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Naval Commanders at Kochi for OP Discussions

Admiral Sunil Lanba, Chief of the Naval Staff will be in Kochi tomorrow (on 18 Mar) to preside over the debrief of largest War Game of the Indian Navy - the Theatre Level Operational Readiness Exercise (TROPEX 19). The exercise had commenced 07 Jan 19 and was planned to be terminated by 10 Mar 19. However, the JEM sponsored terrorist attack on the CRPF convoy in Pulwama on 14 Feb 19 led to the rapid redeployment of the Indian Navy for Operations in North Arabian sea.

The major combat units of the Indian Navy including the Carrier Battle Group with INS Vikramaditya, nuclear submarines and scores of other ships, submarines and aircraft swiftly transited from exercise to operational deployment mode as tensions between India and Pakistan escalated. A clear and resolute message regarding the operational posture of the Indian Navy to prevent, deter and defeat any misadventure by Pakistan in the maritime domain was also issued during the tri-services press conference conducted on 28 Feb 19.

About 60 ships of the Indian Navy, 12 ships of the Indian Coast Guard and 60 aircraft were part of TROPEX 19. Amongst the key attributes of Naval forces are the 'Versatility' to change roles, 'Mobility' and 'Poise'. Availability of such a large number of combat ready assets in the theatre of operations for TROPEX 19 allowed the Indian Navy to expeditiously respond to the developing situation in synergy with the three services. The overwhelming superiority of Indian Navy in all three dimensions forced the Pakistan Navy to remain deployed close to the Makran coast and not venture out in the open ocean.

Earlier, TROPEX 19 had commenced with Tri-services Amphibious Exercise in the A & N islands with participation of Army and Air Force. This was followed by the largest Coastal Defence Exercise code named 'SEA VIGIL' on 22 Jan and 23 Jan 19 with participation of all 13 Coastal States and Union Territories along with all maritime stakeholders. The TROPEX itself was thus far the largest in terms of geographical spread covering the IOR and also with regard to the number of participating units.

This day long review of TROPEX 19 by the Chief of the Naval Staff with all Operational Commander's is intended to examine the conduct of the exercise and to assess the operational preparedness of the Indian Navy. A realistic audit of the Indian Navy's deployment philosophy and fighting capability would also be undertaken. The lessons learnt from the exercise will provide the planners accurate assessments to fine tune force structuring requirements, operational logistics, as also material and training imperatives.

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