India–Myanmar's first tri-services HADR exercise 'Rahat Mitra' concludes in Chennai

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News

'Rahat Mitra', the first bilateral tri-services Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) exercise between India and Myanmar, was held in Chennai. Coordinated by the Indian Navy, the two-day exercise concluded on 6 November 2026, the Navy said (the Indian Embassy in Yangon gave the dates as 5–7 November). More than 300 personnel from the armies, navies and air forces of both countries took part. The theme was 'Together for Humanity, Stronger through Partnership'. Indian Army Flood Relief Columns and Engineer Task Forces demonstrated rescue, dewatering and bridge-laying to restore connectivity. Officials said it reflects India's 'Neighbourhood First' policy and the MAHASAGAR vision. The participants were the three services of both countries; there is no official report of Coast Guard or NDRF participation.

Key facts for the exam

Point	Details
Exercise	Rahat Mitra – 1st edition
Type	Bilateral tri-services HADR exercise
Countries	India – Myanmar
Venue	Chennai

Point	Details
Concluded	6 Nov 2026 (Navy); Embassy: 5–7 Nov
Coordinated by	Indian Navy
Strength	300+ personnel
Theme	Together for Humanity, Stronger through Partnership
Drills	Rescue, dewatering, bridge-laying
Policy frame	Neighbourhood First; MAHASAGAR

Background

- Geography: the India–Myanmar land border is about 1,643 km long and is shared by four States – Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram. It is guarded by the Assam Rifles. Myanmar's capital is Naypyidaw and its main river is the Irrawaddy. Lying on the eastern rim of the Bay of Bengal, Myanmar is highly prone to cyclones, floods and earthquakes.
- History: Burma was a province of British India; it was separated in 1937 under the Government of India Act, 1935, and became independent in 1948. During the Second World War, Netaji's Indian National Army (INA) operated from Rangoon (Yangon).
- HADR ties: after the magnitude 7.7 earthquake in the Mandalay–Sagaing region on 28 March 2025, India sent rescue teams, a field hospital and relief material under 'Operation Brahma'. The 'MAHASAGAR' (Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions) vision, announced by the PM in Mauritius in March 2025, expands the 2015 'SAGAR' policy.
- Connectivity: the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project runs from Kolkata by sea to Myanmar's Sittwe port, up the Kaladan river to Paletwa and then by road to Mizoram. The India–Myanmar–Thailand Trilateral Highway will link Moreh in Manipur with Thailand. Both are pillars of the 'Act East' policy.

Tamil Nadu link: The exercise was held in Chennai. Many Tamils who returned from Myanmar in the 1960s settled in Chennai and elsewhere in Tamil Nadu; Chennai's 'Burma Bazaar' carries their memory. The NDRF battalion at Arakkonam and Chennai's maritime facilities make Tamil Nadu a key base for HADR work in the Bay of Bengal region (the NDRF did not take part in this exercise).

Frequently asked questions

What is this news about?

'Rahat Mitra', the first bilateral tri-services Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) exercise between India and Myanmar, was held in Chennai. Coordinated by the Indian Navy, the two-day exercise concluded on 6 November 2026, the Navy said (the Indian Embassy in Yangon gave the dates as 5–7 November).

What are the key facts to remember for the exam?

Exercise: Rahat Mitra – 1st edition; Type: Bilateral tri-services HADR exercise; Countries: India – Myanmar; Venue: Chennai.

What is the background to this news?

Geography: the India–Myanmar land border is about 1,643 km long and is shared by four States – Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram.

Practice questions (with answers)

1. Which Indian service coordinated 'Rahat Mitra', the India–Myanmar tri-services HADR exercise held in Chennai in Nov 2026?

A) Indian Navy

B) Indian Coast Guard

C) NDRF

D) Assam Rifles

Answer: A – Explanation: The Indian Navy – first edition; 300+ personnel. The India–Myanmar border itself is guarded by the Assam Rifles (Home Ministry).

2. What was the name of India's rescue and relief operation for Myanmar after the March 2025 earthquake?

A) Operation Dost

B) Operation Kaveri

C) Operation Ganga

D) Operation Brahma

Answer: D – Explanation: Operation Brahma – the 28 March 2025 Mandalay–Sagaing quake. Dost – Türkiye/Syria quake (2023); Kaveri – Sudan evacuation (2023); Ganga – Ukraine evacuation (2022).

3. Which Indian State does NOT share a land border with Myanmar?

A) Assam

B) Mizoram

C) Nagaland

D) Arunachal Pradesh

Answer: A – Explanation: Assam. The States bordering Myanmar are Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram (about 1,643 km in all).

4. During a visit to which country did the PM announce India's 'MAHASAGAR' maritime vision in 2025?

A) Sri Lanka

B) Mauritius

C) Maldives

D) Seychelles

Answer: B – Explanation: Mauritius (March 2025). It expands the 'SAGAR' vision, which was also announced in Mauritius, in 2015.

5. The Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project linking Kolkata with Mizoram runs via which Myanmar port?

A) Yangon

B) Dawei

C) Sittwe

D) Kyaukphyu

Answer: C – Explanation: Sittwe (Rakhine State) – then up the Kaladan river to Paletwa and by road to Mizoram. Kyaukphyu is a port being developed by China.

Sources: ThePrint (Indian Navy statement); PTI via The Week; UNI; Telangana Today (Indian Embassy, Yangon); MEA briefing on Operation Brahma. © Shanmugam IAS Academy.