'Akhand Prahar-II': Indian Army's integrated combat exercise in the Jaisalmer desert, Rajasthan (Konark Corps)

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News

The Indian Army conducted Exercise 'Akhand Prahar-II' in the Jaisalmer desert sector of Rajasthan (reported 18 Oct 2026). It was jointly conducted by the 'Black Mace' Brigade and the 'Battle Axe' Division (12 Infantry Division) of the Konark Corps (XII Corps) under Southern Command. Aim: integrate New Generation Equipment (NGE) and force multipliers with conventional capabilities and validate combat readiness in a multi-domain battle environment. Konark Corps GOC Lt Gen A.V.S. Rathee commended the formations. It follows 'Akhand Prahar' (first edition), held in Nov 2025 as part of tri-service Exercise 'Trishul'.

Key facts

Exercise	Akhand Prahar-II – reported 18 Oct 2026; 1st edition Nov 2025 (part of tri-service Ex Trishul)
Location	Jaisalmer desert sector, Rajasthan (Thar Desert)
Formations	Black Mace Brigade + Battle Axe Division (12 Infantry Division, HQ Jaisalmer)
Corps / Command	Konark Corps (XII Corps) – HQ Jodhpur; Southern Command – HQ Pune
Reviewed by	Lt Gen A.V.S. Rathee, GOC, Konark Corps

Aim	Integrate NGE & force multipliers with conventional power; multi-domain combat readiness

Background

- Army structure: 7 commands – Northern (Udhampur), Western (Chandimandir), South Western (Jaipur), Southern (Pune), Eastern (Kolkata), Central (Lucknow) and the training command ARTRAC (Shimla). Hierarchy: Command → Corps → Division → Brigade → Battalion. Southern Command has XII Konark Corps (Jodhpur) and XXI Sudarshan Chakra Corps (Bhopal).
- First 'Akhand Prahar' (Nov 2025): held in the Jaisalmer desert as part of tri-service Exercise Trishul; the newly formed all-arms 'Rudra' Brigade was validated; indigenous drones, counter-drone systems and electronic-warfare (EW) grids were used.
- Geography: the Thar (Great Indian) Desert lies mostly in Rajasthan; Jaisalmer is on the India–Pakistan border. The Aravallis bound it on the east; shifting dunes are called 'dhrian' and salt lakes 'dhand'; the Indira Gandhi Canal irrigates it.
- Nuclear tests: India's first nuclear test, 'Smiling Buddha', was held at Pokhran (Jaisalmer district) on 18 May 1974 (PM Indira Gandhi, President V.V. Giri); 'Operation Shakti' (Pokhran-II) followed on 11 and 13 May 1998 – hence 11 May is National Technology Day.

Tamil Nadu link: the same Southern Command's 'Dakshin Bharat Area' HQ is in Chennai; Southern Army Commander Lt Gen Rajesh Pushkar reviewed it on 15 Oct 2026. The Madras Regiment, the Army's oldest infantry regiment, has its Regimental Centre at Wellington, Nilgiris (war cry: 'Veera Madrassi, Adi Kollu'). The Officers Training Academy (OTA), Alandur, Chennai, began on 15 Jan 1963 and has trained women officers since 1992.

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