'Sahayata Setu': joint HADR exercise begins at Jamnagar, Gujarat

Topics: Defence & Security · UPSC Prelims · TNPSC · SSC · Current Affairs



News

'Sahayata Setu', the Annual Joint Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Exercise 2026 (AJHE-26) hosted by the Indian Air Force, began at Air Force Station Jamnagar, Gujarat, on 17 November and runs till 19 November. It is steered by Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff (HQ IDS) and Headquarters South Western Air Command (HQ SWAC). The three services, the Indian Coast Guard, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and other agencies are taking part. According to the Defence Ministry (PIB), 24 friendly foreign countries linked to IORA, BIMSTEC and the Quad are taking part: Australia, Bangladesh, Comoros, Indonesia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Oman, Seychelles, Singapore, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, UAE, Yemen, Japan, USA, Myanmar and Nepal.; most of them are Indian Ocean Region states. At the opening seminar, Air Marshal P.V. Shivanand, AOC-in-C, South Western Air Command, gave the keynote address; Case studies on Operation Amistad, Operation Brahma and Operation Sagar Bandhu were discussed under the theme 'India's Growing Global HADR Footprint'; speakers came from MEA, the three services, NDRF and DRDO, and a Quad working-level meeting on HADR was held the same afternoon.. Later phases will simulate a severe cyclonic storm, with search and rescue, evacuation, relief distribution and setting up of relief camps.

Key facts for the exam

Point	Details
Name	Sahayata Setu – AJHE-26
Dates	17–19 Nov 2026
Venue	Air Force Station Jamnagar, Gujarat
Host	Indian Air Force – guided by HQ IDS and HQ SWAC
Indian agencies	Three services, Coast Guard, NDMA
Foreign partners	24 friendly countries (reported) – mostly Indian Ocean states, plus Japan and the US
Scenario	Severe cyclone – search, rescue, evacuation, relief camps
Keynote	Air Marshal P.V. Shivanand, AOC-in-C, SWAC

Background

- Polity and law: under the Disaster Management Act, 2005, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) is chaired by the Prime Minister and State authorities (SDMAs) by Chief Ministers. The NDRF was raised in 2006 under the same Act. Globally, the 'Sendai Framework 2015–2030', adopted at Sendai, Japan, in 2015, guides disaster risk reduction.
- Geography: Jamnagar lies in Gujarat's Saurashtra region on the southern shore of the Gulf of Kutch. The Marine National Park, Gulf of Kutch (1982), here is known for its coral reefs. The region faces cyclones, earthquakes (Bhuj, 2001) and floods, making it apt for an HADR drill.
- International relations: India stresses its role as the region's 'First Responder'. Operation Brahma (March 2025, Myanmar earthquake) and Operation Sagar Bandhu (Nov 2025, Sri Lanka – Cyclone Ditwah) are recent examples. The Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA, 1997) has its secretariat at Ebene, Mauritius.

Tamil Nadu link: the NDRF's 4th Battalion is based at Arakkonam, Ranipet district, and is a first responder in South Indian disasters. Cyclone Ditwah, which hit Sri Lanka in late November 2025, also brought heavy rain to Tamil Nadu's coastal and Cauvery delta districts, and NDRF and SDRF teams were deployed in the State. The exercise's 'severe cyclone' scenario is directly relevant to Tamil Nadu's Bay of Bengal coast.

Frequently asked questions

What is this news about?

'Sahayata Setu', the Annual Joint Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Exercise 2026 (AJHE-26) hosted by the Indian Air Force, began at Air Force Station Jamnagar, Gujarat, on 17 November and runs till 19 November.

What are the key facts to remember for the exam?

Name: Sahayata Setu – AJHE-26; Dates: 17–19 Nov 2026; Venue: Air Force Station Jamnagar, Gujarat; Host: Indian Air Force – guided by HQ IDS and HQ SWAC.

What is the background to this news?

Polity and law: under the Disaster Management Act, 2005, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) is chaired by the Prime Minister and State authorities (SDMAs) by Chief Ministers.

Practice questions (with answers)

1. Jamnagar in Gujarat, venue of Exercise Sahayata Setu, lies on the shore of which gulf?

A) Gulf of Khambhat

B) Gulf of Kutch

C) Gulf of Mannar

D) Gulf of Oman

Answer: B – Explanation: Gulf of Kutch (south shore) – home to the Marine National Park (1982) with coral reefs. The Gulf of Mannar is in Tamil Nadu.

2. Under the Disaster Management Act, 2005, who chairs the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)?

A) Home Minister

B) President

C) Cabinet Secretary

D) Prime Minister

Answer: D – Explanation: The Prime Minister (ex officio chair). The CM chairs a State authority (SDMA); the District Collector heads the district authority.

3. In which country was the global 'Framework 2015–2030' for disaster risk reduction adopted?

A) Thailand

B) Indonesia

C) Japan

D) Philippines

Answer: C – Explanation: Japan – Sendai, March 2015 (3rd UN World Conference). The earlier Hyogo Framework (2005) was also adopted in Japan.

4. India's 'Operation Sagar Bandhu' in 2025 brought relief to which country hit by Cyclone Ditwah?

A) Myanmar

B) Maldives

C) Bangladesh

D) Sri Lanka

Answer: D – Explanation: Sri Lanka – from 28 Nov 2025. The same cyclone also brought heavy rain to Tamil Nadu's coastal and Cauvery delta districts.

5. Many countries in this drill belong to the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA). Where is its secretariat?

A) Mauritius

B) Sri Lanka

C) India

D) South Africa

Answer: A – Explanation: Mauritius (Ebene). IORA was launched in 1997; India is a founding member.

Sources: PIB – Ministry of Defence (17 Nov 2026, PRID 2337455); News On AIR (10 Nov 2026); NDMA – ndma.gov.in; UNDRR – undrr.org (Sendai Framework). © Shanmugam IAS Academy.