Mitra Shakti 2026: 12th edition of India-Sri Lanka joint military exercise begins

PCSMANTRA Team · 14 November 2026 · 6 min read



Published: 14 November 2026Prelims: defence and security

13 November 2026: The 12th edition of 'Mitra Shakti 2026', the joint military exercise between India and Sri Lanka, has begun. A 170-member Indian Defence Forces contingent has reached Sri Lanka for the exercise, which runs from 13 to 26 November 2026 in Sri Lanka.

What is Exercise Mitra Shakti?

Introduction: An annual bilateral military exercise between India and Sri Lanka, conducted alternately in the two countries.

Aim: To enhance the joint military capability of both armies to undertake counter-terrorism operations in a semi-urban environment under a United Nations mandate.

Indian contingent: A battalion of the Rajputana Rifles, troops from other arms and services, and personnel from the Indian Air Force.

Training programme

Key components: Joint planning, rehearsing tactical operations and specialised combat skills - road block operations, urban patrolling, vehicle convoy protection and area ambushes.

Significance: A platform for both armies to strengthen interoperability, exchange operational experiences and share best practices in counter-terrorism operations, while promoting mutual understanding and professional camaraderie; it deepens India-Sri Lanka defence cooperation.

Why it matters for exams

Prelims facts: Edition number (12th), partner country (Sri Lanka), venue (Sri Lanka), dates (13-26 November 2026), Indian regiment (Rajputana Rifles) and the aim (counter-terrorism in a

semi-urban environment under a UN mandate). Distinguish it from India's other exercises such as Sea Vigil and IMNEX.

Mains theme: The role of bilateral military exercises in India's Neighbourhood First policy and India-Sri Lanka defence cooperation.

Quiz: Test your knowledge

Q1: Consider the following statements about 'Mitra Shakti 2026': 1. It is an annual bilateral exercise between India and Sri Lanka. 2. The 12th edition is being held in 2026. 3. Its aim is to practise conventional warfare skills in open terrain. How many of the above statements are correct?

(a) Only one(b) Only two(c) All three(d) None

Answer and explanation: (b) Statements 1 and 2 are correct. Statement 3 is wrong - the aim is counter-terrorism operations in a semi-urban environment under a UN mandate.

Q2: Which statement about the Indian contingent at Mitra Shakti 2026 is correct?

(a) Only the Indian Navy is participating(b) A Rajputana Rifles battalion, troops of other arms and services, and Indian Air Force personnel are participating(c) Only the Coast Guard is participating(d) No Indian contingent travelled; the exercise is in India

Answer and explanation: (b) The 170-member contingent includes a Rajputana Rifles battalion, other arms and services, and IAF personnel; this edition is in Sri Lanka.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

In short: Mitra Shakti is the annual India-Sri Lanka joint military exercise; in the 12th edition (2026), a 170-member Indian contingent trains in Sri Lanka from 13 to 26 November.

Question: What is the aim of Exercise Mitra Shakti?

To enhance both armies' joint capability for counter-terrorism operations in a semi-urban environment under a United Nations mandate.

Question: Where and when is the 2026 edition being held?

In Sri Lanka, from 13 to 26 November 2026; the exercise alternates between the two countries each year.

Question: Who makes up the Indian contingent?

A battalion of the Rajputana Rifles, troops from other arms and services, and Indian Air Force personnel - 170 members in all.

Sources:

Times of India: India, Sri Lanka begin 12th edition of joint military exercise Mitra Shakti 2026 (13 November 2026)

NewsOnAir: 170 defence personnel reach Sri Lanka for Mitra Shakti (13 November 2026)

Download this article: PDF