

## Exercise VARUNA 2021

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### Why in News

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The 19<sup>th</sup> edition of the Indian and French Navy bilateral exercise 'VARUNA-2021' is being conducted in the Arabian Sea.

Earlier this year, the Indian Navy took part for the first time in the France-led naval exercise "La Pérouse" with the navies of the US, Australia and Japan.



### Key Points

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- **About the Exercise:**
  - **Background:**
    - The Indian and French Navies have been conducting bilateral maritime **exercises since 1993. Since 2001**, these exercises have been called ‘VARUNA’.
    - These interactions further underscore the shared values as partner navies, in **ensuring freedom of seas and commitment to an open, inclusive Indo-Pacific and a rules-based international order.**
  - **2021 Exercise:**
    - This is the **first time that the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is participating** in the Varuna maritime exercise.
    - The ‘Varuna’ joint exercise is **part of the French carrier strike group’s ‘CLEMENCEAU 21’ deployment**, which the French Navy is conducting in the **eastern Mediterranean, the Gulf and the Indian Ocean (Arabian Sea).**
      - Its goal is **to contribute to the stabilization of these strategic zones** and strengthening cooperation with the navies of partner countries, in particular India for the Indian Ocean component.
      - As part of this deployment, the **Carrier Strike Group is also taking part in anti-ISIS (the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) operations.**
    - The exercise will see **high tempo-naval operations at sea**, including **advanced air defence and anti-submarine exercises**, tactical manoeuvres, underway replenishment and other maritime security operations.
- **Other Indo-French Joint Exercises:**
  - **Desert Knight-21** and **Garuda** (Air exercise)
  - **Varuna** (Naval exercise)
  - **Shakti** (Army exercise)

### Major Indian Bilateral Maritime Exercises

Name of the Exercise	Name of the Country
<b>SLINEX</b>	Sri Lanka
<b>Bongosagar and IN-BN CORPAT</b>	Bangladesh
<b>JIMEX</b>	Japan
Naseem-Al-Bahr	Oman
<b>Indra</b>	Russia
<b>Za’ir-Al-Bahr</b>	Qatar

<b><u>Samudra Shakti</u></b>	Indonesia
<b><u>Indo-Thai CORPAT</u></b>	Thailand
IMCOR	Malaysia
<b><u>SIMBEX</u></b>	Singapore
<b>AUSINDEX</b>	Australia

**Source: PIB**