

Tri Services Academia Technology Symposium (T-SATS) Concludes With Strategic Vision For Future - Ready Indian Academia Defence Ecosystem

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The maiden Tri Services Academia Tech Symposium (T-SATS), a landmark two-day initiative aimed at synergising the Services-Academia R&D ecosystem, concluded on September 23, 2025 at the Manekshaw Centre, New Delhi. Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Minister of Education presided over the closing ceremony which was attended by Shri Sanjay Seth, Raksha Rajya Mantri and General Upendra Dwivedi, Chief of the Army Staff. The symposium brought together top minds from the armed forces, academia and research institutions to accelerate indigenous defence research and innovation. It provided an opportunity to academia, especially scholars and innovators to present their research studies and innovations, and identify their possible military use cases.

Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, the Chief Guest on the second day, appreciated the R&D Exhibition showcasing the high-potential of academia in defence related innovations. He felicitated select project proposals and exhibits and also announced ten promising project proposals which will be taken up for R&D.

Delivering the keynote address, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan lauded the Armed Forces for placing their trust in India's youth and academia, noting that this partnership is transforming research into real defence applications. He highlighted India's rapid rise in global innovation rankings, the expansion of universities in international listings, and the doubling of research expenditure as indicators of growing national capability. He underlined India's shift from defence imports to exports, with achievements like Operation Sindoor, the success of DRDO and ISRO showcasing the power of indigenous innovation. He called for academia, industry, and the Armed Forces to continue this collaboration as an annual mechanism for national strength and self-reliance.

In his address, Raksha Rajya Mantri Shri Sanjay Seth highlighted that the Tri-Services Academia Tech Symposium has underscored the immense potential of our scientific talent to develop technologies for the operational needs of the Armed Forces. Emphasising that 2025 has been declared as the Year of Reforms, he outlined initiatives to modernise the forces through AI, cyber, robotics, hypersonics, and space technologies, alongside simplified procurement and strengthened Integrated Theatre Commands. Showcasing success stories like Operation Sindoor and the iDEX programme, he noted India's rapid growth in defence production, with MSMEs and start-ups playing a crucial role. He called upon academia, industry, and the Armed Forces to translate discussions into bold actions, making India future-ready and globally recognised for strength, progress, and self-reliance.

Chief of the Army Staff, General Upendra Dwivedi, in his address, emphasised the need to invest in niche technologies, highlighting the untapped potential of academia - military collaboration. He noted the overwhelming response to the newly launched portal (www.tsats.org.in), with nearly 450 proposals received, of which 40% were shortlisted for one-on-one guidance with subject matter experts from the three services. Stressing the importance of mission-driven research, he underlined the creation of technology clusters, internship programs, and defence incubation cells to nurture innovation, including from tier-2 and tier-3 institutions.

The second day of the event featured a Panel Discussion on "Building Future Defence Technology Ecosystem and Technologies", moderated by the Additional Director General, Army Design Bureau. The discussion highlighted challenges in the existing R&D process and procedures. It explored mechanisms to establish a structured, outcome-driven partnership between academia and the armed forces, to develop niche technologies

and customise dual-use technologies for defence applications, in the fastest possible timeframe.

Compendium of Technological Challenges (CTC) of the three Services were also released by the Minister of Education. Requirements of futuristic technology/ equipment having futuristic military application are enunciated in the CTCs. Responses are invited from Defence Innovation Ecosystem and selected responses will be reviewed by High Powered Selection Committees and would be taken up as projects through appropriate R&D Schemes.

The symposium has laid a strong foundation for sustained academia - defence collaboration, ensuring that innovation translates into tangible operational capabilities. It stands as a milestone event that will continue to yield transformative outcomes for national security and self-reliance in the years ahead.

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