



Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



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INDO-PACIFIC MONITOR

This publication is a monthly analytical survey of developments and policy trends that impact India's interests and define its challenges across the extended Indo-Pacific maritime space, which has become the primary theatre of global geopolitical contestation. It is authored by Cmde. Lalit Kapur (Retd.), DPG Senior Fellow for Maritime Strategy, assisted by Ms. Divya Rai, based on open source reports and publications. Your comments and feedback may be addressed to the author at lalit@dpg.org.in. To subscribe, please [click here](#).

Cover Images:

India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi meets Mauritius Prime Minister Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam in Port Louis on March 11, 2025. Source: MEA Photo Gallery

FNS Charles de Gaulle, INS Vikrant and other ships in formation during Exercise Varuna on the Western Seaboard, March 22, 2024. Source: PIB

Prime Minister Narendra Modi holds discussions with New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon at Hyderabad House, New Delhi on March 17, 2025. Source: MEA Photo Gallery

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INDO-PACIFIC MONITOR

March 2025

Abstract

Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Mauritius on March 11-12. Ten years after unveiling India's SAGAR initiative, he upgraded it to MAHASAGAR – Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions – India's broader vision for the Global South, encompassing trade, capacity building and mutual security.

The Indian Navy launched its IOS Sagar (an IN ship deployed in the Southwestern Indian Ocean with a combined crew from 10 IOR countries) and AIKEYME (a training exercise co-hosted by India and Tanzania for IOR countries) initiatives on March 24 as a follow-up to the MAHASAGAR vision. The Indian Navy concluded the 2025 edition of its Theatre Level Operational exercise TROPEX. It also participated in exercises Sea Dragon (with USA, Japan, Australia and South Korea), Varuna (with France) and Indra (with the Russian Federation) during the month.

Responding to a high-intensity earthquake resulting in mass casualties in Myanmar on March 28, India launched Operation Brahma to provide disaster relief for Myanmar. Rescue teams, a field hospital and relief supplies reached Myanmar within 24 hours of the quake. Relief operations were continuing at month end.

New Zealand's Prime Minister Christopher Luxon visited India from March 16-20. His talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi defined the future of the bilateral relationship, based on the defence forces building greater strategic trust, scientists collaborating on global challenges, improved trade cooperation, and greater mobility for students, young professionals and tourists.

US Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth made his maiden visits to Manila and Tokyo from March 27-30, strengthening the US posture in the Philippines and providing reassurance that the US defence relationship with Japan remained on a sound footing.



China announced a defence budget of about 1.78 trillion Yuan (\$ 249 billion) on March 5. The amount is more than the spending of the next 22 largest militaries in the region, and represents an increase of 7.2% over last year's budget.

The US Intelligence Community published its annual threat assessment on March 25. The assessment prioritised illicit drug actors, transnational Islamic extremists and other transnational criminals as the main non-state threats. Amongst state actors, China, Russia, Iran and North Korea were identified as threats.

About 2500 marines from the USMC returned to Darwin as part of the 14th rotation of the US Marine Rotational Force on March 17. The marines will spend the next five months in Australia, participating in various bilateral and multilateral exercises.

Ships from China, Russia and Iran participated in Exercise Security Belt 2025 in the Gulf of Oman from March 09-13. Nine countries including Sri Lanka and South Africa were reported to have sent observers for this exercise.

Transforming SAGAR into MAHASAGAR - The Modi Visit to Mauritius

On March 12, 2015, India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled SAGAR – Security and Growth for all in the Region – his vision for the Indian Ocean¹, during a state visit to Mauritius. Ten years later, during another state visit to Mauritius, Modi unveiled MAHASAGAR – Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions – India's vision for the Global South². The vision encompasses trade for development, capacity building for sustainable growth, and mutual security for a shared future. Under it, India will extend cooperation to the Global South through technology sharing, concessional loans and grants.

Located in the Southern Indian Ocean, about 200 Km Northeast of Reunion, 880 Km East of Madagascar and 3800 Km Southwest of Kanyakumari, Mauritius is a former French and British colony that gained independence in 1968. India's connect with Mauritius dates back to 1729, when the first batch of Indians were brought to the island from Puducherry, to work as artisans and masons. A little over a century later, the British brought half a million Indians to the island to work as indentured labour in sugarcane plantations. People of Indian origin

¹ Text of the PM's Remarks on the Commissioning of Coast Ship Barracuda, 12 March 2015, <http://www.pib.gov.in/newsite/erelcontent.aspx?relid=116881>

² English Translation of Press Statement by Prime Minister during the India-Mauritius Joint Press Statement, March 12, 2025, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2110746>



now make up nearly 70% of the country's population³. Independent India's diplomatic relationship with Mauritius dates back to 1948, before the island country's independence. Mauritius has no regular military forces. The Mauritius Police Force (MPF) functions under the Ministry of Defence and includes a paramilitary unit known as the Special Mobile Force, a Police Helicopter Squadron, a Special Support Unit and the National Coast Guard. India is the MPF's primary security partner. Its chief security concerns are piracy and trafficking of narcotics.

The recent visit of Prime Minister Modi witnessed the bilateral relationship being elevated to an Enhanced Strategic Partnership. The Joint Statement released on the occasion identifies ten pillars for this partnership: political exchanges, development partnership, HRD and capacity building, space and climate change, health and education cooperation, economic and trade cooperation, digital cooperation, defence and maritime security cooperation, regional and multilateral cooperation, and cultural and people-to-people ties. There are a number of commitments under each pillar.

