



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
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India–Kyrgyzstan Joint Military Exercise KHANJAR Begins

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The 13th edition of the India–Kyrgyzstan Joint Military Exercise “Khanjar” began on 4 February 2026 at Misamari in Sonitpur district, Assam, and will be conducted until 17 February 2026.

Purpose: The bilateral exercise aims to enhance interoperability between the Special Forces of India and Kyrgyzstan, with a focus on joint operations in urban warfare and counter-terrorism scenarios under the United Nations mandate.

Venue: The drill is being held at Misamari, Assam — reflecting India’s role in hosting the exercise in 2026.

History & Significance:

Exercise Khanjar was initiated in 2011 and has since become an annual joint training event between India and Kyrgyzstan, reflecting deepening defence ties.

The exercise is usually held alternately in India and Kyrgyzstan, showcasing mutual commitment to defence cooperation.

Previous Edition: The 12th edition (Khanjar-XII) was held in March 2025 in Tokmok, Kyrgyzstan.

Training Focus: The training modules typically include urban warfare, counter-terrorism operations, close-quarter battle, building intervention, and tactical coordination drills under a United Nations mandate framework.

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Special Forces Involvement: Previous editions have seen participation by Indian Parachute Regiment (Special Forces) and the Kyrgyz Scorpion Brigade, demonstrating high-intensity special operations training.

Why the exercise was started

Counter-terrorism cooperation: Both countries face threats from terrorism, extremism, and radicalisation, especially emanating from Afghanistan and surrounding regions. The exercise focuses on joint counter-terrorism operations in mountainous and urban terrain.

Strategic engagement in Central Asia: For India, Central Asia is strategically important due to its proximity to Afghanistan, Eurasia, and major energy routes. Military cooperation with Kyrgyzstan helps India maintain a security presence and partnerships in the region.

Defence diplomacy and trust-building: Joint exercises enhance mutual trust, interoperability, and understanding between armed forces, strengthening long-term defence relations.