonesia have conducted CORPAT along the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) twice a year.

### i) Exercise Al Nagah

- The third in the series of bilateral joint exercises between **India and Oman** is Al Nagah III. It was held in Oman's Jabel Al Akhdar Mountains from March 12 to March 25, 2019.
- Both armies exchanged expertise and experience in tactics, weapon handling, and firing during the 14-day exercise.
- The exercise's goal is to improve interoperability in counter-terrorism operations in semi-urban mountainous terrain.
- Al Nagah I took place in Muscat, Oman, in January 2015, and Al Nagah II took place in Himachal Pradesh, India, in March 2017.

### j) Exercise Dharma Guardian

- Dharma Guardian is a joint military exercise between **India and Japan** that began in 2018. The exercise is carried out by the armies of both countries.
- The most recent edition of this bilateral exercise was Dharma Guardian 2019, which took place in October 2019 at Vairengte, Mizoram, between the Indian and Japanese armies.

- The first Dharma Guardian exercise was held in 2018 at the Counter Insurgency Warfare School in Vairengte (Mizoram), India, from November 1 to November 14, 2018.
- The following activities are included in the exercise:
  - Counter-terrorism operations training
  - Counter-terrorism operations are being planned.
  - Implementation of a series of well-planned tactical drills

#### **k) Exercise Maitree**

- Exercise Maitree began in 2006 as a bilateral exercise between the **Indian Army and the Royal Thai Army**.
- It is an annual event between troops from both countries' armies. It is also known as the Indo-Thailand Joint Exercise.
- The most recent Maitree Exercise was held in September 2019, from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 29<sup>th</sup> of September.
- This exercise emphasizes:
  - Enhancing interoperability
  - Training
  - Planning
  - Executing a series of well-planned tactical drills for the neutralization of potential threats encountered in urban warfare scenarios
  - Fostering friendship between the two armies

#### **l) Exercise Prabal Dostyk**

- In August 2021, Kazakhstan hosted the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the **India-Kazakhstan** Joint Training Exercise "KAZIND-21."
- The exercise is a joint training exercise involving both Indian and Kazakhstani armies.
- Professional exchange, as well as sharing experiences in counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism operations, are all part of the Joint Exercise's scope.

#### **m) Exercise Nomadic Elephant**

- It is a joint military exercise between **India & Mongolia**.
- The 14<sup>th</sup> edition of Nomadic Elephant took place in Bakloh Cantonment, Himachal Pradesh, in Oct. 2019.
- The Mongolian Army was represented by the 084 Airborne-Special Task Battalion in the latest edition of the Nomadic Elephant series (Nomadic Elephant XIV), while the Indian Army was represented by the RAJPUTANA RIFLES Regiment battalion.
- Under a United Nations (UN) mandate, the Nomadic Elephant exercise aims to train army troops in counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency operations.
- One of the goals of the Nomadic Elephant exercise is to promote defence cooperation and improve military relations between the two armies.

#### n) Exercise LAMITYE

- Since 2001, **India & Seychelles** have been conducting a joint exercise with the goal of improving military cooperation & interoperability between the two countries' armies.
- Under the United Nations (UN) charter, the ongoing exercise aims to conduct counter-insurgency as well as counter-terrorist operations in a semi-urban environment.
- The 8<sup>th</sup> joint military exercise between the Indian Army as well as the Seychelles People's Defence Forces was scheduled for Mahe Island, Seychelles, from February 24<sup>th</sup> to March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018.
- The exercise was dubbed 'LAMITYE,' which means 'friendship' in the local Creole dialect. This was the eighth in a series of bilateral exercises taking place in the lovely island nation.

#### o) Exercise BOLD KURUKSHETRA

- The Joint Military Training Exercise Bold Kurukshetra is a series of joint military exercises between **India & Singapore**.
- The four-day joint training emphasized interoperability and the execution of joint tactical operations in mechanized warfare. The troops learned about each other's organizations as well as combat best practises.
- The 12<sup>th</sup> edition of BOLD KURUKSHETRA came to a close on April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019, at Babina Military Station, with a closing ceremony.

