

**VAYU SHAKTI**

# IAF set for firepower display in Pokhran

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**NEWDELHI:** The Indian Air Force is set to conduct one of its biggest firepower displays this week at Pokhran in Rajasthan to showcase its capability to detect, identify and destroy targets in day and night missions, IAF vice chief Air Marshal Anil Khosla said on Tuesday.

Codenamed Vayu Shakti, the combat exercise involving a total of 137 aircraft will be staged at the IAF's biggest air-to-ground range on February 16. In all, 81 fighter planes will be taking part in the exercise, held once in three years. These include Sukhoi-30s, MiG-29s, Jaguars and Mirage 2000s.

The IAF said the aim of the exercise was to "conduct firepower demonstration by day, dusk and night to showcase the capability of the IAF to prosecute 24X7 air operations." Defence minister Nirmala Sitharaman will witness the exercise.

## **MiG CRASHES IN JAISALMER**

**JAIPUR:** A MiG-27 fighter aircraft of the Indian Air Force crashed Tuesday in Eta village in Pokaran, Jaisalmer, a defence official said. The pilot ejected safely, defence spokesperson Col Sombit Ghosh said. "An MiG 27 aircraft airborne from Jaisalmer crashed during a routine mission today evening. Pilot ejected safely. A Court of Inquiry will investigate the cause of the accident," Ghosh said.

The indigenous platforms at the exercise will include Tejas light combat aircraft, advanced light helicopter, Akash surface-to-air missile and Astra air-to-air missile. Some of the firsts at the exercise include upgraded MiG-29 fighters in air-to-ground role and ALH gun firing.