Under the development partnership, the leaders noted that India has been the leading development partner for Mauritius since its independence and has successfully implemented several high-profile infrastructure projects, such as the India-Mauritius Metro Express Project, the new Supreme Court building, a new ENT hospital, 956 social housing units and educational tablets, among others. They acknowledged the benefits of the new runway and jetty developed at Agalega with Indian assistance and its critical role in the provision of humanitarian assistance in the aftermath of Cyclone Chido recently. The leaders agreed to work towards timely delivery of 100 electric buses and associated charging infrastructure; implement Phase II of the High Impact Community Development Projects; initiate implementation of replacement of 100 Km water pipeline in Mauritius; finalise discussions on a new Parliament building on a site to be identified by Mauritius and conclude a framework understanding to implement the project under India's grant assistance; finalise discussion on the redevelopment of the Ganga Talao Spiritual Sanctuary and its implementation with India's grant assistance; and to explore new areas of development cooperation as per the needs and priorities of the Government of Mauritius.

Under HRD and capacity building, the leaders committed to implement a customised training programme for 500 civil servants of Mauritius over a period of five years; support the continued deputation of consultants and

³ India Mauritius Bilateral Relations, March 14, 2025,
<https://www.mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/UC.pdf>



technical experts to assist Mauritius for its functional requirements, enhance training collaboration for Mauritian diplomats at the Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service, and explore training programmes for Mauritian officials in civil, police, parliamentary, customs, legal, health and other domains.

In the field of space and climate change, the two leaders agreed to work closely together towards development and launch of the India-Mauritius satellite including training for Mauritian personnel at ISRO; support implementation of weather and climate forecasting systems in Mauritius to help build disaster preparedness and response; renew ongoing cooperation on the ISRO Telemetry and Tracking Centre in Mauritius; pursue a proposal for utilising an Earth Observation Application and an interactive computing framework to enable Mauritius to monitor extreme weather events and study climate impact effectively.

Under economic and trade cooperation, the two countries decided to facilitate trade settlements in local currencies, viz. the Indian and Mauritian rupee, pursuant to the signing of an MoU on Local Currency Settlement by the partner Central Banks; and to promote investments in sunrise sectors such as ocean economy, pharmaceuticals, IT and Fintech, among others, to support Mauritius in diversification of its economy for long term and sustainable economic growth. Under digital cooperation, the leaders agreed to support the implementation of an e-judiciary system and digitisation of records at the Mahatma Gandhi Institute; and support implementation of digital tools developed by India such as PM Gati Shakti digital platform, as per Mauritius's requirements.

The two leaders agreed that India and Mauritius, having a shared commitment to ensure a free, open, safe and secure Indian Ocean Region, are natural regional partners and reiterated their resolve to work closely in countering maritime challenges and safeguarding larger strategic interests in the region. They resolved to continue cooperation on provisioning of defence and maritime assets and equipment, as per the needs and priorities of Mauritius; enhance maritime cooperation through increased deployment of ships and aircraft for joint maritime surveillance and hydrography surveys; enhanced utilisation of the newly built jetty and runway at Agalega; assist in setting up of the National Maritime Information Sharing Centre to enhance maritime domain awareness; provide expertise in the fields of Marine Operations and Marine Engineering, Port safety environment and port emergency and port security to the Mauritius Port Authority, and to conduct customised training and capacity building to meet the growing needs of the Mauritius Police Force. A technical agreement on sharing of White Shipping Information was signed



between the Indian Navy and the Government of Mauritius. The navigational chart of St Brandon Island, prepared following the hydrographic survey of the island by an IN ship, was also handed over.

The leaders welcomed the ongoing discussions between Mauritius and UK on Chagos Islands, with PM Modi reiterating India's firm support to Mauritius on the Chagos issue. They agreed to work closely together to advance cooperation under regional and multilateral frameworks, especially the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), Colombo Security Conclave, the Global Biofuels Alliance, International Solar Alliance and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure.

INS Imphal, the third of the Visakhapatnam Class destroyers of the Indian Navy, made her maiden port call at Mauritius to participate in the National Day celebrations⁴.

Geographical location and the historical connect make Mauritius intrinsic to India's Indian Ocean Policy. This "substantive, productive and fruitful visit"⁵, as described by India's Foreign Secretary, has gone a long way in keeping the bilateral relationship on the desired track. Will MAHASAGAR make Mauritius intrinsic to India's Global South policy? Time will tell.

New Zealand's Prime Minister Visits India

New Zealand is located in the Southwestern Pacific, Southeast of Australia, far from India's international trade routes and well over 12,000 Km from New Delhi. The country has a land area of a little under 270,000 Km², making it about 11% larger than Uttar Pradesh, but a population of just 5.2 million, a third smaller than that of Himachal Pradesh. It is, however, a developed country, with a per capita GDP of over \$ 48,000⁶. New Zealand continues to be a member of the Five Powers Defence Arrangements (FPDA). It signed the ANZUS Treaty in 1951; however, the US suspended ANZUS security obligations to New Zealand in 1986 after the country barred nuclear armed and nuclear-powered warships from visiting its ports. The country's population includes about 150,000 Non-

⁴ Indian Naval Ship Imphal to Participate in Mauritius National Day Celebrations 2025, March 10, 2025, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2110026>

⁵ Transcript of Special Briefing by MEA on Prime Minister's State Visit to Mauritius (March 12, 2025), https://www.mea.gov.in/media-briefings.htm?dtl/39163/Transcript_of_Special_Briefing_by_MEA_on_Prime_Ministers_State_Visit_to_Mauritius_March_12_2025

⁶ International Monetary Fund New Zealand dataset, October 2024, <https://www.imf.org/external/datamapper/profile/NZL>



Resident Indians and another 120,000 Persons of Indian Origin⁷, adding up to 6% of the country's population. Geographic distance, differing strategic outlooks, capacity limitations and different stages of economic development have meant that India-New Zealand relations have remained tepid. The last Prime Ministerial visit from India to New Zealand was in 1986; New Zealand is not amongst the countries Prime Minister Narendra Modi and former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh have visited in their official capacity even though there have been three Prime Ministerial visits from New Zealand to India since 2004 (there has, however, been a Presidential visit from India to New Zealand in 2024⁸).

