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Joint Indo-Russia Tri-Services Exercise Indra-2017 successfully conducted

The Joint Indo-Russia Tri-Services Exercise INDRA-2017 was successfully conducted from 19 to 29 Oct 2017 at Vladivostok in Russia. The name of the exercise INDRA has been derived from **INDia** and **RussiA**. So far INDRA exercises have been undertaken between respective Armies, Navies and Air Forces engaged with each other without concurrent participation from other Services. 17 such service specific exercises with the Russian defence forces have been conducted since 2003. Exercise INDRA-2017 is the first Joint Tri-Services Exercise between Russia and India. This is also the first time that Russia has hosted a Tri-Services Exercise on its soil.

The theme of Exercise INDRA-2017 was 'Preparation and Conduct of Operations by a Joint Force for Suppression of International Terror Activity at the request of a host country under UN mandate'.

More than 900 soldiers, sailors and air warriors from the Indian Army, Navy and Air Force participated in the exercise along with over 1000 personnel from the Russian Defence Forces. The exercise was conducted in the Sergeevsky Combined Arms Training Range, Cape Klerk Training Area and the waters of the Sea of Japan.

Army exercise tasks involved check point defence and humanitarian convoy escort in the back drop of threat from armed groups. Naval tasks comprised Visit, Board, Search and Seizure (VBSS) operations besides Force Protection Measures, Joint Air Defence and Anti-mining Operations. The Air Forces of both countries, combined their air crews for Combat Air Patrols, Reconnaissance Missions, Formation Flying and Slithering operations utilising Russian fighters, transport aircraft and helicopters.

It was indeed a historic occasion for two of the world's greatest Armed Forces to join hands and successfully conduct an exercise of this magnitude with professionalism, providing an opportunity for both defence forces to imbibe the best practices from each other and jointly evolve and practice drills to defeat the scourge of terror. The first ever Indo-Russia Joint Tri Services Exercise has been a combination of training and cross training in field conditions on land, sea and air, to achieve seamless integration. The validation of the exercise tasks is a testimony of the contingents of both countries having integrated and synergised seamlessly to achieve the laid down objectives. The exercise also provided an opportunity to all personnel for cultural exchange and for friendly sports competitions.

Exercise INDRA-2017 will surely be a benchmark for future exercises of this nature all across the world. The esprit de corps and goodwill generated during the exercise will facilitate further strengthening of bonds between the defence forces of India and Russia enabling them to understand each other's organisations and the methodology of executing joint counter terrorist operations. It is even more satisfying that this milestone in Indo-Russia defence cooperation has been realised as we commemorate 70 years of Indo-Russian friendship.

MJPS/NA/NM/RP