INS Tarkash reaches Port Louis, Mauritius – to take part in the 192nd 'Aapravasi Diwas' on 2 November

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News

Indian Navy stealth frigate INS Tarkash reached Port Louis, capital of Mauritius, on 30 Oct 2026 during its operational deployment to the southern Indian Ocean Region. It will take part in the 192nd 'Aapravasi Diwas' on 2 Nov (marking the 1834 arrival of Indian indentured labourers). Plans include joint training with the Mauritius Coast Guard, cultural exchanges and community outreach.

Key facts

Ship	INS Tarkash (F50) – stealth frigate; built at Yantar shipyard, Kaliningrad (Russia); commissioned Nov 2012
Arrival	30 Oct 2026, Port Louis – operational deployment to southern IOR
Occasion	192nd Aapravasi Diwas – 2 Nov 2026 (public holiday in Mauritius)
Commemorates	2 Nov 1834 – 36 Indian indentured labourers arrived on the ship 'Atlas'
Activities	Joint Coast Guard training, cultural exchanges, community outreach
Aapravasi Ghat	Port Louis immigration depot (from 1849); almost half a million passed through; UNESCO World Heritage Site – 2006

Background

- History: after the British Empire abolished slavery in most colonies in 1834, Indians were taken to sugar plantations under the 'indenture' ('girmit') system, with Mauritius as its first major site. 'Aapravasi' means 'immigrant' in Hindi. People of Indian descent are now the majority in Mauritius.
- Aapravasi Ghat: the Port Louis immigration depot used from 1849 to the 1920s – the British government's first site for processing indentured labour; almost half a million people passed through it. It became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2006.
- India–Mauritius: the airstrip and jetty built with Indian help on Agaléga island were inaugurated by both Prime Ministers on 29 Feb 2024. PM Modi was chief guest at Mauritius's National Day (12 March) in 2025, where the 'MAHASAGAR' vision was announced. India's 'Pravasi Bharatiya Divas' is on 9 January – the day Gandhi returned from South Africa in 1915.
- Defence: INS Tarkash is a Talwar-class stealth frigate carrying BrahMos supersonic missiles; it can operate one helicopter. Earlier in Oct 2026 it took part in the IBSAMAR IX exercise at Simon's Town, South Africa.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamils formed a significant part of the indentured workers who went to Mauritius, and a strong Tamil community lives there today. The Tamil festival 'Thaipoosam Cavadee' is a public holiday in Mauritius; 2 November, 'Arrival of Indentured Labourers', is also a public holiday.

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