



Exercise Sea Breeze

Why in News

Ukraine and the United States launched **joint naval Exercise 'Sea Breeze' in the Black Sea** in a show of Western cooperation with Ukraine as it faces off with Russia.

- The drills come just days after the [British Royal Navy's HMS Defender passed near Russian-annexed Crimea](#) in the Black Sea.

Key Points

▪ About the Exercise:

- The exercise Sea Breeze **has been held since 1997**, involving [NATO states](#) and **their allies in the Black Sea region**.
- It has taken place **21 times since 1997**. This edition (2021) will be the **largest In Exercise's history** that will involve some 5,000 military personnel from more than 30 countries.

▪ Aim of the Exercise:

- The drill is **aimed at improving naval and land operations** and improving cooperation among participating countries.
- The exercise is also aimed at sending a powerful message to **maintain stability and peace in the region**.

▪ Significance of Black Sea for Russia:

- The unique geography of the Black Sea region confers several **geopolitical advantages to Russia** and thus Russia always wanted to control the region.
 - Firstly, it is an **important crossroads and strategic intersection** for the entire region. Access to the Black Sea is **vital for all littoral and neighboring states**, and greatly enhances the projection of power into several adjacent regions.
 - Secondly, the region is an **important transit corridor for goods and energy**.
 - Thirdly, the Black Sea region is **rich in cultural and ethnic diversity**, and due to geographical proximity, shares **close historical ties with Russia**.
- Following such interest, **Russia annexed Crimea from Ukraine in 2014** and claims the waters around the peninsula as part of its territory.

- Most countries do not recognise the takeover and stand behind Ukraine's claims to the waters.

▪ Black Sea:

- This marginal sea of the Atlantic Ocean, located between Eastern Europe and Western Asia.
- The bordering countries of Black Sea are: **Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, Turkey, Bulgaria and Romania**.
- The Black Sea **happens to be the largest water body with a meromictic basin**, which means the movement of water between the lower and upper layers of the sea is a rare

phenomenon which is also responsible for its **Anoxic Water** (i.e. a significant absence of oxygen in the water).



[Source: TH](#)

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