The visit of New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon to India from March 16-20 is therefore of some significance. Luxon was accompanied by three ministers and a high-level delegation comprising of officials, representatives of business, community diaspora, media and cultural groups. Delivering the inaugural keynote at the 10th edition of the Raisina Dialogue on March 17, he observed that New Zealanders of Indian heritage comprise 11% of the people living in Auckland, New Zealand's biggest city⁹. He described India as a critical source of pharmaceuticals and machinery for New Zealand, while that country served as a great tourism and education destination for Indians. Observing that with a country as consequential as India, New Zealand needed rich political interaction, engaged militaries, strong economic architecture and connections that support a diaspora that bridges the two nations, he said that he and PM Modi had charted out the future of the bilateral relationship earlier that day. They agreed that the defence forces build greater strategic trust with each other, while deploying together and training together more. They wanted their scientists collaborating on global challenges like climate change and on commercial applications like space. They supported businesses to improve air links and build primary sector cooperation. They would facilitate students, young professionals and tourists to move between the two countries. And they instructed trade negotiators to negotiate a free trade agreement between the two countries.

Noting that India and New Zealand were fortunate to live in the world's most economically dynamic region, he identified technological change as a big opportunity for both. This included not just artificial intelligence, but also

⁷ Population of Overseas Indians, <https://www.mea.gov.in/population-of-overseas-indians.htm>

⁸ India-New Zealand Bilateral Brief, <https://www.cgiauckland.gov.in/page/india-new-zealand-bilateral-brief/>

⁹ Raisina Dialogue 2025: K᳚lachakra – People, Peace and Planet, <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/speech/raisina-dialogue-2025-k%C4%81lachakra-people-peace-and-planet>



quantum, biotech and advanced manufacturing. There was need for the international community to develop new norms to manage risks in a way that ensures compliance with the rules of war while ensuring human responsibility in conflict.

Luxon identified three big shifts that would make for challenging times ahead. First, rules were giving way to power. Nations could no longer count on countries respecting the UN Charter, the Law of the Sea and world trade rules. This raised the risk of dangerous miscalculation at flashpoints. Second, the world was witnessing a shift from economics to security. National security demands were now expanding, with nations dedicating increased attention and resources to military modernisation. The threat of damage to critical infrastructure like undersea cables had emerged. Third was the geo-economic shift from efficiency to resilience. Onshoring protectionism and trade wars were displacing best price, open markets and integrated supply chains.

He identified three ideas as New Zealand's organising principles for the Indo-Pacific. First, New Zealand wanted to live in a region where countries were free to chose their own path free from interference and no one country dominated. Second was the criticality of regional institutions, even as they evolve. This included ASEAN, the Quad, minilaterals, and regional trade and economic integration groupings. Third was alignment around a region in which respect for rules is foundational. He saw bilateral relations between the two nations developing with the above in mind.

The visit joint statement reaffirms the shared desire of the leaders to further strengthen the growing bilateral relationship even as they recognise that they face an increasingly uncertain and dangerous world¹⁰. The statement is structured around five pillars. Under cooperation in trade, investment and financial matters, the leaders called for further exploring the potential to expand bilateral trade and for greater two-way investment. They welcomed launch of FTA negotiations and committed to designate senior representatives to steer these negotiations to resolution as soon as reasonably possible. This includes discussions to explore early implementation of cooperation in the digital payments sector. Under political, defence and security cooperation, the leaders welcomed the signing of the India-New Zealand Memorandum of Understanding for Defence Cooperation. PM Luxon expressed New Zealand's interest in joining the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI), while PM Modi welcomed New Zealand into this partnership. Under the Cooperation in science and technology and disaster management pillar, PM Luxon welcomed

¹⁰ India-New Zealand Joint Statement, March 17, 2025, https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/39197/India_New_Zealand_Joint_Statement_March_17_2025



India's leadership role in the International Solar Alliance, while PM Modi welcomed New Zealand joining the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI). Under the education, mobility, sports and people to people ties pillar, the two leaders encouraged academic institutions of the two countries to build future-oriented partnerships focused on areas of mutual interest. They encouraged the creation of further opportunities for Indian students seeking education programmes in New Zealand, and agreed to launch negotiations on an arrangement facilitating mobility of professionals and skilled workers between the two countries. Finally, under the cooperation in regional and multilateral fora pillar, the leaders reaffirmed their commitment to supporting an open, inclusive, stable and prosperous Indo-Pacific where sovereignty and territorial integrity are respected.

New Zealand, like Australia, has an economic strategy for India¹¹. The strategy identifies six relationship goals: A relationship based on trust that advances shared interests; New Zealanders have improved capability for engaging with India; goods and services trade grows for shared prosperity; New Zealand's value proposition is known and understood; stronger and broader cultural connections between New Zealand and India; shared approaches bilaterally and in international fora. The distance factor and New Zealand's size and capacity limitations will limit the scale of what the two countries can do together in the geostrategic domain. Nevertheless, there is mutual benefit to be had, particularly in the economic and people-to-people domains. The question now is whether the two countries will be able to deliver the resources required to fulfil their commitments in their joint statement. This should become clear by the end of the year, when expectations are that the FTA negotiations will be completed.

Hegseth Reinforces US Posture in the Indo-Pacific

The maiden visits by US Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth to the Indo-Pacific region took him to the Philippines on March 27-28, and to Japan on March 28-30.

In the Philippines, Secretary Hegseth met with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr and Secretary of National Defense Gilberto Teodoro, Jr. He reiterated the US commitment to the 1951 US-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) amidst an increasingly complex security environment. He reiterated that the MDT extends to armed attacks against the Philippines armed forces, aircraft and

¹¹ India-New Zealand 2025: Investing in the Relationship, <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/assets/Countries-and-Regions/South-Asia/India/India-Strategy-A5-Final-web-spreads.pdf>



public vessels, including those of the Coast Guard, anywhere in the South China Sea. He also underscored that the 1998 Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) and the 2014 Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) were critical foundations for continued alliance coordination and interoperability.

