

China, Russia, Iran Holding Joint Naval Drills

By [AFP](#)

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The Russian cruiser Varyag. **Russian Defense Ministry**

The navies of China, Russia and Iran are staging joint drills in the Gulf of Oman this week, Beijing said Monday.

The military activities — to be conducted from Monday through Friday — are aimed at "jointly maintaining regional maritime security," according to a statement published on social media platform WeChat by China's defense ministry.

"China will send... guided-missile destroyer Urumqi, guided-missile frigate Linyi and comprehensive supply ship Dongpinghu to participate in the exercise," the statement added, without providing further details.

Drills in the area were held in March last year between the same three countries under the name "Security Bond 2023."

This year's round of joint exercises coincides with soaring tensions in the region as the war in Gaza rages and Iran-backed Huthi rebels in Yemen have launched a flurry of attacks on ships in the Red Sea.

Russian state media reported that a detachment of ships from the country's Pacific Fleet, led by the Varyag cruiser, arrived at the Iranian port of Chah Bahar on Monday ahead of the drills.

"The practical part of the exercise will take place in the waters of the Gulf of Oman in the Arabian Sea," Russian news agencies cited the defense ministry as saying.

"The main purpose of the maneuvers is to work out the safety of maritime economic activity."

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