

# Exercise Cope India 18



General CQ Brown Jr of the USAF in Mirage 2000D of the IAF



Air Chief Marshal BS Dhanoa with USAF officers at Kalaikunda

Described as testimony of a growing Indo-US military relationship, *Exercise Cope India 18*, the fourth edition in the series of bilateral joint exercises between the Indian Air Force and the US Air Force, was held from 3 to 14 December 2018 at two fighter airbases, Kalaikunda and Panagarh, both in West Bengal.

While the IAF contingent fielded 10 Sukhoi Su-30MK1s, 6 Jaguars and 5 Mirage 2000s, the US Air Force brought 12 F-15 Eagles from Kadena Air Base, Japan, which also houses the 67<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron 'Fighting Cocks', plus 3 C-130 Hercules tactical transport aircraft, from the Illinois Air National Guard.

On his visit to Kalaikunda on 5 December 2018 to witness the exercise, Air Chief Marshal BS Dhanoa, Chief of the Air Staff, emphasised the importance of joint exercises as "they create an

environment of camaraderie and provide an opportunity to learn from each other's best practices and operational synergy."

General CQ Brown, Jr, Commander Pacific Air Forces, USAF also visited Kalaikunda and stated, "These exercise scenarios challenge us to be agile in execution, innovative in our approach and integrated in our command and control... enhancing the readiness and lethality of our airmen and our allies and partners."

Earlier, Air Commodore JS Mann, Exercise Director, said that the aim was to give an exposure to IAF fighter pilots and ground crew on USAF practices, having four objectives : to hone the technical use of air power, imbibe best practices, and prepare for future operations wherein "we learn to exercise intra capability so that we can fight together ... understand each other's limitations and capabilities and complement each other".



USAF F-15 Eagle at Kalaikunda, from the USAF's 18<sup>th</sup> Operations Group at Kadena Air Base, Japan. (US Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Hailey Haux)

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