Four key new initiatives were announced¹². First, the US would be deploying more advanced capabilities in the Philippines, including the Navy-Marine Expeditionary Ship Interdiction System (NMESIS) and highly capable unmanned surface vessels. These systems would be used in exercises to improve interoperability and strengthen deterrence by providing coverage of strategic sea lanes from coastal positions. Second, US Special Operations Forces and Philippine Marines would train together on complex landing scenarios in the Batanes Islands to improve their combined capability to conduct high-end operations in the region. Third, the US and Philippines announced the release of a bilateral defense industrial cooperation vision statement intended to explore unmanned systems (production and logistics), ammunition components/energetics (storage, all-up Round production, logistics), critical minerals (refinement), logistics support, ship maintenance and repair, airspace integration, additive manufacturing (3-D printing), aircraft maintenance and repair, and system components and spare parts production as priority areas for future cooperation¹³. Fourth, the two countries would launch a bilateral cybersecurity campaign to establish a secure defense network, develop a capable cybersecurity workforce and enable advanced operational cooperation. This would also enable greater information and intelligence sharing.

The initiatives build on an ongoing \$ 500 million commitment in foreign military financing and other security assistance to support the Philippines military modernisation. Secretary Hegseth also said, "So together, we'll encourage our other partners and allies in the region to step up their efforts and their cooperation to increase defense capabilities and strengthen deterrence"¹⁴.

¹² United States – Philippines Joint Statement on Secretary Hegseth's Inaugural Visit to the Philippines, March 28, 2025, <https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/4137869/united-statesphilippines-joint-statement-on-secretary-hegseths-inaugural-visit/>

¹³ Joint Vision Statement on US-Philippines Defense Industrial Cooperation, March 28, 2025, <https://media.defense.gov/2025/Mar/28/2003677420/-1/-1/1/JOINT-VISION-STATEMENT-ON-U.S.-PHILIPPINE-DEFENSE-INDUSTRIAL-COOPERATION.PDF>

¹⁴ Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth and Philippine Secretary of National Defense Gilberto Teodoro Hold Joint Media Availability, March 28, 2025, <https://www.defense.gov/News/Transcripts/Transcript/Article/4138360/defense-secretary-pete-hegseth-and-philippine-secretary-of-national-defense-gil/>



On his part, Secretary Teodoro said, “Because of the increased inter-operational activities, we expect increased rotational presence of likeminded and allied troops in the Philippines”¹⁵. Notably, ships and aircraft from the US, Japan and Philippines were conducting a maritime cooperation activity in the Philippines EEZ in the South China Sea during the visit. Secretary Teodoro observed, “We are facing a common threat, which now is the overreach of the Communist Party of China. So the Indo-Pacific, the rule of international law, freedom of navigation and individual personal freedoms are what are at stake here”. He reiterated the words of President Marcos describing US leadership as essential to the continuing peace and stability of the Indo-Pacific.

In Tokyo, Secretary Hegseth met Japan’s Defense Minister General Nakatani and discussed concrete steps to deepen cooperation across a range of areas, including through enhancing bilateral training and exercises, strengthening Alliance force posture and presence including in Japan’s Southwest Islands, and promoting defense equipment and technology cooperation¹⁶. The Secretary stated, “America is committed to sustaining robust, ready and credible deterrence in the Indo-Pacific, including across the Taiwan Strait”¹⁷. He announced the commencement of Phase One of the upgrade of US Forces Japan to a Joint Force Headquarters, as envisaged in the joint statement by President Trump and Prime Minister Ishiba on February 07, 2025¹⁸. There was no discussion on Japan increasing its defense budget, or enhancing the host nation support it provides for US personnel.

Outcomes from the visits reaffirm the US intent to execute the long-delayed pivot to the Indo-Pacific. There is stated commitment to strengthen US posture in both the Philippines and in Japan. As China’s capability grows and its assertion in the region becomes stronger, the increased deterrence provided by the US will be welcomed.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth Concludes Visit to Japan, March 30, 2025, <https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/4139267/secretary-of-defense-pete-hegseth-concludes-visit-to-japan/>

¹⁷ Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth Joint Press Conference With Japanese Defense Minister Gen Nakatani in Tokyo, March 29, 2025, <https://www.defense.gov/News/Transcripts/Transcript/Article/4139247/secretary-of-defense-pete-hegseth-joint-press-conference-with-japanese-defense/>

¹⁸ United States – Japan Joint Leaders’ Statement, February 7, 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/2025/02/united-states-japan-joint-leaders-statement/>



Exercise Varuna 2025

by Divya Rai

The 23rd edition of the bilateral naval exercise Varuna was held from March 19 to 22, 2025, off the coast of Goa. This year's exercise featured the Indian Navy's indigenous aircraft carrier INS *Vikrant*, MiG-29K fighter aircraft, destroyers, frigates, and a Kalvari-class submarine alongside the French Navy's Carrier Strike Group led by the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier FNS *Charles de Gaulle* and Rafale-M fighter jets. Exercise Varuna 2025 showcased a higher tempo of naval operations than the previous editions. It featured a range of complex drills, including realistic combat scenarios and mock air-to-air combat between the French Rafale-M and Indian MiG-29K fighter jets. The exercise included anti-submarine warfare operations involving Indian submarines and anti-submarine frigates of the two forces focused on improving underwater domain awareness, while surface warfare manoeuvres demonstrated coordinated engagements that showcased the combined combat power of both fleets¹⁹.

Maritime patrol operations were also part of the exercise for enhancing situational awareness in the region. Notably, the navies successfully conducted replenishment-at-sea operations involving their fleet tankers. Furthermore, anti-air gun firing exercises were conducted to bolster air defence capabilities. FNS Charles De Gaulle has previously exercised with *INS Vikramaditya* in the previous iterations of Varuna; 2025 was the first time the French nuclear carrier participated alongside *Vikrant*.

