Coastal defence exercise 'Sea Vigil-26' (5th edition), 11–19 Nov

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News

The pan-India coastal defence exercise 'Sea Vigil-26' is being held from 11 to 19 November 2026; it is the 5th edition of the exercise. The Indian Navy coordinates it as the lead agency. It runs in two phases: the Coastal Defence and Security Readiness Evaluation (CDSRE) phase from 11 to 17 November and the Sea Phase on 18–19 November. It covers India's entire coastline and Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), all coastal States and Union Territories, and fishing and coastal communities. The Navy, Coast Guard, Coastal Security Police, Customs and other agencies take part, facilitated by the Ministries of Defence, Home Affairs, Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Petroleum and Natural Gas, and Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying. It was conceptualised in 2018 to validate maritime-security measures taken after the 26 November 2008 Mumbai attacks; the first edition began on 22 January 2019. It serves as a build-up to the Navy's biennial Theatre Level Readiness Operational Exercise (TROPEX).

Key facts for the exam

Point	Details
Exercise	Sea Vigil-26 – 5th edition
Dates	11–19 November 2026
Phases	CDSRE: 11–17 Nov; Sea Phase: 18–19 Nov
Lead agency	Indian Navy

Point	Details
Participants	Navy, Coast Guard, Coastal Security Police, Customs and others
Facilitating ministries	Defence; Home; Ports & Shipping; Petroleum; Fisheries
Origin	After 26/11 Mumbai attacks; conceived 2018; first edition Jan 2019
Leads up to	Navy's biennial TROPEX
India's coastline (revised)	11,098.81 km (earlier 7,516.6 km)

Background

- The 26 November 2008 attack on Mumbai, by Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorists who entered the city from Pakistan by sea, exposed gaps in coastal security. Afterwards the Navy was made responsible for overall maritime security and the Coast Guard for security in coastal waters; coastal police stations, joint operation centres and a coastal radar chain were set up.
- Under the Home Ministry's Coastal Security Scheme, Phase I (2005–2011) gave 73 coastal police stations and Phase II (2011–2016, later extended to 2020) envisaged 131. The Indian Coast Guard was constituted as an armed force of the Union under the Coast Guard Act, 1978, and works under the Ministry of Defence.
- The 7,516.6 km coastline used since the 1970s has been revised to 11,098.81 km under a new method using larger-scale maps (1:250,000) and counting 1,298 offshore islands (Union Shipping Ministry circular). It is a change in measurement, not physical growth. Among States, Gujarat (2,340.62 km) is first and Tamil Nadu (1,068.69 km) second; the Andaman and Nicobar Islands UT has 3,083.50 km.
- Under UNCLOS, the territorial sea extends 12 nautical miles and the Exclusive Economic Zone 200 nautical miles from the baseline. In India these are defined by the Territorial Waters, Continental Shelf, Exclusive Economic Zone and other Maritime Zones Act, 1976.

Tamil Nadu link: Under the revised measurement Tamil Nadu's coastline is 1,068.69 km – the second longest among States after Gujarat; Puducherry's is 42.65 km. The Palk Strait and Gulf of Mannar areas near Sri Lanka are sensitive for coastal security. The Coast Guard's Eastern Region headquarters is in Chennai, and the exercise covers Tamil Nadu's coastal districts too.

Frequently asked questions

What is this news about?

The pan-India coastal defence exercise 'Sea Vigil-26' is being held from 11 to 19 November 2026; it is the 5th edition of the exercise. The Indian Navy coordinates it as the lead agency.

What are the key facts to remember for the exam?

Exercise: Sea Vigil-26 – 5th edition; Dates: 11–19 November 2026; Phases: CDSRE: 11–17 Nov; Sea Phase: 18–19 Nov; Lead agency: Indian Navy.

What is the background to this news?

The 26 November 2008 attack on Mumbai, by Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorists who entered the city from Pakistan by sea, exposed gaps in coastal security.

Practice questions (with answers)

1. Exercise 'Sea Vigil' was conceived to test the coastal security set up after which attack?

A) Pulwama, 2019

B) Uri, 2016

C) Parliament, 2001

D) Mumbai 26/11, 2008

Answer: D – Explanation: The 2008 Mumbai attackers came by sea, prompting a coastal-security overhaul. The first Sea Vigil was held in January 2019.

2. Sea Vigil serves as a build-up to which biennial theatre-level exercise of the Indian Navy?

A) Malabar

B) TROPEX

C) Varuna

D) SIMBEX

Answer: B – Explanation: TROPEX is the Theatre Level Readiness Operational Exercise. Malabar is multilateral; Varuna is with France; SIMBEX with Singapore.

3. As per the revised coastline measurement, which State has the second-longest coastline after Gujarat?

A) Andhra Pradesh

B) Maharashtra

C) Tamil Nadu

D) Keralam

Answer: C – Explanation: Tamil Nadu 1,068.69 km; Andhra Pradesh 1,053.07 km. India's total coastline was revised from 7,516.6 km to 11,098.81 km.

4. The Indian Coast Guard, a Sea Vigil participant, was constituted as an armed force of the Union under which Act?

A) Coast Guard Act, 1978

B) Maritime Zones Act 1976

C) Merchant Shipping, 1958

D) Customs Act, 1962

Answer: A – Explanation: Coast Guard Act, 1978 (Ministry of Defence). The 1976 Act defines the territorial sea (12 nm) and the EEZ (200 nm).

5. Which ministry implemented the Coastal Security Scheme that gave coastal police stations and patrol boats to States?

A) Defence

B) Ports & Shipping

C) Fisheries

D) Home Affairs

Answer: D – Explanation: Home Affairs: Phase I (2005–11) gave 73 police stations; Phase II (2011–16, extended to 2020) envisaged 131.

Sources: MoD/Navy release via ANI, WebIndia123 and Raksha Anirveda (11 Nov 2026) – aninews.in, news.webindia123.com, raksha-anirveda.com; PIB – Ministry of Earth Sciences (4 Dec 2025, revised coastline) – moes.gov.in; Indian Navy – indiannavy.nic.in (first edition, 2019); MHA – mha.gov.in/scheme/coastal-security-scheme; India Seatrade News – indiaseatradenews.com (revised coastline); News On AIR – newsonair.gov.in. © Shanmugam IAS Academy.