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## Coastal Defence Exercise Sea Vigil 21

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### Why in News

Recently, the **second edition** of the **biennial pan-India coastal defence exercise 'Sea Vigil-21'** has started.

### Key Points

- **Launch:**
  - The **inaugural edition** of the exercise was conducted in **January 2019**.
  - It is billed as **India's largest coastal defence drill**.
- **Area of Operation:**
  - The 2021 exercise is **being undertaken along the entire 7516 km coastline and Exclusive Economic Zone of India**.

The **United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)** defines an **Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)** as generally **extending 200 nautical miles from shore**, within which **the coastal state has the right to explore and exploit**, and the responsibility to conserve and manage, both living and non-living resources.
  - It **involves all the 13 coastal States and Union Territories** along with other maritime stakeholders, including the **fishing and coastal communities**.

**13 Coastal States and UTs:** Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, West Bengal, Daman & Diu, Puducherry, Andaman & Nicobar Islands (Bay of Bengal) and Lakshadweep Islands (Arabian Sea).
  - Assets of the Indian Navy, **Coast Guard**, Customs and other maritime agencies are participating in the Exercise.
  - The **Indian Air Force**, **National Security Guard**, the **Border Security Force**, oil handling agencies and airports also participate in the exercise.
- **Coordinating Force:**

**Indian Navy**

- **Aim:**
  - To check the **efficacy of the measures** initiated to plug gaps in coastal security following the Mumbai terror attack in 2008.
  - Multiple initiatives were set forth, including the **National Committee for Coastal and Maritime Security (NCSMCS)**, creation of **Joint Operations Centres (JOC)** at Mumbai, Cochin, Visakhapatnam and Port Blair, raising of **Sagar Prahari Bal (SPB)**, installation of the Harbour Defence Surveillance System, setting-up of **National Command Control Communication and Intelligence (NC3I) Network**.
- **Significance:**
  - The exercise is a **build up towards the major Theatre level exercise TROPEX (Theatre-level Readiness Operational Exercise)** which **Indian Navy conducts every two years**.
    - Sea Vigil and TROPEX together will cover the entire spectrum of maritime security challenges, including transition from peace to conflict.
  - While **smaller scale exercises are conducted in coastal states regularly**, including combined exercises amongst adjoining states, the conduct of a security exercise at national-level is aimed to serve a larger purpose.
    - It provides opportunity, at the **apex level, to assess the country's preparedness in the domain of maritime security** and coastal defence.

**Source: PIB**