#### p) Exercise Khanjar

- The 8<sup>th</sup> **Indo-Kyrgyz Joint Special Forces Exercise 'Khanjar'** was launched at the Special Forces Brigade of the Kyrgyz Republic's National Guards in Bishkek, the host country's capital.
- The two-week-long special operations exercise, which began in the year 2011, focuses on high-altitude warfare, mountain warfare, and counter-extremism exercises.
- The Indian contingent for the exercise congratulated them on their role as a bridge in promoting both nations' shared mountain & nomadic heritage.
- The occasion was marked by a ceremonial parade, a display of equipment and weapons, and a visit to the training arena and barracks.

### Indian Navy

#### a) Exercise SLINEX

- In October 2020, the **annual Indian Navy (IN) – Sri Lanka Navy (SLN) bilateral maritime exercise SLINEX-20** eighth edition (i.e. latest edition between two countries) taken place in Trincomalee, Sri Lanka.
- The SLINEX-20 increased interoperability, improved mutual understanding, and allowed both navies to share best practises and procedures for multi-faceted maritime operations.
- The SLINEX exercise series highlights India and Sri Lanka's deep engagement, which has strengthened mutual cooperation in the maritime domain.

### b) Exercise INDRA Navy

- The 12<sup>th</sup> Edition (i.e. the most recent edition between the two countries) of the **Indo-Russia joint maritime exercise INDRA** took place in August 2021 in Volgograd, Russia.
- The exercise involved a joint force conducting counter-terror operations against international terror groups under the auspices of the United Nations.
- The INDRA series of exercises began in 2003 as a bilateral naval exercise conducted alternately by the two countries. The first joint Tri-Services exercise, however, took place in 2017.
- The last joint tri-services exercise between India and Russia took place in December 2019 in India. It was held in Babina (near Jhansi), Pune, and Goa, all at the same time.

### c) Exercise Konkan

- The Bilateral Konkan exercise is a naval exercise held by **India and the United Kingdom**.
- The Konkan exercise series began in 2004. Since then, both Navies have hosted the exercise in turn, and it has grown in complexity, scale, and intensity.
- The Indo-UK Naval Exercise 'Konkan 2021' was held in the English Channel between INS Tabar and HMS Westminster.

### d) Exercise Varuna

- The 19<sup>th</sup> (and most recent) edition of the **Indian and French Navy bilateral exercise 'VARUNA-2021'** was held in the Arabian Sea.
- The United Arab Emirates (UAE) took part in the Varuna maritime exercise for the first time.
- Since 1993, the Indian and French navies have conducted bilateral maritime exercises. These exercises have been known as 'VARUNA' since 2001.
- These interactions highlight the shared values of partner navies in ensuring freedom of the seas as well as the commitment to an open, inclusive Indo-Pacific and a rules-based international order.

### e) Exercise Naseem Al Bahr

- The 12<sup>th</sup> edition of the bilateral maritime exercise Naseem Al Bahr was held in Mormugao Port, Goa, by **India and Oman**.
- Naseem-Al-Bahr (or sea breeze) is a naval exercise conducted by the Indian Navy and the RNO since 1993.
- This exercise was being carried out by Indian Navy ships Beas and Subhadra, as well as Oman Navy ships RNOV Al Rasikh and RNOV Khassab.

### f) Exercise Sahyog HOP TAC

- The first joint exercise of the Coast Guards of **India and Vietnam**, "Sahyog HOP TAC - 2018," took place in the Bay of Bengal off the coast of Chennai, Tamil Nadu.
- Its goal was to improve the working relationship between coast guards from both navies.

