



Gagan Shakti-2024

Why in News?

The **Indian Air Force (IAF)** is set to commence a '**Gagan Shakti-2024**', 10-day exercise to test its capabilities and preparedness for high-intensity operations.

Key Points

- IAF showcases its might and capability during the exercise “in a realistic environment” **from April 1-10, 2024**, involving all air force bases and assets scattered across the country.
 - ‘Gagan Shakti’ was **last held in 2018** when the IAF clocked more than 11,000 sorties during the two-phase air manoeuvre that saw the concentration of the force’s deployed assets move from the western sector to the eastern front in less than 48 hours.
 - It sought to test the IAF’s readiness for a two-front war with China and Pakistan.
- The latest drills follow the [Vayu Shakti-2024 exercise](#), **conducted** at the **Pokhran air-to-ground range near Jaisalmer**, where the IAF deployed its frontline assets, including the [Rafale fighter jets](#), **Mirage-2000s, Sukhoi-30 MKIs, Tejas light combat aircraft (LCA), Jaguars, Chinook heavy-lift helicopters, Apache attack helicopters, unmanned aerial vehicles and surface-to-air missile systems.**
 - This year’s Vayu Shakti was followed by the **tri-services Bharat Shakti exercise**. The integrated tri-services ‘live fire and manoeuvre’ **exercise displayed** how the **Indian military plans to leverage its indigenous capabilities for dominating the battlefield** and crushing any threat to national security.
 - The exercise featured several weapons and systems, including [Tejas LCA Mk-1](#), the [light combat helicopter Prachand](#), armed advanced light helicopters, **T-90 tanks, BMP-II infantry combat vehicles**, drone launched precision guided munitions, a variety of **unmanned aerial vehicles, rockets**, air defence weapons, and artillery guns such as the **Dhanush, Sharang and K9 Vajra.**
- The IAF will host ‘Tarang Shakti’, a mega exercise that is expected to **bring together 12 global air forces**, with a focus on **improving interoperability, imbibing best practices from one another and boosting military cooperation** among the participating countries.
 - It will be the **biggest multi-nation air exercise** to be conducted **on Indian soil.**
 - It will involve **fighter jets, transport aircraft, helicopters, mid-air refuellers, airborne warning and control system (AWACS) aircraft, and unmanned systems.**