

MALABAR EXERCISE



Issue

For the first time, the member nations of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) would participate in Malabar Exercise.

Background

The Malabar Exercise started as a bilateral naval exercise of India and US in 1992. It has upgraded since members of QUAD have joined.

Details

- This is the 25th edition of the exercise that will be held off the coast of Guam in the Pacific Ocean. India, US, Japan and Australian navies will participate.
- The main objective and charter of the QUAD is to ensure the freedom of navigation for all nations.

The beginning

- Since the start in 1992, the exercise continued for two more editions in 1995 and 1996, after which it was suspended due to Pokhran Nuclear tests.
- The exercise resumed in 2002. It takes place annually. Japan and Australia first participated in 2007.
- Australian government decided not to participate in next editions owing to Chinese pressure. However, India, the US and Japan have participated in the exercise every year since 2014.

The previous edition

- Last edition's first leg was held near Vishakhapatnam in the Bay of Bengal, followed by the second leg in Arabian Sea.
- The exercise showed war games and combat manoeuvres. Advanced surface and anti-submarine warfare exercises, seamanship evolutions, and weapon firings were also part of the exercise.
- Last year saw the participation of all four Quad members. It was the second time that Australia participated in the Malabar Naval exercises.

Reasons for Australia's return

- China and Australia are involved in a trade war. There are also signs of Chinese expansion near Australian territory, which has irked Australia.
- China is also involved in territorial disputes with India in Ladakh that forced it to expand the grouping and invite Australia.

Indian contingent

INS Shivalik multirole frigate, the INS Kadmat anti-submarine warfare corvette, and P8I long-range maritime patrol aircraft will be part of the Indian contingent.

Significance

- The exercise will enhance the synergy and mutual understanding among the four navies in undertaking joint maritime security operation.
- The Malabar will send a strong message to China regarding its expansionist policies.

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