



CURRENT AFFAIRS



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TROPEX 23

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details the recently concluded military exercise named TROPEX 23.

For Prelims:

- a) Details of Tropex 23.
- b) About Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

For Mains: GS2, International Relations and GS3, Maritime Security

- a) Issues related to the Navy's Operational readiness.
- b) Importance of the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).
- c) Initiatives are taken by India to enhance its leadership in Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

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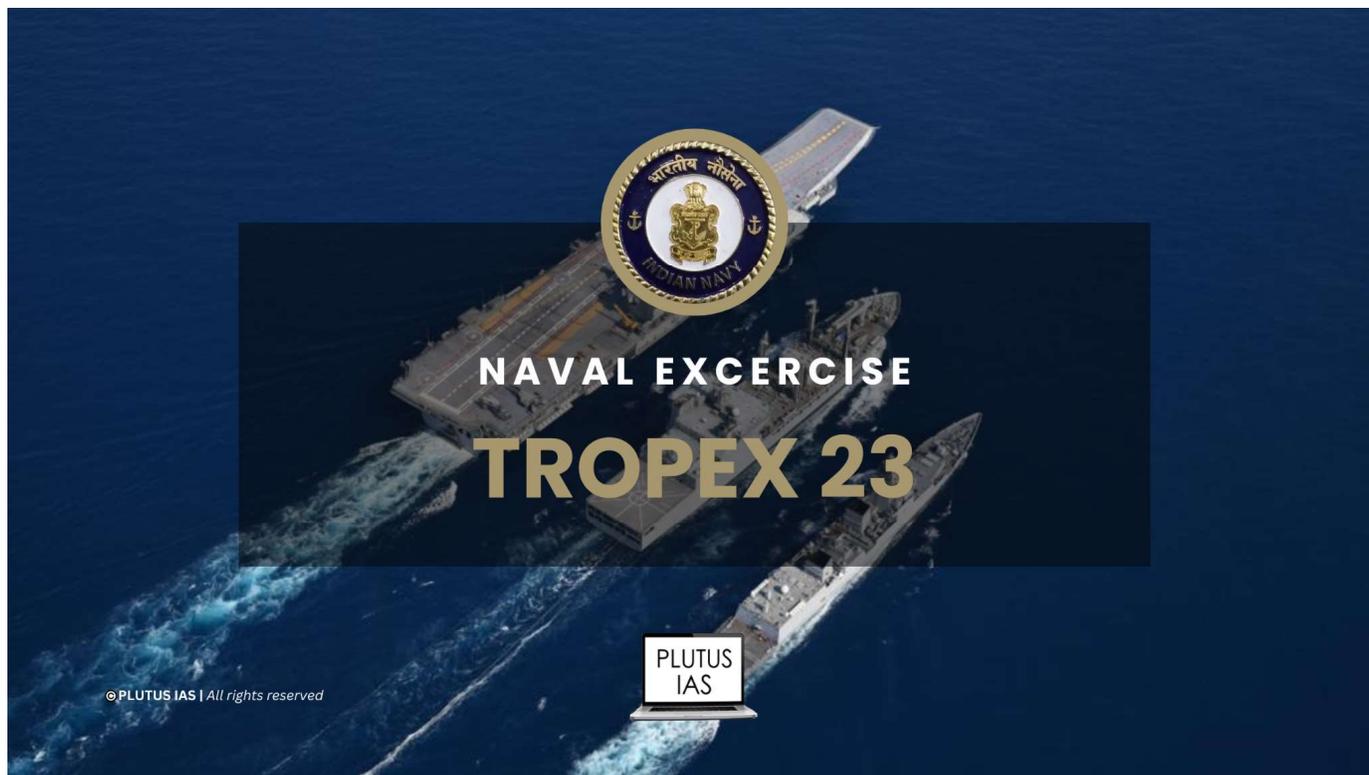
Why in news?

Indian Navy's major Operational level exercise TROPEX 23 for the year 2023, conducted across the expanse of IOR over four months from Nov 22 – Mar 23, culminating this week in the Arabian Sea. The overall exercise construct included the Coastal Defence exercise Sea Vigil and the Amphibious Exercise AMPHEX. Together, these exercises (Tropex-23) also witnessed significant participation from the Indian Army, the Indian Air Force, and the Coast Guard.

WHAT IS TROPEX 23?

Tropex 23 is a naval exercise conducted by the Indian Navy. Tropex 23 stands for Theatre Level Operational Readiness Exercise, and it is conducted every two years to test the readiness and interoperability of the Indian Navy's various units in a simulated combat environment.

