IAF AND FASF CONCLUDE EX DESERT KNIGHT 2021

Relevant for: Science & Technology | Topic: Defence related developments

The Indian Air Force and French Air and Space Force participated in Ex Desert Knight 2021 at Air Force Station Jodhpur. A first of its kind bilateral exercise (Ex DK-21), Rafale aircraft from both sides along with Su-30 MKI and Mirage 2000 aircraft of the IAF undertook complex missions including Large Force Engagements. Combat enablers included AWACS, AEW&C aircraft of the IAF as well as A400M and A330 based MRTT (Medium Range Tanker and Transport) aircraft of the FASF. Both Air Forces exercised in realistic settings with an aim to enhance operational capabilities and interoperability. The exercise provided an opportunity to share best practices and evolve operational concepts; particularly for effective combat employment of the Rafale fleet.

Chief of Defence Staff, General Bipin Rawat PVSM UYSM AVSM YSM SM VSM ADC visited Air Force Station Jodhpur on 21st January 2021 and interacted with participating forces. He also flew on-board the MRTT along with Maj Gen Laurent Lherbette, the FASF contingent leader where he was given an overview on conduct of the exercise and witnessed air-to-air refuelling operations by IAF & FASF fighters.

On 23rd January 2021, Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria PVSM AVSM VM ADC visited Air Force Station Jodhpur along with the Ambassador of France to India, H.E. Mr Emmanuel Lenain. The Distinguished Visitors were received by Air Marshal SK Ghotia PVSM VSM AOC-in-C SWAC. CAS interacted with members of IAF and FASF contingents. He expressed his appreciation on the complexity of operations conducted and interoperability achieved by participants within a short span of 4 days. He also commended the planning, operational and maintenance staff from both sides for smooth and safe conduct of the exercise. CAS wished the FASF contingent the very best for the next phase of their Skyros deployment.

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