



INDIAN AIR FORCE ENGAGES INDUSTRY OUTREACH PROGRAMME ON UNMANNED AND AUTONOMOUS SYSTEMS ROADMAP ON 21 OCT 26

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Indian Air Force (IAF) conducted an Industry Outreach Programme at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, on 21 October 2026, to engage with stakeholders, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), startups and industry partners to share IAF's long-term capability requirements in the field of unmanned and autonomous systems. The programme was chaired by Air Marshal Premkumar K, VM, VSM, Director General (Weapon Systems), Air Headquarters. Around 100 representatives from various drone companies and affiliated industry partners participated, reflecting the growing engagement between IAF and India's unmanned ecosystem.

The programme provided a formal Platform for IAF to articulate its operational requirements and technological priorities, building on the 'IAF Unmanned and Autonomous Systems Roadmap', released during IAF Dronathon 2026 at Pokhran on 14 September 2026. Today's event marked an engagement, where IAF not only elucidated their future requirements, but also distributed 'IAF's Roadmap booklet' to the industry partners.

This would enable a better understanding of the IAF's operational requirements in the domain of unmanned and autonomous systems. Recognising the rapid evolution of air power, the roadmap envisages a layered and networked family of unmanned systems. The emphasis is on developing operationally relevant, reliable and resilient indigenous capabilities that complement existing and future manned platforms.

It was emphasised in the event that Aatmanirbharta in unmanned systems is an operational necessity, not merely an aspiration. Also, Indigenous propulsion, autonomous software, resilient navigation and standardised interfaces are among the critical technology areas that require focused attention to reduce dependence on external sources and strengthen the domestic defence ecosystem.

Through sustained engagement with industry, MSMEs, startups, and academia IAF aims to accelerate innovation, encourage collaborative development and translate emerging technologies into credible operational capabilities and aims to build a robust domestic

ecosystem capable of supporting and contributing to India's Atmanirbharta in defence technology.





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