Tropex 23, which was held in early 2023, involved a range of naval assets and personnel, including ships, submarines, aircraft, and special forces units. The exercise was held across multiple locations, including the Arabian Sea, the Bay of Bengal, and the Indian Ocean.



TROPEX 23

THE OBJECTIVE OF TROPEX 23

The primary objectives of Tropex 23 were to enhance the Indian Navy's operational preparedness, test its ability to respond to a range of maritime security threats, and demonstrate its readiness to undertake joint operations with other friendly navies.

INDIAN NAVY: CAPACITIES AND CAPABILITIES

Indian Navy is one of the largest and most powerful naval forces in the world, with a fleet of more than 150 ships and submarines, and over 300 aircraft. The Indian Navy has made significant progress in enhancing its capabilities, modernizing its fleet, and developing its human resources. Here are some of the key aspects of the Indian Navy's readiness:

- **Modernization:** The Indian Navy has been actively pursuing the modernization of its fleet and equipment to enhance its operational capabilities. It has been acquiring new warships, submarines, and aircraft, and upgrading its existing assets with advanced sensors and weapons systems.
- **Training and human resource development:** The Indian Navy has been focused on training and developing its personnel to ensure they are prepared for a wide range of operations, from humanitarian assistance and disaster relief to combat operations.

The Navy has established a robust training and education system that includes technical and leadership training, and it also conducts regular exercises with other navies to enhance interoperability.

- **Maritime domain awareness:** The Indian Navy has developed a comprehensive maritime domain awareness system that includes satellite and radar-based surveillance, as well as human intelligence. This system enables the Navy to monitor and track maritime activity in the Indian Ocean Region, and respond to any potential security threats.
- **Regional cooperation:** The Indian Navy has been actively engaged in regional cooperation with other navies in the Indian Ocean Region. It participates in joint exercises, patrols, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations, and shares information and expertise with partner countries.

ABOUT INDIAN OCEAN REGION (IOR)

The Indian Ocean Region (IOR) is a geopolitical term used to describe the vast expanse of ocean that stretches from the east coast of Africa to the west coast of Australia and includes the Arabian Sea, the Bay of Bengal, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. It is one of the most strategically important and economically vibrant regions in the world, with a rich history and diverse cultures.

- **Shipping lanes:** The IOR is home to several important shipping lanes, including the Strait of Malacca, the Suez Canal, and the Persian Gulf, through which much of the world's trade and energy supplies pass. The region is also home to several important ports and naval bases, which are critical to maintaining maritime security and ensuring the free flow of goods and services.
- **Diversity:** The IOR is a region of immense diversity, with a rich mix of cultures, religions, and languages. It is home to some of the world's fastest-growing economies, including India, China, and several countries in Southeast Asia.
- **Strategic Partnerships:** The region is also home to several important strategic partnerships, including the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad), which bring together like-minded countries to promote security and economic cooperation in the region.

INITIATIVES (TROPEX 23) ARE TAKEN BY INDIA TO ENHANCE ITS LEADERSHIP IN INDIAN OCEAN REGION (IOR)

India has been an active participant in initiatives aimed at promoting cooperation and stability in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). Some of the Indian initiatives in IOR are as follows:

- **Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA):** India was one of the founding members of the IORA, a regional forum comprising 23 countries bordering the Indian Ocean. The

IORA aims to promote economic cooperation and maritime security in the region through dialogue and collaboration.

- **SAGAR:** The Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) initiative were launched by India in 2015. Tropex 23 seeks to promote economic and security cooperation in the IOR by strengthening maritime links, promoting sustainable development, and enhancing regional security.
- **Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS):** India played a key role in the establishment of IONS, a voluntary association of navies from the littoral states of the Indian Ocean. IONS seeks to enhance maritime security and promote regional stability through dialogue and cooperation.
- **Project Mausam:** India launched Project Mausam in 2014 to promote cultural and economic ties among countries in the IOR. The initiative seeks to revive historical maritime links and promote tourism, trade, and cultural exchange in the region.
- **Indian Ocean Conference:** India hosts an annual Indian Ocean Conference that brings together policymakers, academics, and business leaders to discuss issues related to regional security and economic cooperation.

Way Forward

India can expand its maritime capabilities, including naval presence, maritime surveillance, and search and rescue operations, to ensure the safety and security of shipping lanes and territorial waters in the region with the help of Tropex 23. This can be done through the development of infrastructure, acquisition of advanced naval assets, and capacity building of regional countries.

Source:
PIB

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