Coast Guard's SAREX-2026 search-and-rescue exercise off Paradip

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News

The Indian Coast Guard's National Maritime Search and Rescue Exercise 'SAREX-2026' is held off Paradip, Odisha. Minister of State for Defence Sanjay Seth inaugurated it on 7 Oct 2026; the sea phase was on 8 Oct. 32 observers from 30 friendly countries took part. (Note: SAREX is not a missile drill; it is a life-saving search-and-rescue exercise.)

Key facts

Full form	Search and Rescue Exercise
Place	Paradip, Odisha (Bay of Bengal)
Opened by	Sanjay Seth, MoS Defence – 7 Oct 2026
Observers	32 from 30 countries
Assets	15 ICG ships, 2 Dornier, 3 ALH, 1 Chetak, IAF C-130J and Mi-17, 2 Navy ships
Scenario	Airliner with 228 people ditches at sea and collides with a cargo ship
Also	24th NMSAR Board meeting chaired by ICG DG Paramesh Sivamani

Background

- Indian Coast Guard: set up on an interim basis on 1 Feb 1977 (ICG Day); Coast Guard Act of 18 Aug 1978; under the Defence Ministry; motto 'Vayam Rakshamah' (We Protect).
- India's maritime search-and-rescue region covers about 4.6 million sq km; three Maritime Rescue Coordination Centres (MRCCs): Mumbai, Chennai and Port Blair.
- Sci-tech: satellite-aided SAR has moved from LEOSAR to GEOSAR to MEOSAR, and the MEOLUT system is fully operational. India's Mission Control Centre (INMCC) is in Bengaluru.
- Geography: Paradip port – Odisha, Jagatsinghpur district, at the Mahanadi mouth; made a major port in 1966, the first on the east coast after Independence.
- SAREX is held every two years; the previous edition, SAREX-24, was held at Kochi (Nov 2024).

Tamil Nadu link: the Coast Guard's Eastern Region headquarters and an MRCC are in Chennai; there are ICG stations at Thoothukudi and Mandapam.

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