Initiated in 1983 and officially christened as 'Varuna' in 2001, the bilateral naval exercise has become a cornerstone of India and France's strategic partnership. The exercise has evolved into a robust platform for the enduring partnership between the two nations, which has matured over the years, with maritime cooperation as the backbone²⁰. The exercise stands out from other naval exercises conducted by India with different countries due to its focus on advanced naval tactics across air, surface, and underwater domains. While other exercises may focus on specific domains such as counterterrorism or peacekeeping (as seen in exercises like Yudh Abhyas with the USA), exercise Varuna includes advanced air defence drills, anti-submarine warfare, and

¹⁹ PIB, "Culmination of Bilateral Naval Exercise – Varuna 2025". March 24, 2025.

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2114535>

²⁰ PIB, Indian and French Navies Set for the 23rd Edition of Bilateral Naval Exercise – Varuna 2025. March 18, 2025. <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2112430>



coordinated surface engagements, often involving high-end assets such as aircraft carriers and submarines from both nations.

The Indian Ocean has become a focal point in recent Indo-French bilateral interactions, with maritime cooperation playing a central role. Exercise Varuna reaffirmed India and France's commitment to uphold a rules-based maritime order and promote stability in the Indo-Pacific region. The timing of 23rd edition of the exercise is crucial, as it comes when India is planned to acquire 26 Rafale-Marine fighters and construct three additional Scorpene-class submarines in collaboration with France²¹.

Other Developments Impacting the Indo-Pacific

Operation Brahma - Disaster Relief for Myanmar. Two earthquakes of magnitude 7.7 and 6.4 respectively struck Myanmar on the afternoon of April 28, causing widespread destruction. The epicentre was reported about 16 Km West of Mandalay and about 100 Km North of Naypyidaw. Reacting as the first responder, India launched Operation Brahma, intended to provide medical assistance to earthquake victims²². The first aircraft carrying about 15 tons of relief material and a rescue team landed at Yangon less than 20 hours after the earthquakes²³. Two warships loaded with relief supplies left Visakhapatnam for Yangon on March 29, two more sailed from Port Blair on March 30²⁴. A field hospital from India reached Yangon on March 29.

China's Defence Budget. China announced a planned defence budget of 1.784665 trillion Yuan (about \$ 249 billion) on March 5²⁵. The announcement was made at the National People's Congress, the annual meeting of China's legislature. Pentagon and other experts say that actual spending may be 40% higher because of items included under other budgets. The amount is more than the spending of the next 22 largest militaries in the region. According to

²¹ The Economic Times, "India to seal Rafale-M, Scorpene deals with France soon", January 30, 2025.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/india-to-seal-rafale-m-scorpene-deals-with-france-soon/articleshow/117745031.cms?from=mdr>

²² Operation Brahma – Medical Assistance to Myanmar Earthquake Victims by Indian Army, March 29, 2025, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2116635>

²³ Transcript of Special Briefing by MEA on Operation Brahma, March 29, 2025,

https://www.mea.gov.in/media-briefings.htm?dtl/39308/Transcript_of_Special_briefing_by_MEA_on_Operation_Brahma_March_29_2025

²⁴ Operation Brahma – Indian Naval Ships Sail with Relief Material, March 30, 2025,

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2116801>

²⁵ China to increase defence budget by 7.2 percent in 2025, marking single-digit growth for 10th year, March 05, 2025,

http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/CHINA_209163/TopStories_209189/16372869.html



western assessments, Beijing actually spends 40% to 90% more than it announces in its public defence budget²⁶. The increase in defence spending is 7.2%, about the same as the increase last year, notwithstanding the slowdown in China's economy. The amount is below 1.5% of the GDP. China claims global military expenditure in 2024 urged to an all-time high of \$ 2.43 trillion, and that its spending as a percentage of GDP is less than that of other powers.

Australia's Defence Budget. The Australian Government presented a defence budget of A \$ 58,988.7 million (about \$ 37.2 billion) for the year 2025-26 on March 25²⁷. The expected expenditure (all in Australian dollars) for the workforce is \$7.17 billion, for operations \$ 317.9 million, for capability acquisition \$ 18.8 billion, for capability sustainment \$ 18.76 billion and for operating expenses \$ 2.37 billion. The Australian Signals Directorate gets about \$ 2.5 billion, while the Australian Submarine Agency gets \$ 397.6 million. Defence spending constitutes 2.05% of the GDP.

Annual Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community. The US published the Annual Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community on March 25²⁸. The assessment identifies foreign illicit drug actors, transnational Islamic extremists (mainly ISIS and Al Qa'eda) and other transnational criminals (in that sequence) as the major nonstate threats. Amongst major state actors, it identifies China, Russia, Iran and North Korea as threats. "The PRC will seek to increase its power and influence to shape world events to create an environment favourable to PRC interests, obtain greater US deference to China's interests, and fend off challenges to its reputation, legitimacy and capabilities at home and abroad", according to the report. Militarily, the report states, "China presents the most comprehensive and robust military threat to US national security". Climate change was not mentioned as a threat to American security.

Australia's Independent Intelligence Review 2024. The Australian Government released the findings of Australia's Independent Intelligence Review on March 21²⁹. The review, announced in September 2023, found that the pace and scale

²⁶ US Department of Defense Annual Report to Congress: Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China, 2024, <https://media.defense.gov/2024/Dec/18/2003615520/-1/-1/0/MILITARY-AND-SECURITY-DEVELOPMENTS-INVOLVING-THE-PEOPLES-REPUBLIC-OF-CHINA-2024.PDF>

²⁷ Portfolio Budget Statements, Defence Portfolio, https://www.defence.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-03/2025-26_Defence_PBS_00_Complete.pdf

²⁸ Annual Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community, March 2025, <https://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/assessments/ATA-2025-Unclassified-Report.pdf>

²⁹ Release of the 2024 Independent Intelligence Review, March 21, 2025, <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/release-2024-independent-intelligence-review>



of change since the last independent review of 2017 are remarkable. The world in which Australia seeks security and prosperity is significantly more contested, fragmented and volatile. Major-power conflict is no longer unimaginable. New security threats are prominent, many amplified by technological change. The fragility of borders is more visible than ever before. Australia faces both a more dangerous international environment and a growing need to defend itself against threats to its democracy, social cohesion and essential infrastructure.

