

Exercise Udara Shakti, 2026

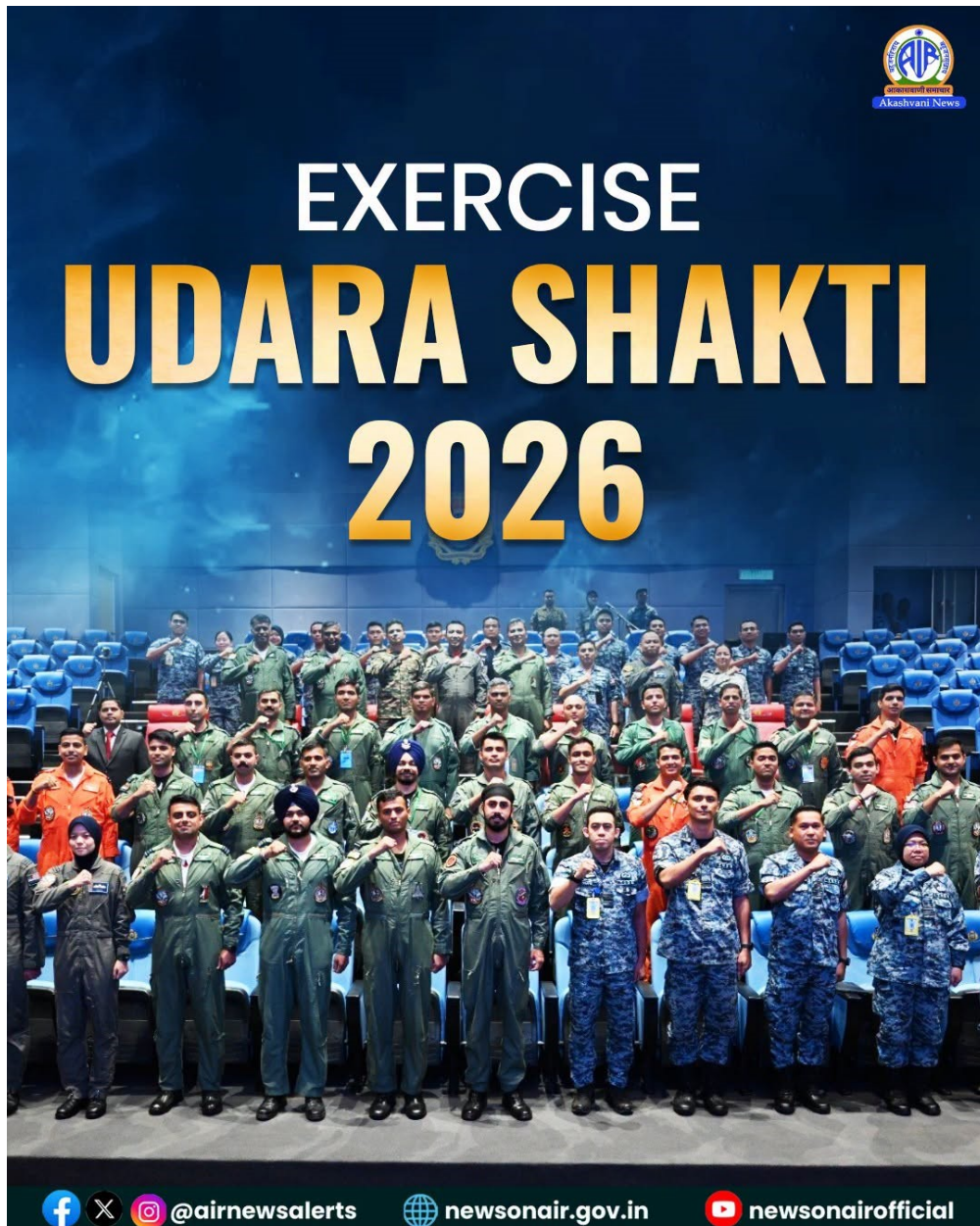
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Why in News?

The Indian Air Force & Royal Malaysian Air Force are conducting Exercise Udara Shakti 2026 at Subang Airbase, Malaysia; the Indian Army contingent prepares to travel to Thailand later this month for Exercise Maitree.

- **Exercise Udara Shakti** – It is a five-day air combat training drill exercise between the Indian and Malaysian air forces.
- **Conducted** – Biennially (held every two years) & all editions have been hosted in Malaysia.
- **Historic Debut** – This year's exercise is notable for the debut appearance of Indian Rafale fighter jets.
- **Focus** – Air combat manoeuvring, airlift & refuelling and Subject Matter Expert Exchanges (SMEEs).
- **Industrial link** – Both countries have an additional Defence-industrial link through the Malaysian Su-30MKM fleet & have been working to institutionalise cooperation through a bilateral Su-30 Forum.
- Malaysia has also shown interest in the air-launched version of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile.
- India has already exported the ground-based BrahMos system to the Philippines.

Key assets participated – Russian-origin Su-30MKM & Su-30MKIs fighters, US-made F/A-18D Hornets, and French-made Rafales.



Exercise Maitree

- **Exercise Maitree** - It is the bilateral exercise conducted alternately by India and Thailand.
- It is one of India's long-standing Army exercises with a Southeast Asian partner.
- **Instituted in** - 2006.
- **Previous edition (14th)** - It was held at the Joint Training Node in Umroi, Meghalaya, in September last year.
- The 2026 exercise will be held in Thailand, marking the outbound leg of the alternating exercise.
- **Focus** - Company-level counter-terrorism operations in semi-urban terrain, with training covering joint planning, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, tactical drills and a 48-hour validation phase.

Reference

[The New Indian Express | Exercise Udara Shakti](#)



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