- The exercise was designed to familiarize coast guards from both countries with each other's capabilities and to strengthen working relationships to save lives at sea.
- It included a scenario of an oil tanker hijacking and subsequent crew rescue in a coordinated anti-piracy joint operation, as well as preventive efforts for marine environment protection.

#### g) Exercise IND-INDO CORPAT

- It's a naval exercise between **India & Indonesia**, who have been conducting CORPAT exercises along their International Maritime Boundary Line twice a year since 2002.
- The Indian Naval Ship (INS) Khanjar, a Missile Corvette built in India, and a Dornier Maritime Patrol Aircraft conducted a coordinated patrol (CORPAT) with the Indonesian Naval Ship KRI Sultan Thaha Syaifuddin, a Kapitan Patimura-Class Corvette.
- The 37<sup>th</sup> India-Indonesia Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT) took place in the Indian Ocean region from November 23<sup>rd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021. The 37th edition of CORPAT between India and Indonesia included Maritime Patrol Aircraft from both countries.

#### h) Exercise SIMBEX

- The 28<sup>th</sup> (latest edition) **Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX)** was held from September 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021. The Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN) hosted the SIMBEX-2021 annual bilateral maritime exercise on the southern rims of the South China Sea.
- The Indian Navy was represented by the Guided Missile Destroyer INS Ranvijay, which had a shipborne helicopter, the ASW Corvettes INS Kiltan & INS Kora, as well as one P8I Long Range Maritime Patrol Aircraft.
- The exercise was designed to strengthen bilateral defence ties between the two countries. This year's SIMBEX is also a special occasion because it takes place during India's 75<sup>th</sup> year of independence celebrations.

#### i) Exercise IMCOR

- The most recent **Indo-Myanmar coordinated patrol (IMCOR)** took place in 2019 from May 20<sup>th</sup> to May 28<sup>th</sup>. This was the eighth edition of the India-Myanmar coordinated patrol (CORPAT).
- The Indian Navy & Myanmar Navy's coordinated patrol (CORPAT) initiative aims to combat terrorism, human trafficking, illegal fishing, poaching, drug trafficking, and other illegal activities that harm both countries' interests.
- The CORPAT series began in March of 2013. It has improved professional interaction as well as mutual understanding between the two navies for maritime interoperability since then.

#### j) Exercise 'AL-MOHED AL-HINDI 2021'

- The first naval exercise between the **Indian Navy & the Royal Saudi Naval Force** successfully completed, dubbed 'AL-MOHED AL-HINDI 2021.'

- The exercise was being held to highlight India & Saudi Arabia's defence and military cooperation.
- India is represented by INS Kochi, the flagship destroyer of the Indian Western Naval Fleet, which has arrived in Saudi Arabia's Port-al-Jubail.
- This was the first time the two countries had conducted a joint naval exercise.
- The naval exercise will include a variety of practices, such as shore and sea-based drills.

## Indian Air Force

### a) Exercise Garuda

- Ex Garuda 2019 (latest edition), a **bilateral Indo-French** large force employment warfare exercise hosted by the French Air Force (FAF) from 01<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> July 2019 at Mont-de-Marsan in France, was completed successfully, with the IAF contingent returning to India on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2019.
- Garuda-VI was the year's largest international air training exercise.
- The exercise's goals were to foster closer ties between India & France in order to promote the interoperability through knowledge & experience exchange.

### b) Exercise Eastern Bridge

- 'EX EASTERN BRIDGE' is a bilateral joint air force exercise conducted by the **Indian Air Force (IAF) and the Royal Air Force of Oman (RAFO)**. The most recent edition was 'EX EASTERN BRIDGE-V,' which took place on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2019 at Air Force Base Masirah in Oman.
- The Indian Air Force's contingent consists of MiG-29 and C-17 aircraft. The MiG-29 participated in the exercise, as did the Royal Air Force of Oman's Eurofighter Typhoon, F-16, and Hawk. For the first time, MiG-29 fighter planes took part in an international exercise outside of India.
- The goal of the exercise is to improve interoperability between the two Air Forces during mutual operations, as well as to provide an opportunity to learn from each other's best practises. The last bilateral exercise was held in Jamnagar, Gujarat, in 2017.

