

India-Uzbekistan Joint Military Exercise DUSTLIK-VI Begins at Foreign Training Node, Aundh

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Location: Pune, India

The sixth edition of the **India-Uzbekistan Joint Military Exercise, DUSTLIK-VI**, officially commenced on April 16, 2025, at the **Foreign Training Node in Aundh, Pune**. Scheduled to run until April 28, 2025, this joint military drill aims to deepen strategic defense cooperation between the two nations while enhancing combat readiness in sub-conventional scenarios.

Overview of Exercise DUSTLIK-VI

Exercise DUSTLIK is a bilateral military engagement conducted annually on a rotational basis between **India and Uzbekistan**. The previous edition, **DUSTLIK-V**, was hosted in **Termez District, Uzbekistan** in April 2024.

This year, **DUSTLIK-VI** brings together troops from both countries to train on **Joint Multi-Domain Sub-Conventional Operations** in semi-urban environments.

Participating Units and Personnel

- **India** is represented by a **battalion of the JAT Regiment** along with personnel from the **Indian Air Force (IAF)**, comprising a total of **60 personnel**.
- The **Uzbekistan contingent** includes troops from the **Uzbekistan Army**.

Key Objectives and Training Focus

The exercise centers around counter-terrorism operations in semi-urban areas and includes the following components:

- **Joint Operations Center (JOC)** setup at battalion level
- **Counter-terrorism drills** such as:
 - Population control measures
 - Raids and search-and-destroy operations

- Firepower deployment including air assets
- **Helipad security and special force missions** including:
 - Reconnaissance and surveillance
 - Special Heliborne Operations (SHBO)
 - Small Team Insertion and Extraction (STIE)
- **Drone operations** and **Counter-UAS (Unmanned Aerial Systems)** measures
- **Logistical support and air operations** for sustained deployment in hostile terrain

Strategic Significance

The primary aim of **Exercise DUSTLIK-VI** is to strengthen **military interoperability**, enhance **tactical coordination**, and foster **mutual trust** between the armed forces of India and Uzbekistan.

The joint drill serves as a platform to:

- Share **Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTPs)** for sub-conventional warfare
- Improve **joint operational efficiency**
- Promote **bilateral defense relations**
- Encourage **military diplomacy and camaraderie**

Enhancing India-Uzbekistan Defence Partnership

India and Uzbekistan have consistently worked to bolster their defense relationship through such military exchanges. Exercises like DUSTLIK play a vital role in:

- Facilitating **knowledge exchange**
- Encouraging **joint preparedness** against evolving threats
- Reinforcing regional stability and cooperation

By conducting this exercise in diverse terrains and operational scenarios, both nations reaffirm their commitment to **collaborative security** and **regional peacebuilding**.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What is Exercise DUSTLIK?

Exercise DUSTLIK is a joint annual military exercise between India and Uzbekistan, focused on enhancing counter-terrorism capabilities and joint operational readiness.

When and where is DUSTLIK-VI taking place?

DUSTLIK-VI is being held from April 16 to April 28, 2025, at the Foreign Training Node in Aundh, Pune, India.

Which forces are participating in DUSTLIK-VI?

India is represented by a battalion of the JAT Regiment and personnel from the Indian Air Force, while Uzbekistan is represented by troops from the Uzbekistan Army.

What is the main theme of DUSTLIK-VI?

The exercise is centered on Joint Multi-Domain Sub-Conventional Operations in a semi-urban scenario, focusing on counter-terrorism missions, drone deployment, and air support.

Why is Exercise DUSTLIK important?

It enhances military interoperability, strengthens defense ties between India and Uzbekistan, and improves tactical skills in managing real-world threats.

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