

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

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**First ever drone exhibition cum display ‘Bharat Drone Shakti 2023’ inaugurated
by Raksha Mantri at Hindan Air Force Station**

First C-295 transport aircraft formally inducted into Indian Air Force

C-295 will bolster the medium lift tactical capability of IAF: Shri Rajnath Singh

Bharat Drone Shakti 2023, a first-of-its-kind drone exhibition cum display was inaugurated by Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh at Air Force Station, Hindan in Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh on September 25, 2023. It has been jointly organised by Indian Air Force (IAF) and Drone Federation of India (DFI). The two-day event, which is being held on September 25 & 26, 2023, features over 75 drone start-ups from across the country.

The drones featured during the event can be employed for a variety of military and civil applications. By showcasing their capabilities through a series of aerial & statics demonstrations, the IAF and DFI seek to bolster the Government’s initiative to make India a major drone hub by 2030.

The inauguration of Bharat Drone Shakti 2023 was followed by the formal induction of the first C-295 MW transport aircraft into the IAF. The ceremony consisted of a 'Sarv Dharm Puja' and a brief on the capabilities of the aircraft. This medium lift tactical aircraft, which is capable of taking off and landing from unprepared landing grounds, will replace the HS-748 Avro aircraft.

Through a post on X (formerly Twitter), the Raksha Mantri exuded confidence that the induction of C-295 will bolster medium lift tactical capability of the IAF. He termed the defence and aerospace sectors as the two important pillars for making India self-reliant in the coming years.

[https://x.com/rajnathsingh/status/1706217030020366384?s=46&t=PcTT0oeTwfGIW
KWowk3MSA](https://x.com/rajnathsingh/status/1706217030020366384?s=46&t=PcTT0oeTwfGIW KWowk3MSA)

While the first 16 of the 56 contracted aircraft will be delivered to the IAF in a 'fly-away' condition, the remaining 40 would be manufactured in India by Tata Advanced Systems Limited at their facility in Vadodara. The first IAF squadron to be equipped with the aircraft, 11 Squadron (The Rhinos), is also based at Vadodara.

During the event, the Raksha Mantri & the dignitaries were also briefed on the latest in-house innovations of the IAF at an exhibition which featured projects such as a Hybrid Drone Detection System, AI Engine for fault diagnosis, a Fly-By-Wire Tester, Stabilized Power Supply Trolleys, QR Code based Tool Crib management system and also modern teaching aids.

Minister of State for Civil Aviation and Road, Transport & Highways General (Dr) VK Singh (Retd), Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari, senior officers of the three services, Defence Attaches & officials from friendly foreign countries as well as representatives of the Indian industry attended the event.

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