Indian Navy's IOS Sagar and AIKEYME Initiatives. Following the launch of the Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security Across the Region (MAHASAGAR) initiative by PM Modi in Mauritius during the month, the Indian Navy launched two initiatives aimed at consolidating its position as the preferred security provider and first responder in the Indian Ocean Region³⁰. The first, Indian Ocean Ship Sagar envisages an IN ship (INS Sunayna) being deployed to the Southwest IOR with a combined crew from India and nine friendly foreign countries (Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Sri Lanka and South Africa). The ship will make port calls at Dar-es-Salaam, Nacala, Port Louis, Port Victoria and Male in April 2025 and will undertake joint surveillance of the Exclusive Economic Zones of Tanzania, Mozambique, Mauritius and the Seychelles. Foreign personnel, after undergoing a training capsule of two weeks at professional schools in Kochi, would operate the ship thereafter. The second initiative, Africa India Key Maritime Engagement (AIKEYME – meaning “unity” in Sanskrit) is a joint exercise co-hosted by the IN and the Tanzanian People's Defence Force in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, in mid-April 2025. The six-day exercise will include participation from Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles and South Africa apart from the co-hosts, and will encompass exercises on piracy and information-sharing, as well as training on seamanship, VBSS procedures, SAR, small arms firing and helicopter operations.

Visit of Belgian Team to India. Princess Astrid, the sister of the current Belgian monarch, and Belgium's Defence Minister Theo Francken visited India and called on India's Defence Minister Shri Rajnath Singh on March 03³¹. Both sides discussed the possibility of defence engagement in the Indo-Pacific, particularly in the maritime domain.

³⁰ Indian Navy's Maiden Initiatives of Indian Ocean Ship Sagar (IOS Sagar) and Africa India Key Maritime Engagement (AIKEYME), March 24, 2025, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2114491>

³¹ Raksha Mantri Meets Princess Astrid of Belgium & Defence Minister in New Delhi, March 03, 2025, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2107706>



Raisina Dialogue. The 10th edition of India's flagship conference on geopolitics and geo-economics, the Raisina Dialogue, took place in New Delhi from March 17-19, 2025³². The dialogue witnessed the participation of representatives from about 125 countries. It was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on March 17. The Prime Minister of New Zealand, Christopher Luxon, delivered the keynote address as Chief Guest³³.

Imposition of Additional Duties on China. Having determined that the PRC has not taken adequate steps to alleviate the illicit drug use crisis in the US through cooperative enforcement action, President Trump imposed an additional 10% duty on all articles that are products of the PRC on March 03³⁴. A 10% duty had earlier been imposed on February 1, 2025³⁵.

Japan – UK Foreign Ministers' Meeting. Foreign Ministers of Japan and UK met in Tokyo on March 07³⁶. The Ministers welcomed the UK's presence in the Indo-Pacific, including the UK's Carrier Strike Group's port call in Japan. They also agreed to support each other's efforts regarding the Global Combat Air Programme (GCAP) as diplomatic authorities, towards the in-service date of 2035. They further agreed to coordinate at the working level to have the next meeting of the Japan-UK Foreign and Defence Ministers (2+2) in the UK.

Japan UK Economic 2+2. The first Japan-UK Economic 2+2 Ministers' Meeting took place at Tokyo on March 07³⁷. The meeting provided opportunity for the two countries, as each other's closest security partners in Europe and Asia, to strengthen their economic ties. The ministers discussed economic security, free and open international trade, energy security and the Global South. The ministers expressed concern over economic coercion, non-market policies and practices including harmful industrial subsidies, market-distorting practices of state-owned enterprises, as well as forced technology transfer and

³² Raisina Dialogue 2025, March 16, 2025, https://www.mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/39172/Raisina_Dialogue_2025

³³ Raisina Dialogue 2025: Kalachakra – People, Peace and Planet, March 17, 2025, <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/speech/raisina-dialogue-2025-k%C4%81lachakra-people-peace-and-planet>

³⁴ Further Amendment to Duties Addressing the Synthetic Opioid Supply Chain in the People's Republic of China, March 03, 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/03/further-amendment-to-duties-addressing-the-synthetic-opioid-supply-chain-in-the-peoples-republic-of-china/>

³⁵ Executive Order 14195 – Imposing Duties to address the Synthetic Opioid Supply Chain in the People's Republic of China, February 01, 2025, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/executive-order-14195-imposing-duties-address-the-synthetic-opioid-supply-chain-the>

³⁶ Japan-UK Foreign Ministers' Meeting, March 07, 2025, https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/kaiken/pageite_000001_00005.html

³⁷ Japan-UK Economic 2+2 Joint Press Release, March 7, 2025, https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/pressite_000001_01069.html



other market distortions resulting from non-market policies and practices. They concurred on further strengthening effective export controls on materials, technology, and research that could be used for military purposes in a way that keeps pace with rapid technological developments. They reaffirmed the importance of the rules-based multilateral trading system with the WTO at its core, and concurred on moving towards strengthening all of the WTO's functions, including negotiation, monitoring, deliberation and dispute settlement. They discussed energy security risks and opportunities for Japan-UK collaboration to support further development of clean energy supply chains. They welcomed signing of Memoranda of Cooperation on offshore wind cooperation among governments, organisations, companies and research institutions of both countries, including on advanced nuclear technologies, fusion energy and nuclear decommissioning. They shared the recognition that it is important to further enhance cooperation with Global South countries to maintain and strengthen a rule-based international economic order and affirmed that they would engage with the Global South towards sustainable development and trade mechanisms that support economic development and poverty reduction.

