

21ST EDITION INDIA FRANCE BILATERAL NAVAL EXERCISE 'VARUNA' – 2023

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

Phase II of the 21st edition of Varuna (Varuna-23) bilateral exercise between Indian and French Navy was conducted in the Arabian Sea. The exercise witnessed participation of guided missile frigates, tanker, Maritime Patrol Aircraft and integral helicopters from the two sides. The exercise was conducted over three days and witnessed joint operations, underway replenishment and various tactical manoeuvres. Units of both navies endeavoured to enhance and hone their war fighting skills, improve interoperability and demonstrate their ability to promote, peace, security and stability in the region. The first phase of 'Varuna-2023' was conducted off India's Western Seaboard from 16 to 20 Jan 23

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1891610>).

Indian & French Navy bilateral naval exercise was initiated in 1993. The exercise was later christened as 'Varuna' in 2001 and has since become a hallmark of robust India-France strategic bilateral relationship. Having grown in scope and complexity over the years, this exercise provides an opportunity to learn from each other's best practices and procedures. The exercise also facilitates operational level interaction between the two Navies to foster mutual cooperation for good order at sea, underscoring the shared commitment to ensuring security, safety and freedom of the global maritime commons.

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