# INS Sahyadri at Exercise Malabar-2025

#### 1.Introduction

- The Indian Naval Ship (INS) Sahyadri, a Guided Missile Stealth Frigate of the Indian Navy, is currently at Guam in the Northern Pacific Ocean.
- It is participating in the **multilateral Exercise Malabar-2025**, one of the most significant naval exercises involving key Indo-Pacific nations.

## 2. About Exercise Malabar

- Origin: Began in 1992 as a bilateral exercise between India and the United States.
- Expanded Membership:
  - Japan became a permanent participant in 2015.
  - Australia joined in 2020, making it a quadrilateral naval exercise involving all QUAD nations (India, USA, Japan, and Australia).

## Purpose:

- Enhance interoperability and coordination among the navies.
- Strengthen the rules-based international order and freedom of navigation in the Indo-Pacific region.
- Promote regional peace, stability, and security.

## 3. Significance of India's Participation

- Strategic Engagement: Reaffirms India's commitment to the Indo-Pacific vision and QUAD framework.
- Regional Security: Demonstrates a collective resolve to safeguard maritime security, trade routes, and freedom of navigation.
- Partnership Strengthening: Highlights India's enduring partnership with other democratic maritime powers.
- Operational Readiness: Provides Indian naval personnel exposure to advanced naval tactics, technology sharing, and joint operations.

## 4. About INS Sahyadri

- Class: Shivalik-class (Project 17) Guided Missile Stealth Frigate.
- Design and Construction:
  - Indigenously designed and built by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL), Mumbai.
  - Embodies the vision of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' (Self-Reliant India).

## Capabilities:

- Equipped with state-of-the-art stealth features that reduce radar and infrared signatures.
- Armed with surface-to-air missiles, anti-ship missiles, torpedoes, and advanced sensors for multi-dimensional warfare.
- Designed for anti-submarine, anti-surface, and anti-air operations.

## Previous Operations:

- Participated in various bilateral and multilateral naval exercises.
- Deployed for operational missions across the Indo-Pacific region, showcasing India's maritime strength.

#### 5. Structure of Exercise Malabar-2025

The exercise is conducted in **two main phases**:

#### A. Harbour Phase (at Guam)

• **Focus:** Planning, interaction, and coordination.

#### Key Activities:

- Operational planning discussions.
- Communication protocol alignment.
- Cross-visits and familiarisation among participating navies.
- Professional and cultural exchanges.
- Sports events to build camaraderie.

#### **B. Sea Phase**

- Focus: Execution of complex joint naval operations.
- Key Drills Include:
  - Joint Fleet Operations coordinated maneuvers among multi-nation fleets.
  - Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) detection and neutralisation of submarines.
  - Gunnery Serials live weapon firing exercises.
  - Flying Operations coordination between ship-based and shore-based aircraft.
  - Maritime Surveillance and Air Defence Drills.

## 6. Broader Strategic Context

- Indo-Pacific Strategy: Exercise Malabar underlines India's growing naval role in the Indo-Pacific, balancing regional power dynamics.
- Maritime Diplomacy: Reflects India's emphasis on "Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR)" policy.
- Defence Cooperation: Enhances trust, communication, and technical coordination among partner navies.
- **Deterrence:** Sends a message of **collective preparedness** against any maritime threats or coercive tactics in international waters.

#### 7. Relevance for UPSC Exam

- **GS Paper II (IR Section):** India's role in multilateral engagements and Indo-Pacific cooperation.
- **GS Paper III (Security Section):** Maritime security, defence modernization, and indigenisation under Aatmanirbhar Bharat.
- **Essay Paper:** Topics related to India's foreign policy and regional stability in the Indo-Pacific.

### 8. Conclusion

The participation of INS Sahyadri in Exercise Malabar-2025 symbolizes:

- India's **strategic alignment** with like-minded nations.
- Its commitment to maritime security and a free and open Indo-Pacific.
- And the growing success of India's **indigenisation efforts** in building advanced naval platforms like INS Sahyadri.

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