### c) Exercise SIAM Bharat

- The **Indian Air Force and the Royal Thai Air Force (RTAF)** participated in the Indo-Thailand Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Table Top Exercise 2017 (latest edition) in Chiang Mai, Thailand, in May 2017. This was the second such exercise between the two Air Forces.
- The goal of the bilateral exercise is to develop SOPs for planning and executing relief missions during natural disasters such as Tsunamis, earthquakes, cyclones, floods, and so on.
- The goal is to improve interoperability between the two Air Forces while conducting joint air operations in response to a crisis.

#### d) Exercise Desert Eagle

- Desert Eagle II was the second in a series of bilateral exercises held in June 2016 between the **Indian Air Force (IAF) and the United Arab Emirates Air Force (UAE AF)**.
- The exercise lasted ten days and involved the IAF and the UAE Air Force conducting air combat exercises from Al-Dhafra Air Base in Abu Dhabi.
- The IAF Su-30 MKI took part in Desert Eagle-II, along with the UAE Air Force's Mirage 2000-9 and F-16 block 60. Notably, the Indian Air Force had previously participated in Desert Eagle I in 2008.

#### e) Exercise Red Flag

- The **Indian Air Force & United States Air Force** holds Exercise Red Flag, a two-week advanced aerial combat training exercise, several times a year.
- Its goal is to provide realistic air-combat training to military pilots and other flight crew members from the United States and other allies. It was first held in the year 1975.
- Each year, four to six Red Flag exercises are held at Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada, with up to four more held at Eielson Air Force Base in Alaska under the banner of Red Flag – Alaska.

#### f) Exercise Desert Knight-21

- Ex Desert Knight-21, a bilateral air exercise between the **Indian Air Force and the French Air and Space Force**, has begun. It was held at the Jodhpur Air Force Station in Rajasthan.
- This Ex Desert Knight-21, in particular, includes both sides' fielding of Rafale aircraft.
- This exercise demonstrates the growing interaction between India's and France's premier air forces.
- Mirage 2000, Rafale, Su-30 MKI, IL-78 Flight Refueling Aircraft, AWACS, and AEW&C aircraft represented India.
- France was represented by the Rafale, the A-400M Tactical Transport aircraft, and the Airbus A-330 Multirole tanker transport.

### 3. Multilateral Exercise:

#### a) Exercise RIMPAC

- The Rim of the Pacific Exercise, also known as RIMPAC, is the **world's largest international maritime warfare exercise**.
- RIMPAC is held biennially from Honolulu, Hawaii, in June and July of even-numbered years, with the exception of 2020, when it was held in August.
- It is hosted and administered by the United States Navy's Indo-Pacific Command, which is headquartered in Pearl Harbor, in collaboration with the Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and Hawaii National Guard forces, all of which are under the command of the Governor of Hawaii.

- The first RIMPAC was held in 1971, and forces from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom (UK), and the United States participated (US).
- Since then, Australia, Canada, and the United States have participated in every RIMPAC.

#### b) Exercise Malabar

- In Malabar Exercise 2021:
  - This was the first joint maritime exercise in the Western Pacific under the Quadrilateral framework, and it appears to be designed to frighten China. The United States was hosting it.
- Malabar Exercise is a multilateral naval war-gaming exercise that began in 1992. It began as a bilateral exercise between India's and the United States' navies.
- After two more editions of the exercise in 1995 and 1996, there was a break until 2002 in the aftermath of India's nuclear tests. Since 2002, the exercise has been held every year.
- Japan and Australia were the first to take part in 2007, and since 2014, India, the United States, and Japan have taken part every year.
- At India's request, Australia joined the Malabar Exercise in 2020 to contain China in the Indo-Pacific region.
- Malabar 2020 saw the participation of all four Quad members (including **India, US, Australia, and Japan**) for the first time in over a decade.
- Its goal is to promote a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific while remaining committed to a rules-based international order.

