

Indian Navy Set for 32nd SIMBEX Exercise in Singapore, Bolstering Maritime Ties



The Indian Navy is poised to participate in the 32nd iteration of the Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX), a long-standing naval drill scheduled to take place later this month in Singapore. This annual exercise, previously known as Exercise Lion King, underscores the robust and enduring defense cooperation between the Indian Navy and the Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN).

India's High Commissioner to Singapore, Shilpak Ambule, highlighted the significance of SIMBEX, noting it as one of the longest uninterrupted maritime exercises for India. He emphasized that the engagement aligns with India's Vision SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) and Act East policy, both of which prioritize regional cooperation and maritime security. Ambule stressed the collective need for joint efforts in ensuring maritime safety, particularly in light of escalating threats from piracy and non-state actors, affirming that cooperation at sea is vital for maintaining free and secure trade routes.

For the 32nd SIMBEX, the Indian Naval Ships (INS) Delhi, INS Satpura, INS Kiltan, and INS Shakti have already arrived in Singapore. These indigenously built warships, equipped for modern naval operations, are under the command of Rear Admiral Susheel Menon, Flag Officer Commanding Eastern Fleet. Their presence was met with a warm reception from RSN personnel and officials from the High Commission of India in Singapore.

SIMBEX typically comprises two phases: a Harbour Phase and a Sea Phase. The Harbour Phase involves joint planning sessions, professional exchanges, and cultural interactions, fostering mutual understanding and interoperability between the two navies. The subsequent

Sea Phase features complex maneuvers, including air and surface operations, surveillance drills, and Search and Rescue (SAR) exercises, allowing both navies to hone their operational capabilities in a realistic maritime environment.

The exercise, which commenced in 1994, has consistently evolved in scope and complexity. It serves as a crucial platform for both navies to enhance interoperability, improve maritime domain awareness, and collaboratively address common challenges in the Indo-Pacific region. As Ambule underscored, the growing intensity of these engagements reflects a strong, well-founded construct established over three decades ago, continuously adapting to evolving maritime paradigms. The successful execution of SIMBEX 2025 will further solidify the strategic partnership between India and Singapore, contributing to regional stability and security.