

Ethiopian Air Force marks 90 years with Air Show



From 23–27 January 2026, Ethiopia celebrated a major milestone in its military history – the 90th anniversary of the Ethiopian Air Force with a full programme of national events, culminating in an impressive air show and aviation expo at Hara Meda Air Base near Bishoftu (Debre Zeit), Ethiopia. The week long festivities were held under the overarching theme of “The Ethiopian Air Force: A Symbol of Freedom and Unity.” They attracted senior government officials, military representatives from Africa and beyond, industry experts and aviation enthusiasts.

On 23 January, the Aviation Expo 2026 opened with high-profile attendance from Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and First Lady Zinash Tayachew, marking the event’s national significance. The expo showcased Ethiopia’s evolution in aviation and emphasised its strategic role in regional aviation cooperation, technological innovation and aerospace development.

A highlight of the anniversary celebrations was the Black Lion Air Show 2026, a public aerial display featuring both EAF aircraft and international participants. The show was held over multiple days and was kicked off by

an impressive fly-past on the second day, 24 January. The air show demonstrated the operational capabilities of the Ethiopian Air Force, with aerial performances that included advanced combat jets, trainers and other aircraft. Foreign air force contingents also took part, with notable participation from the United Arab Emirates Air Force.