#### c) Exercise MILEX-18

- In September 2018, the first field training military exercise, MILEX-18, as part of the Bay of Bengal initiative for multi-sectoral technical and economic cooperation (BIMSTEC), began at the Foreign Training Node at Aundh in Pune, Maharashtra.
- Except for Thailand and Nepal, **all BIMSTEC member countries** (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka) actively participated in this exercise.
- Thailand and Nepal only send their small group in MILEX-18.

#### d) Exercise PEACEFUL MISSION

- The Indian military contingent, which consists of an all-arms combined force of 200 personnel, is taking part in the Exercise PEACEFUL MISSION -2021, a **Joint Counter-Terrorism Exercise between Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) member states**.
- In September month of 2021 (i.e. from 13<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021), Russia hosted the Exercise PEACEFUL MISSION- 2021 in the Orenburg Region of South-West Russia.
- The sixth edition of the biennial multilateral exercise PEACEFUL MISSION was held in 2021.

- The exercise's goal is to strengthen ties between SCO member states and to improve military leaders' abilities to command multi-national military contingents. The exercise will allow the Armed Forces of the SCO nations to share best practices.
- The exercise will also give the Armed Forces of the SCO Nations the opportunity to train in Counter-Terrorism Operations in an urban scenario in a multinational & joint environment.

#### e) Exercise Cobra Gold

- The 40<sup>th</sup> iteration of Exercise Cobra Gold took place in the Kingdom of Thailand from August 3<sup>rd</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021.
- The **annual Thai-US** co-sponsored military exercise included several virtual and in-person events with service members from seven full participating nations: the United States, Thailand, South Korea, Japan, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore, as well as observers and additional participants from other nations and organizations throughout the region.
- In the year 1982, the first Cobra Gold exercise was held.
- Every year, it is the largest Asia-Pacific military exercise.

#### f) Exercise Kakadu

- It is **Australia's premier multilateral**, regional maritime engagement, hosted by the **Royal Australian Navy (RAN) and supported by the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF)**.
- It was founded in 1993. It is held every two years in Darwin and the Northern Australian Exercise Areas (NAXA).
- KAKADU 2018 is the fourteenth edition of the exercise, which was held in between August 29<sup>th</sup> and September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2018. Its goal is to improve interoperability and develop a common understanding of maritime operations procedures.

#### g) Exercise ARF DiREx (ASEAN Regional Forum Disaster Relief Exercise)

- The ASEAN Regional Forum Disaster Relief Exercise (ARF DiREx) is an international disaster drill designed to promote disaster relief cooperation among the ASEAN Regional Forum's **27 member countries**.
- It takes on large-scale disasters like earthquakes & tsunamis and conducts on-the-job and icon-based drills such as exploration & medical support by mobilizing national military assets.

#### h) Sea Dragon 2022

- **India, Australia, Canada, the United States, South Korea, and Japan** all participated in the Sea Dragon 22 exercise.
- It is a multinational exercise.
- This year's event will take place at Guam's Andersen Air Force Base. It is essentially a US-led exercise.
- The countries that have taken part focus on the anti-submarine warfare training.

- They talk about the traditional maritime security challenges that the Indo-Pacific region faces.
- They complete more than 270 hours of in-flight training activities, including target tracking.
- The Dragon Belt award will be given to the country with the highest point total throughout the training process.

**i) Exercise PANEX-21**

- The PANEX-21 is a Humanitarian Assistance & Disaster Relief (HADR) Exercise for BIMSTEC countries.
- The exercise was held at Pune's College of Military Engineering.
- The exercise was in its third year. It is essentially a multinational and multi-agency exercise.
- The goal of the PANEX-21 was for BIMSTEC countries to collaborate on the regional development planning and execution, as well as to respond to natural disasters.

