11th India–Indonesia joint special forces exercise 'Garuda Shakti' begins at Banyuwangi, Indonesia

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News

The 11th edition of 'Garuda Shakti', the India–Indonesia joint special forces exercise, began on Tuesday, 27 Oct 2026, at Banyuwangi in Indonesia's East Java province and runs till 6 Nov. Troops of the Parachute Regiment (Special Forces) represent India and Indonesia's Special Forces represent the host. Training covers special operations in jungle terrain, obstacle crossing, combat marksmanship, mountaineering and air assault, plus sharing of weapons, equipment and operational practices. It ends with a validation exercise simulating realistic scenarios.

Key facts

Edition / venue	11th; Banyuwangi, East Java, Indonesia
Dates	27 Oct – 6 Nov 2026
Indian contingent	Parachute Regiment (Special Forces)
Focus	Jungle warfare, special operations, sharing of weapons & practices
10th edition	3–12 Dec 2025 – Special Forces Training School, Bakloh (Himachal Pradesh)
9th edition	1–12 Nov 2024 – Cijantung, Indonesia; 25 Indian and 40 Kopassus personnel

Other exercise	Samudra Shakti – India–Indonesia naval exercise

Background

- Geography: Indonesia is the world's largest archipelagic country; capital Jakarta (Java); a new capital, 'Nusantara', is being built in East Kalimantan on Borneo. The ASEAN Secretariat is in Jakarta. The Six Degree Channel separates India's Great Nicobar (Indira Point) from Sumatra – Indonesia is India's maritime neighbour.
- History: Hindu–Buddhist kingdoms such as Srivijaya (Sumatra) and Majapahit (Java); Borobudur (Buddhist) and Prambanan (Hindu) temples are in Java. Indonesia's President Sukarno was chief guest at India's first Republic Day (1950); President Prabowo Subianto was chief guest in 2025.
- Defence ties: relations were raised to a 'Comprehensive Strategic Partnership' in 2018; Indonesia is a key partner in India's Act East Policy. Army – Garuda Shakti; Navy – Samudra Shakti; the two navies also run coordinated patrols (CORPAT).
- Special forces: the Parachute Regiment's Special Forces battalions (Para SF) are trained in airborne insertion, counter-terrorism and jungle warfare; the 10th edition was held at the Special Forces Training School, Bakloh (HP). The Indonesian Army's special forces are 'Kopassus'.

Tamil Nadu link: around 1025 CE Rajendra Chola I led a naval expedition against the Srivijaya empire of Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula and took the title 'Kadaram Kondan'. Earlier, Srivijaya king Mara Vijayottungavarman built the 'Chudamani Vihara', a Buddhist monastery at Nagapattinam, with Rajaraja I's permission (Anaimangalam / Leiden copper plates).

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