

**04– 04 – 2023**

**News:** India U.S. air exercise to begin next week, Japan to be observer

## **Cope India Exercise**

- Continuing the **military to military engagement, the Air Forces of India and the U.S. are set to conduct the Cope India exercise from April 10 to 21 at the Kalaikunda airbase in West Bengal, with Japan as an observer.**
- The exercise will see intense air maneuvers aimed at improving interoperability.
- The Indian Air Force (IAF) is set to field its frontline fighters **SU 30MKI, Rafale and the indigenous Light Combat Aircraft along with force multipliers, while the U.S. Air Force is expected to bring in F15 fighter jets.**
- The **Japanese Air Self Defence Force (JASDF) participated in Cope India as an observer for the first time in December 2018** based on the Agreement of Defence Ministerial Meeting on August 20, 2018.
- The U.S. proposed a **trilateral air exercise between the three countries and so Japan was included as an observer** with the intention to elevate it into trilateral level in phases.
- The **India U.S. bilateral Malabar naval exercise became trilateral with the addition of Japan in 2015 and further brought in all the QUAD partners together with the inclusion of Australia in 2020.**

- In January this year, India and Japan held the maiden air exercise Veer Guardian hosted by the JASDF.