



Malabar Exercise 2021

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Why in News

Recently, the Navies of the **Quad (Quadrilateral Framework) Nations** (India, the United States, Japan, and Australia) have participated in the **25th edition of the Malabar Exercise**, which began off the coast of Guam in the Pacific Ocean.

Guam is a US island territory in the North Pacific Ocean, which is much **closer to China in the East than to the US mainland in the West** making it an **ideal US military strategic outpost for Indo-Pacific operations**.



Key Points

- **Malabar Exercise:**

- It is a **multilateral war-gaming naval exercise** that was started in 1992. It began as a **bilateral exercise between the navies of India and the United States.**

Two more editions of the exercise were carried out in **1995 and 1996, after which there was a break until 2002** in the aftermath of India's nuclear tests.

- **From 2002 onward**, the exercise has been conducted every year.

Japan and Australia first participated in **2007**, and **since 2014, India, the US and Japan have participated in the exercise every year.**

- In 2020 **Australia joined the Malabar Exercise** on India's request in order to contain China in the Indo-Pacific region.

For the first time in over a decade, **Malabar 2020** saw the participation of all four Quad members.

- It is aimed **to support free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific and remain committed to a rules based international order.**

- **Malabar 2021:**

This is the **first joint maritime exercise within the framework of Quad in the Western Pacific** and apparently aims to frighten China. It is being hosted by the US.

- **Significance:**

- **Enhance Strategic Partnership:**

Such complex exercises have further **enhanced synergy and mutual understanding among the four navies in undertaking joint maritime security operations**, and will go a long way in further strengthening their already close strategic partnership.

- **Sustainable Indo-Pacific Coalition:**

A major step towards building a **sustainable Indo-Pacific coalition thereby addressing the massive strategic imbalance** generated by an economically and militarily powerful China.

There is a **consensus, among many major liberal democracies, that China threatens the international system**, liberal societies and a rules-based regime.

- **Peace through Sea:**

- It is not a coincidence that as **India-US ties improved in the mid-2000s, China was better behaved.**
- It is only **with economic strength and partnerships** such as the one that will be manifested in the Malabar exercise that **India can broaden its options with China.**

The **road to peace in the mountains may lie through the sea.**

- **Other Exercises with Quad Countries:**
 - **India- Japan:** **JIMEX** (naval exercise), **SHINYUU Maitri** (air force exercise), and **Dharma Guardian** (military exercise).
 - **India-US:** Yudha Abhyas (Army), Vajra Prahar (Military), Spitting Cobra, SANGAM, RED FLAG, COPE INDIA.
 - **India-Australia:** **AUSINDEX (Maritime)**, AUSTRALIA HIND, Pitch Black
 - **Passage Exercises (PASSEX).**

Quad

- It is a **four-nation alliance of India, Australia, USA and Japan** which was **established in 2007**.

The idea of Quad was first mooted by former **Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe**.
- It is often dubbed as an "**Asian**" or "**mini**" **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)**, and is viewed as a **counterbalance to China's military and economic clout** in the Indo-Pacific region.
- Interestingly, the QUAD, which used to be known as the quadrilateral security dialogue, is **now known as the quadrilateral framework to indicate it has gone beyond a narrow security dialogue**.

Source: IE