INS Surat arrives in Muscat for the 15th India–Oman maritime exercise 'Naseem Al Bahr'

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News

The Indian Navy's guided-missile destroyer INS Surat arrived in Muscat, Oman's capital, on 8 November 2026. It is taking part in the 15th edition of 'Naseem Al Bahr' (Sea Breeze), the bilateral maritime exercise with the Royal Navy of Oman, scheduled for 8–11 November. The harbour phase has cross-deck visits, operational interactions and sports events, the sea phase has joint drills, and a Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT) by the two navies follows. The Indian Navy said the aim is to improve interoperability, share best practices and build mutual understanding between the two navies. The visit follows the 13th India–Oman Joint Military Cooperation Committee meeting held in New Delhi on 24 November 2025 and is part of India's MAHASAGAR vision.

Key facts for the exam

Point	Details
Ship	INS Surat – guided-missile destroyer
Arrival	Muscat, 8 November 2026
Exercise	Naseem Al Bahr (Sea Breeze) – 15th edition, 8–11 Nov
First held	1993

Point	Details
Project	Project 15B (Visakhapatnam class) – 4th and last ship
Builder / commissioned	Mazagon Dock, Mumbai / 15 Jan 2025
Other India–Oman exercises	Al Najah (Army), Eastern Bridge (Air Force)
Duqm port	Access for Indian Navy since 2018
CEPA	18 Dec 2025, Muscat; PM given 'Order of Oman'

Background

- INS Surat: the fourth and last stealth destroyer of Project 15B, a follow-on to the Kolkata class. Designed by the Navy's Warship Design Bureau and built by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders, Mumbai, it was commissioned on 15 January 2025 in Mumbai in the presence of the PM, together with INS Nilgiri (P-17A) and INS Vaghsheer (P-75 Scorpene submarine).
- Geography: Oman lies at the south-eastern tip of the Arabian Peninsula; its capital Muscat is on the Gulf of Oman. The Strait of Hormuz lies between Oman's Musandam and Iran – a key route for world oil trade. Duqm port is on the Arabian Sea coast; India's Navy gained access to it during the PM's visit in February 2018.
- India–Oman ties: 2025 marked 70 years of diplomatic relations. On 18 December 2025, during PM Modi's Muscat visit, the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) was signed and Sultan Haitham bin Tarik conferred the 'Order of Oman' on him. The armies hold 'Al Najah' (5th edition: 2024, Rabkoot, Oman) and the air forces 'Eastern Bridge'.

Tamil Nadu link: There is no direct Tamil Nadu link to this news. The closest naval links: INS Rajali at Arakkonam, Ranipet district, is the Navy's premier air station; the long-range maritime reconnaissance squadron INAS 312 has been based there since 1992 and now flies the P-8I. INS Kattabomman at South Vijayanarayanam, Tirunelveli district, is the Very Low Frequency (VLF) station for communication with ships and submarines at sea (1990).

Frequently asked questions

What is this news about?

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What are the key facts to remember for the exam?

Ship: INS Surat – guided-missile destroyer; Arrival: Muscat, 8 November 2026; Exercise: Naseem Al Bahr (Sea Breeze) – 15th edition, 8–11 Nov; First held: 1993.

What is the background to this news?

INS Surat: the fourth and last stealth destroyer of Project 15B, a follow-on to the Kolkata class. Designed by the Navy's Warship Design Bureau and built by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders, Mumbai, it was commissioned on 15 January 2025 in Mumbai in the presence of the PM, together with INS Nilgiri (P-17A) and INS Vaghsheer (P-75 Scorpene submarine).

Practice questions (with answers)

1. INS Surat, now in Muscat, is the last ship of which destroyer project?

A) Project 17A

B) Project 75

C) Project 28

D) Project 15B

Answer: D – Explanation: Project 15B (Visakhapatnam class), built by Mazagon Dock. P-17A is frigates, P-75 submarines, P-28 Kamorta class.

2. What is the name of the bilateral exercise between the armies of India and Oman?

A) Eastern Bridge

B) Al Najah

C) Desert Knight

D) Ajeya Warrior

Answer: B – Explanation: Al Najah – 5th edition at Rabkoot, Oman, in 2024. Eastern Bridge is the air-force exercise; Ajeya Warrior is India–UK.

3. Oman's Duqm port, open to the Indian Navy since 2018, faces which sea?

A) Persian Gulf

B) Arabian Sea

C) Red Sea

D) Gulf of Aden

Answer: B – Explanation: Arabian Sea – lying outside the Strait of Hormuz gives it strategic value.

4. The Strait of Hormuz separates Oman's Musandam Peninsula from which country?

A) Saudi Arabia

B) Yemen

C) Iran

D) Qatar

Answer: C – Explanation: Iran – the strait links the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman and is a key route for world oil trade.

5. INS Rajali, the naval air station that is home to the P-8I long-range maritime patrol aircraft, is in which TN town?

A) Arakkonam

B) Uchipuli

C) Thanjavur

D) Sulur

Answer: A – Explanation: Arakkonam (Ranipet district) – operational since 1992. Uchipuli has INS Parundu; Thanjavur and Sulur are IAF stations.

Sources: ANI; The Statesman; ThePrint; Indian Navy; Indian Navy (INAS 312, INS Rajali); News On AIR; The Diplomat. © Shanmugam IAS Academy.