China-Japan-South Korea Foreign Ministers' Meeting. The 11th trilateral foreign ministers' meeting between the top diplomats of China, Japan and South Korea took place in Tokyo on March 22³⁸. The ministers concurred on promoting a future-oriented cooperation for the next Trilateral Summit and accelerating preparation to achieve concrete outcomes, focused in three specific areas: understanding each other better, shaping and protecting livelihoods, and joint effort to tackle common challenges. A controversy developed regarding the Chinese readout of the courtesy call in Japan's Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba due to the statement "The Japanese side fully recognizes the important significance of the four political documents between Japan and China, respects the position elaborated by the Chinese side, and is willing to strengthen exchanges and cooperation with the Chinese side to push forward the development of bilateral relations and deliver more benefits to the two peoples"³⁹. Japan protested about China including respect for China's positions in the statement, saying that such a statement had never been made⁴⁰.

³⁸ The Eleventh Japan-China-ROK Trilateral Foreign Ministers' Meeting, March 22, 2025, https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/pressite_000001_01107.html

³⁹ Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba Meets with Wang Yi, March 21, 2025, https://www.mfa.gov.cn/eng/wjbzhd/202503/t20250322_11580309.html

⁴⁰ Japan protests China's description of Ishiba and Wang meeting, March 24, 2025, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2025/03/24/japan/politics/japan-protests-ishiba-wang-meet/>



US Marines Return to Darwin. The 14th rotation of the United States Marine Rotational Force returned to Darwin on March 17, 2025⁴¹. About 2500 US Marines and sailors will work alongside the Australian Defence Force and other regional partners through this rotation to participate in combined training exercises across Australia and the Indo-Pacific, including Exercise Talisman Sabre 2025.

Exercise Tropex 2025. The 2025 edition of the Indian Navy's capstone Theatre Level Operational Exercise (TROPEX) was conducted over a period of three months from January to March 2025⁴². Tropex included an amphibious exercise, a joint workup phase focused on precise delivery of ordnance on target, cyber and electronic warfare, and a tactical phase. Conducted in the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal, it witnessed the participation of over 65 ships, nine submarines and 80 aircraft of different types, as well as the participation of forces from the Indian Army, Indian Air Force and Indian Coast Guard.

China-Russia-Iran Exercise Security Belt 2025. Warships from China, Russia and Iran came together for Exercise Security Belt 2025 in the Gulf of Oman from March 09 – 13⁴³. PLAN ships that participated in the exercise were the destroyer CNS Baotou and the fleet oiler Gaoyouhu. Russian participants were the corvettes RFS Hero of the Russian Federation Aldar Tsydenzhapov and RFS Rezkiiy, as well as the fleet oiler Pechenga. Iran deployed ten ships for the exercise, including IRIS Alvand, IRIS Jamaran, IRIS Shahid Sayyad Shirazi, and IRIS Shahid Nazeri. The sea phase of the exercise was on March 10-11 and included a strike on maritime targets, VBSS, damage control and joint SAR operations⁴⁴. Azerbaijan, South Africa, Oman, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Qatar, Iraq, Sri Lanka and the UAE sent observers, according to Iranian news.

Japan-US-ROK Multilateral Exercise in the East China Sea. Ships from Japan (JS Ikazuchi), ROK (ROKS Sejong the Great and Dae Joyeong) and the US (The USS Carl Vinson CSG) came together for a multilateral exercise in the East

⁴¹ United States Marines return to the Top End for 2025, March 17, 2025, <https://www.minister.defence.gov.au/media-releases/2025-03-17/united-states-marines-return-top-end-2025>

⁴² Culmination of Indian Navy's Theatre Level Operational Exercise (TROPEX) – 2025, March 07, 2025, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2109094>

⁴³ China-Iran-Russia "Security Belt 2025" joint exercise kicks off, March 10, 2025, http://eng.chinamil.com.cn/CHINA_209163/TopStories_209189/16374180.html

⁴⁴ Maritime Phase of China-Iran-Russia "Security Belt-2025" joint exercise concludes, March 13, 2025, http://eng.mod.gov.cn/xb/News_213114/TopStories/16374735.html



China Sea from March 17-20⁴⁵. The ships conducted anti-surface warfare, anti-air warfare and anti-submarine warfare drills.

Exercise Sea Dragon 2025. Maritime Reconnaissance and Anti-Submarine Warfare Aircraft from Australia, India, Japan, South Korea and the US gathered at Guam from March 04-18 for the seventh edition of multinational Exercise Sea Dragon 2025⁴⁶. This annual exercise includes phases for training and competition and provides opportunity for continuous multilateral ASW prosecution against simulated and real targets.

Maritime Cooperative Activity in South China Sea. USS Shoup, JS Noshiro and BRP Jose Rizal along with a USN P-8A carried out a maritime cooperative activity in the Philippines EEZ in the South China Sea to coincide with the visit of US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth to Manila on March 28⁴⁷. The exercise was intended to demonstrate a collective commitment to strengthen regional and international cooperation in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific.

Exercise INIOCHOS-25. The Indian Air Force contingent comprising Su-30 MKI fighters, and IL78 and C-17 combat enablers began participation in Exercise INIOCHOS-25 in Greece on March 31⁴⁸. The exercise hosted by the Hellenic Air Force will integrate air and surface assets from 15 countries under realistic combat scenarios.

Sea Trials of Fujian. The PLA Navy's third aircraft carrier, Fujian, sailed for its seventh sea trial on March 27Sea Trial of aircraft carrier⁴⁹. The focus of this trial is reported to be catapult launch and arrested landing, including by night.

