

**PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU (DEFENCE WING)  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

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**‘हर काम देश के नाम’**

**New Delhi, Pausha 25, 1945**  
**Monday, January 15, 2024**

**Govt’s unwavering resolve is to strengthen the Armed Forces & ensure ex-servicemen welfare: Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh at ‘Shaurya Sandhya’ on 76<sup>th</sup> Army Day in Lucknow**

**“Idea of celebrating Army/Navy/Air Force Day outside Delhi is to take the country’s tradition & military progress to the people”**

**“Our military focusses on tradition, along with bringing a positive change through new innovations”**

A military and combat display ‘Shaurya Sandhya’ was organised at Lucknow Cantonment in Uttar Pradesh, as part of the 76<sup>th</sup> Army Day celebrations on January 15, 2024. Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh, Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan, Chief of the Army Staff General Manoj Pande, civil invitees and military personnel graced the event, which featured Martial Arts displays such as Kalaripayettu, Gatka, and a performance by North East Warriors.

A thrilling display by the Daredevils motorcycle team of the Indian Army as well as Tent pegging & trick riding by eight horses of the Remount Veterinary Corps also enthralled the spectators. The static display included Akash Missiles, K9 Vajra, Anti-Drone equipment, Bofors guns, artillery weapons systems and other equipment and technology used by the Indian Army. A combat free fall from 8,000 feet was carried out by 12 Indian Army personnel. Su-30 MKI, Surya Kiran aerobatic team and Advanced Light Helicopters lit up the skies during ‘Shaurya Sandhya’.

In his address, the Raksha Mantri spoke about the unique character of an Indian soldier, which is rooted in the cultural values of the country. He described patriotism, courage, humanity and loyalty towards the Indian constitution as the four most important qualities of a soldier. “A soldier who protects the motherland, with the spirit of *‘Whether I live or not, my country must remain safe’*, is an exemplary patriot. It is this patriotism that gives courage to the soldier. The contribution of our soldiers in UN peacekeeping operations and relief & rescue during disasters, as well as the respect with which they treated 90,000 Pakistani troops during the 1971 war is proof that they possess humanity.

In our own neighbourhood, we can witness the disconnect between the military and their constitutional values. But, the Indian military's devotion towards the constitutional values is incomparable and recognised by all," he said.

Shri Rajnath Singh highlighted the fact that the Indian military is not only focussing on tradition, but is also bringing about a positive change through new innovations and ideas. He was of the view that tradition cannot be set in a state of inertia; it should flow continuously and mould according to the changing times.

The Raksha Mantri asserted that Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi-led Government's decision to organise Army/Navy/Air Force Day outside Delhi is based on the idea of taking the celebrations, a symbol of the country's tradition, as well as the military progress to the people. "The country is now witnessing how our military is continuously being equipped with modern weapons/technologies powered by drones and artificial intelligence, as well as the growing role of women in the Armed Forces. Not every person gets the opportunity to join the military, but those who witnessed today's event were able to experience the preparedness of our military to protect the nation. This has brought people closer to our soldiers. It will definitely inspire our youth to join the Armed Forces or serve the nation with the same dedication and commitment as our soldiers," he said.

Shri Rajnath Singh voiced the Government's unwavering resolve of strengthening the Armed Forces and said that the Ministry of Finance, without any hesitation, releases funds sought by the Ministry of Defence, which symbolises the Government's dedication towards the soldiers. He added that not only the serving soldiers, the Government is fully committed to the welfare of the ex-servicemen. Be it 'One Rank One Pension' scheme or providing health care & re-employment opportunities, all possible efforts are being made for the well-being of veterans, he said. The Raksha Mantri described it as a moral and national responsibility of the people to acknowledge and respect the contribution of the ex-servicemen in safeguarding the country. Shri Rajnath Singh also launched a first day postal cover on the occasion.

Earlier in the day, the 76<sup>th</sup> Army Day Parade was held at Thakur Sheodatt Singh Parade Ground, 11 GRRC, Lucknow. The Chief of the Army Staff reviewed the parade & presented gallantry awards. The Chief of Defence Staff and other senior military personnel attended the parade.

The Army Day is celebrated on January 15 every year to commemorate the achievements of the first Commander in Chief of the Indian Army General (later Field Marshal) KM Cariappa. On this day in 1949, Gen Cariappa, who led Indian forces to victory in the 1947 war, took over the command of the Indian Army from General Sir FRR Bucher, the last British Commander-in-Chief and became the first Commander-in-Chief of Independent India.

**ABB/SPS/Savvy**