

**PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

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**INDIAN NAVY – FRENCH NAVY JOINT EXERCISE ‘VARUNA 08’**

New Delhi, May 8, 2008

The tenth INDO-FRENCH bilateral exercise “VARUNA 08” is scheduled off our east coast from 08 to 16 May 08. The Indian Naval group consist of the newly inducted Landing Platform Dock (LPD) Jalashwa, Guided-Missile Destroyer Ranjit, Guided Missile Corvette Kirch and the submarine Vagli. The French task force would comprise of their Landing Platform Dock Mistral and the Guided Missile Destroyer Dupleix and an embedded Royal Navy Frigate Westminister. The Joint’ Task Force’ for the exercise would be commanded by Rear Admiral Alain Hinden of the French Navy.

The ‘VARUNA’ series of bilateral exercise is a significant facet of the growing co-operation between Indian and France. This series of exercises between the navies of the two nations commenced in 2001 and has grown in scope and complexity over the years. Nine exercises conducted thus far have met the underlying aims of facilitating mutual learning and cross-pollination of best practices.

The Indian Navy lays great stress on enhancing bilateral ties and improving understanding and operability with developed navies through professional interaction. This particular edition of the exercise will, in addition, provide an opportunity to build on the Indian Navy’s cooperative capability for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief through the participation of newly inducted platform Jalashwa along with the French Navy’s Mistral.

In addition to the above, intermediate and advanced level anti-submarine exercise, Maritime Interdiction Operations (MIO), Visit Board Search & Seizure (VBSS) operations and tactical exercises would also be conducted during the sea exercise phase.

The exercise culminates with a harbour phase at Vishakapatnam from 14-16 May 08. During this period, apart from reaffirming our friendship, harbour based professional, social and sports interaction between the two navies is planned.

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