Launch of Tavasya. The second frigate of Project 1135.6 being built by Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) was launched on March 22⁵⁰. The future INS Tavasya (named for the mace of Bhima, the second of the Pandava brothers in Mahabharat) has a displacement of over 3,600 tons and is designed to execute

⁴⁵ Japan-US-ROK Multilateral Exercise, March 20, 2025,

<https://www.mod.go.jp/msdf/en/release/202503/20250320en.pdf>

⁴⁶ Australia, India, Japan, Korea and the US Complete Multinational Exercise Sea Dragon 2025, March 19, 2025, <https://www.navy.mil/Press-Office/News-Stories/Article/4124332/australia-india-japan-korea-and-the-us-complete-multinational-exercise-sea-drag/>

⁴⁷ Japan, Philippines and United States Conduct Multilateral Maritime Cooperation Activity, March 28, 2025, <https://www.cpf.navy.mil/Newsroom/News/Article/4138573/japan-philippines-and-united-states-conduct-multilateral-maritime-cooperative-a/>

⁴⁸ Indian Air Force to Participate in Multi-national Air Exercise INIOCHOS-25, March 30, 2025, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2116710>

⁴⁹ Sea trial of aircraft carrier Fujian is a routine arrangement: Defense Spokesperson, March 27, 2025, http://eng.mod.gov.cn/xb/News_213114/TopStories/16377319.html

⁵⁰ Second Frigate of Project 1135.6 built by GSL launched, March 22, 2025, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2114025>



a diverse range of defensive and offensive operations in the Indian Ocean. GSL is expected to deliver the ship in 2027.

Keel Laying of Second Fleet Support Ship. The keel of the second of the five fleet support ships (FSS) being built for the Indian Navy was laid at L&T Shipyard, Kattupali on March 12⁵¹. The contract for construction of five FSS was awarded to Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL), Vishakhapatnam. HSL has subcontracted L&T to build two of the ships. Scheduled for delivery commencing mid-2027, the ships, with a displacement of over 40,000 tons, will carry fuel, water, ammunition and stores for warships enabling their prolonged operation at sea.

Keel Laying of Next Generation OPVs. The keels of the second and third of the Indian Navy's Next Generation Offshore Patrol Vessels (NGOPV) were laid at Ratnagiri on March 23. 11 NGOPVs are to be built, seven by GSL and four by GRSE. The vessels, with a displacement of about 3000 tons, are designed for coastal defence and surveillance, SAR operations, protection of offshore assets and anti-piracy missions.

Flight Test of Vertically Launched Short Range Surface to Air Missile. DRDO and the Indian Navy successfully flight tested the indigenously developed Vertically-Launched Short-Range Surface-to-Air Missile (VLSRSAM) from the Integrated Test Range at Chandipur on March 26⁵². The test was carried out on a high-speed aerial target at very close range and low altitude, effectively simulating the takedown of a cruise missile.

⁵¹ Keel Laying of Second Fleet Support Ship for Indian Navy, March 13, 2025,

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2111089>

⁵² DRDO & Indian Navy successfully flight-test indigenously-developed Vertically-Launched Short-Range Surface-to-Air Missile, March 26, 2025,

<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2115509>

India's Maritime Interaction with Other Countries

Dates	Participants	Event
01-04 March	INS Sujata and Shardul, ICGS Veera ⁵³	Training visit to Phuket
04 March	INSV Tarini ⁵⁴	Departure from Port Stanley for Capetown.
04-06 March	INS Kuthar ⁵⁵	Visit to Colombo for OTR
10-14 March	INS Imphal ⁵⁶	Visit Port Louis, Mauritius, for National Day Celebrations
12-15 March	ICGS Saksham ⁵⁷	Visit to Port Victoria, Seychelles
13 March	INS Ranvir, BNS Abu Ubaidah ⁵⁸	Exercise Bongosagar 25 and IN-BN CORPAT
16-21 March	R Adm Garin Golding, Chief of New Zealand Navy ⁵⁹	Visit to India
18-21 March	ICGS Saksham ⁶⁰	Visit to Antsiranana, Madagascar
19-22 March	Indian & French Navies ⁶¹	Exercise Varuna 2025 in Arabian Sea
20 March	INS Surat, HMNZS Te Kaha ⁶²	Hosting of visits by New Zealand PM Christopher Luxon, Chief of RNZN, others
28 March – 02 April	IN Ships Rana, Kuthar, RFN ships Pechanga, Rezekiy, Aldar Tsydenzhapov, P-8I aircraft	Exercise Indra-2025 in the Arabian Sea

⁵³ Indian Navy's First Training Squadron Reaches Phuket Deep Sea Port, Thailand, March 03, 2025, <https://www.navy.mil/Press-Office/News-Stories/Article/4124332/australia-india-japan-korea-and-the-us-complete-multinational-exercise-sea-drag/>
<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2107813>

⁵⁴ INSV Tarini departs Port Stanley for Cape Town in fourth leg of global circumnavigation, March 06, 2025, <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/insv-tarini-departs-port-stanley-for-cape-town-in-fourth-leg-of-global-circumnavigation/article69298480.ece>

⁵⁵ Indian Naval Ship Kuthar Arrives at Colombo, Sri Lanka, March 04, 2025, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2108147>

⁵⁶ Indian Naval Ship Imphal to Participate in Mauritius National Day Celebrations 2025, March 10, 2025, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2110026>

⁵⁷ ICGS Saksham makes port call at Port Victoria, Seychelles for a three-day visit, March 12, 2025, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2110896>

⁵⁸ INS Ranvir Participates in Exercise Bongosagar 25 and Indian Navy – Bangladesh Navy CORPAT, March 13, 2025, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2111292>

⁵⁹ Strengthening Maritime Cooperation: Chief of Navy, RNZN, Visits India, March 18, 2025, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2112362>

⁶⁰ ICGS Saksham makes port call at Antsiranana, Madagascar, March 1, 2025, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2112329>

⁶¹ Indian and French Navies set for the 23rd Edition of Bilateral Exercise Varuna 2025, March 18, 2025, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2112430>

⁶² Visit of New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon and Royal New Zealand Navy Ship Te Kaha to Mumbai, March 20, 2025, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2113261>



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