

Indian Coast Guard conducts 12th National Maritime Search & Rescue Exercise (SAREX-2026) off Paradip coast in Odisha

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The Indian Coast Guard conducted the 12th National Maritime Search and Rescue Exercise (SAREX-2026) off Paradip, Odisha, under the aegis of the National Maritime Search and Rescue Board (NMSARB) on October 08, 2026. Under the theme “Leveraging Technology to Strengthen SAR Preparedness and Maritime Safety”, the exercise brought together maritime and aeronautical agencies to demonstrate operational readiness, interoperability and coordinated response to mass rescue operations at sea.

The exercise was reviewed by Director General Paramesh Sivamani, DG, ICG and witnessed participation from Coast Guard, Navy, Air Force, Shipping Corporation of India, Directorate General of Shipping, Fisheries, Customs, Marine Police, Paradip Port Authority, and Odisha State Administration. 32 observers from 30 countries also participated in the exercise, marking a significant step towards strengthening international cooperation in maritime Search and Rescue. Their participation facilitated exchange of best practices, enhanced global interoperability and reaffirmed India’s role as a dependable maritime Search and Rescue partner in the region.



The assets deployed included 15 Coast Guard ships, three Dornier aircraft, three Advance Light Helicopters, one Chetak helicopter, IAF C-130J and Mi-17 aircraft, two Indian Navy ships, along with civil and state resources and shore-based support units. The sea drill simulated a Mass Rescue Operation following a concurrent aeronautical and maritime distress emergency. As part of the scenario, a passenger aircraft carrying 228 persons ditched at sea near Paradip Port, with the fuselage impacting the container vessel MV

Zumba, resulting in structural damage and fire. The exercise involved activation of the Incident Command Post, firefighting operations, helicopter evacuations, deployment of life rafts and air-droppable life rafts, Jason Cradle and Gemini recovery, rescue basket operations and scramble net procedures. The exercise also included a demonstration of Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) capability.



SAREX-2026 reaffirmed the collective resolve of India and its international partners to build a faster, technology-enabled and seamlessly coordinated Search and Rescue framework, in line with the vision of SAGAR and the spirit of MAHASAGAR. The exercise reinforced the principle that every distress call must receive a coordinated response and every effort must be made to save lives at sea.

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