

SIMBEX - Facts about Singapore India Naval Bilateral Exercise for UPSC

SIMBEX stands for Singapore India Maritime Bilateral Exercise which is an annual event. SIMBEX started in 1994 between the Indian and Singapore navies. **The 28th edition of the exercise was SIMBEX 2021 that took place from 2nd to 4th September 2021.** The core idea of SIMBEX is to enhance maritime cooperation between the two nations – India and Singapore. The topic is important from the [IAS Exam](#) perspective.

Facts about SIMBEX for IAS

The table below mentions the important facts about SIMBEX that can be asked in [UPSC Prelims](#):

SIMBEX – Facts about SIMBEX for UPSC

It is an annual naval bilateral exercise. It takes place between the navies of India and Singapore (Republic of Singapore Navy – RSN)

In 2020, the 27th edition of SIMBEX took place in Andaman Sea, while in 2021, it took place in the southern fringes of the South China Sea.

It was introduced in 1994. A total of 27 editions of SIMBEX have taken place over the years counting the latest in 2020.

In 2018, SIMBEX was conducted in Port Blair.

- The participating ships were INS Ranvijay, Satpura, Sahyadri, Shakti, Kirch, Kadmatt, Sumedha and Sukanya along with the RSN Ships, Formidable, Steadfast, Unity, Valiant and Vigour.
- The maritime patrol aircraft of the Indian Navy, the P8I and the Singapore Navy's Fokker F50 also took part in it.
- SIMBEX 2018 was held in November 2018.

In 2017, SIMBEX was conducted in Singapore.

- IN Ships Shivalik, Sahyadri, Kamorta and Jyoti participated in the SIMBEX 2017.
- The ships also participated in the International Maritime Defence Exhibition (IMDEX) during the period.
- Shivalik and Sahyadri Ships are Project 17 indigenous multirole stealth frigates.
- Kamorta is a Project 28 anti-submarine stealth corvette.
- Jyoti is a fleet replenishment tanker.
- Alongside the four Indian Navy ships, P8i anti-submarine and reconnaissance aircraft and integral

Chetak helicopters also represented the Indian Navy.

- Formidable, Supreme (both Formidable class multirole stealth frigates), Victory (missile corvette), Sikorsky S-70B helicopter, Fokker F 50 maritime patrol aircraft, RSAF F-15, F-16 fighter jets represented the Singapore Navy.
- It ended on 24th May 2017.

SIMBEX 2021

It was the 28th edition of the bilateral naval exercise between India & Singapore

1. INS Ranvijay (Guided Missile Destroyer), INS Kiltan (Anti-submarine warfare corvette), INS Kora (Guided Missile Corvette) and P8I Long Range Maritime Patrol Aircraft represented Indian Navy.
2. Amid the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic, the SIMEX 2021 was held without any physical interactions as an 'at-sea only' exercise.
3. It was hosted by the RSN (Republic of Singapore Navy) in the southern fringes of the South China Sea.

Source – (indiannavy.nic.in)

SIMBEX 2020

The 27th edition of the SIMBEX exercise took place in November 2020 in the Andaman Sea.

1. The 2020 edition of SIMBEX witnessed participation by Indian Navy ships including destroyer Rana with integral Chetak helicopter and indigenously built corvettes Kamorta and Karmuk.
2. In addition, IN submarine Sindhuraj and P8I maritime reconnaissance aircraft also participated in the exercise.

SIMBEX 2019

SIMBEX 2019 or the 26th Edition of the SIMBEX took place in May 2019 at Singapore. The important points about SIMBEX 2019 are given below:

1. Indian Navy ships Kolkata and Shakti represented India.
2. The maritime bilateral exercise between India and Singapore has led to tactical and operational cooperation.
3. The bilateral naval exercise between Singapore and India included the following exercises:
 1. Advanced air defence operations
 2. Anti-air/ surface practice firings
 3. Tactical exercises
4. The SIMBEX 2019 was a catalyst for maritime cooperation and friendly relations between the two navies.
5. The objectives of SIMBEX 2019:
 1. To strengthen mutual trust
 2. To enhance interoperability, and
 3. To build greater synergy to address common maritime concerns among both navies
6. There are two phases of a naval exercise – SIMBEX:

1. Harbour Phase – it includes the planning of conferences, simulator-based warfare training/ wargaming, courtesy calls to dignitaries of RSN navy and sporting events
2. Sea Phase – It was conducted in the South China Sea and included maritime combat exercises such as firing on aerial/ surface targets, advanced aerial tracking, coordinated targeting exercises and tactical exercises on surface/ air scenarios
7. Long-range maritime patrol aircraft Poseidon-8I (P8I) also represented Indian Navy alongside IN Ships.
8. Ships Steadfast and Valiant, maritime patrol aircraft Fokker-50 (F-50) and F-16 fighter aircraft represented Republic of Singapore Navy.

India-Singapore Defence Cooperation

The defence relations between India and Singapore are termed as strong. Between the two countries, there are more than 20 regular bilateral mechanisms, dialogues and exercises; both are members of a number of forums:

1. East Asia Summit
2. G20
3. Commonwealth of Nations
4. Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and
5. Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS)

The following activities/events keep the defence cooperation between the two countries intact:

- Annual Ministerial and Secretary-level dialogues
- Staff level talks between three wings of Armed forces; training of Singapore Army and Air force in India every year
- Annual exercises including India's longest uninterrupted naval exercise with any other country
- Ship visits from Navy and Coast Guard
- Singapore participates in IONS and multilateral Exercise MILAN hosted by the Indian Navy.