

DHARMA GUARDIAN EXERCISE

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Context:

India and Japan have initiated a two-week military exercise.

Background:

This exercise provides an opportunity for both nations to share best practices, develop interoperability, and strengthen bilateral relations.

About The Dharma Guardian:

1. The Dharma Guardian is an annual joint military exercise between the Indian Army and the Japan Ground Self Defence Force.
2. The 5th edition of this exercise commenced on February 25, 2024, at the Mahajan Field Firing Ranges in Rajasthan, India.
3. Inception: The exercise was initiated in 2018 as part of the growing bilateral defence cooperation between the two nations.
4. Objective: The primary aim of Dharma Guardian is to enhance military interoperability and strengthen the strategic partnership between India and Japan.
5. Alternating Locations: The exercise takes place alternately in India and Japan. It provides an opportunity for troops from both countries to train together, share best practices, and learn from each other.
6. Focus Areas: During the exercise, soldiers engage in various tactical drills, including establishing temporary operating bases, conducting reconnaissance grids, setting up vehicle check posts, practicing cordon and search operations, and executing heliborne operations.
7. Weapon Exhibition: Apart from the field exercises, there is also an exhibition of weapons and equipment. This showcases India's 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' initiative (self-reliant India) and highlights the country's growing defence industrial capability.
8. Mutual Benefits: Dharma Guardian fosters mutual understanding, interoperability, and camaraderie between the armed forces of India and Japan.