



EXERCISE TARANG SHAKTI 2026: POWER IN PARTNERSHIP, STRENGTH IN SELF-RELIANCE

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The second edition of Exercise Tarang Shakti, hosted by the Indian Air Force at Air Force Station Jodhpur from 26 September to 12 October 2026, marks a significant milestone in India's growing engagement with partner air forces and its emergence as a key contributor to regional and global security. With the theme 'Power in Partnership', the multinational air exercise brings together seven Friendly Foreign Countries (FFCs)—Australia, Bangladesh, France, Germany, Sri Lanka, the United Arab Emirates and the United States of America—along with 32 observer nations. The participation reflects the growing international interest in India's operational capabilities, professional standards and expanding aerospace and defence ecosystem.

Building on the success of its inaugural edition in 2024, Tarang Shakti 2026 provided a platform for complex joint missions, exchange of operational experience and enhanced interoperability among participating air forces. The exercise brought together diverse combat, transport, surveillance and air-to-air refuelling capabilities, enabling aircrew, mission planners and support personnel to gain valuable insights into each other's operational philosophies and procedures. The presence of a large number of observer nations further expanded the exercise's strategic significance, reinforcing India's commitment to constructive defence engagement and international cooperation.

The contemporary relevance of the exercise is underscored by the decisive role of air power in Operation Sindoor, which demonstrated the Indian Air Force's ability to execute precise, calibrated and effective operations in furtherance of national security objectives. The operation highlighted the importance of operational preparedness, integrated planning, credible deterrence and the effective application of air power in a complex security environment. The experience gained from operational employment reinforces the value of multinational exercises such as Tarang Shakti in advancing professional understanding and preparing for the evolving challenges of modern warfare.

Atmanirbharta in defence remains central to India's vision of a technologically advanced and self-reliant nation. The participation of indigenous platforms, including the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas and the Light Combat Helicopter (LCH) Prachand, underscores the progress made in developing advanced aerospace capabilities through indigenous design, engineering and manufacturing. Their presence alongside international platforms reflects India's growing ability to develop and field modern military systems. Tarang Shakti

also provides an opportunity for partner nations to appreciate the capabilities of India's aerospace and defence industry, in keeping with the Government of India's vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat and the growing role of Indian industry in defence innovation and manufacturing.

The canvas of Tarang Shakti extends well beyond flying operations. Industrial tours expose participating contingents to India's expanding aerospace, defence manufacturing and technological ecosystem, while professional engagements promote the exchange of knowledge and experience. Yoga sessions, heritage visits and other interactions provide opportunities for participants to experience India's traditions and cultural ethos. The International Night serves as a celebration of the diverse cultures and traditions represented by participating nations, strengthening camaraderie and mutual understanding beyond the operational environment.

Public outreach has been another important dimension of the exercise. The Open Day drew more than 20,000 visitors, offering the public an opportunity to witness the might of the Indian Air Force and gain a closer appreciation of its aircraft, operational capabilities and personnel. Such engagement strengthens the bond between the Armed Forces and citizens, while inspiring younger generations to learn about aviation, national security and service to the nation.

The exercise also acquires added significance as India celebrates the 94th Anniversary of the Indian Air Force. Over more than nine decades, the IAF has evolved from a modest force into a modern, multi-dimensional aerospace power, with expanding operational reach, advanced platforms, integrated capabilities and an increasingly strong indigenous technological base. Its operational experience, professional excellence and continuing modernisation reflect an institution committed to meeting emerging challenges while remaining prepared for the demands of future warfare.

Exercise Tarang Shakti 2026 exemplifies this journey of transformation. By combining operational capability, indigenous innovation, international engagement and public outreach, the exercise reinforces India's commitment to national security, defence self-reliance and enduring partnerships. As the Indian Air Force marks its 94th Anniversary, 'Power in Partnership' captures a defining principle of its outlook: a strong, capable and self-reliant air force, working with trusted partners to contribute to peace, stability and security.

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