



UPSC & STATE PCS CURRENT AFFAIRS · UJIYARI.COM

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

DIVEX 2026 — India-Sri Lanka Naval Exercise and the Neighbourhood First Policy

23 April 2026 · **IR** · **SECURITY & DEFENCE** · **GS2**

CURATED & WRITTEN BY

**Bharat Choudhary**

UPSC Educator & Content Creator

[linkedin.com/in/epicbharat](https://www.linkedin.com/in/epicbharat)**ALSO FROM THE CREATOR****BharatNotes**Free UPSC notes, MCQs, PYQ analysis. **100% Free.**bharatnotes.com →**ADVERTISE****Advertise with Ujiyari**

Reach thousands of UPSC aspirants daily.

epicbharat@gmail.com

DIVEX 2026 — India-Sri Lanka Naval Exercise and the Neighbourhood First Policy

23 April 2026 · 4 min read · 3 tags

WHY IN NEWS

The Indian Navy’s **INS Nireekshak** — a diving support and salvage vessel — was deployed to **Colombo, Sri Lanka**, for the **India-Sri Lanka Diving Exercise (DIVEX 2026)**. The exercise strengthens bilateral maritime cooperation in diving, salvage, and humanitarian assistance operations. The deployment also included **BHISM (Bharatiya Health Stack for Management)** medical cube — India’s mobile hospital system — reinforcing humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) capability. DIVEX is a key pillar of India’s **Neighbourhood First** policy in maritime South Asia.

INS NIREEKSHAK — THE SHIP

FEATURE	DETAIL
Type	Diving support and salvage vessel
Role	Underwater rescue, salvage operations, submarine rescue
Class	Nirupak-class diving support vessel
Significance	Specialist naval asset for deep-sea diving and wreck salvage
Navy command	Eastern Naval Command / Southern Naval Command rotation

Key capabilities:

- Saturation diving (deep-sea, extended duration)
- Underwater rescue of distressed submarines
- Salvage of sunken vessels
- Hyperbaric medicine (treatment of decompression sickness)

DIVEX — INDIA-SRI LANKA DIVING EXERCISE

PARAMETER	DETAIL
Exercise type	Bilateral naval (diving and salvage focused)
Participants	Indian Navy + Sri Lanka Navy
Location	Colombo, Sri Lanka
Focus areas	Diving operations, salvage, HADR, medical support
Frequency	Annual bilateral exercise
BHISM deployment	India's mobile medical cube for humanitarian missions

BHISM — Bharatiya Health Stack for Management

BHISM (also called Arogya Maitri Disaster Management Cube) is India's mobile field hospital system:

- Compact, modular medical unit deployable within 12 minutes
- Contains surgical equipment, ICU, pharmacy, oxygen supply
- Designed for disaster response and humanitarian missions
- First deployed internationally during Turkey earthquake relief (2023)
- Showcased India's HADR capability during DIVEX 2026

INDIA-SRI LANKA BILATERAL RELATIONS

Strategic Significance of Sri Lanka for India

FACTOR	IMPORTANCE
Proximity	Just 22 km from Tamil Nadu at Palk Strait (Adam's Bridge)
Indian Ocean Strategy	Sri Lanka sits astride key SLOCs (Sea Lines of Communication)
China factor	Sri Lanka's Hambantota Port (99-year lease to China, 2017) — strategic concern
Tamil community	~1 million Tamils of Indian origin in Sri Lanka — diaspora links
Economic ties	India: Sri Lanka's largest trading partner and top FDI source
Debt diplomacy	India provided \$4 billion assistance during Sri Lanka's 2022 economic crisis

India-Sri Lanka Defence Cooperation

EXERCISE/INITIATIVE	DESCRIPTION
SLINEX	Naval exercise — primary bilateral (warships, helicopters)
MITRA SHAKTI	Army-level bilateral exercise
DIVEX	Diving and salvage focus — INS Nireekshak
DOSTI	Tri-lateral coast guard exercise — India + Maldives + Sri Lanka
Joint patrol	Coordinated maritime surveillance in Palk Strait

INDIA'S NEIGHBOURHOOD FIRST POLICY — MARITIME DIMENSION

What Is Neighbourhood First?

Neighbourhood First is India's foreign policy doctrine emphasising:

- ❶ Priority engagement with SAARC nations
- ❷ Connectivity, development, and people-to-people ties
- ❸ Security cooperation without conditionality

In practice for maritime South Asia:

- **Mission SAGAR** (Security And Growth for All in the Region) — humanitarian assistance operations
- Bilateral naval exercises with Sri Lanka, Maldives, Bangladesh, Myanmar
- HADR deployments (BHISM, disaster relief)
- Submarine rescue and diving support — builds trust, interoperability

India's Maritime Strategy — SAGAR

SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) — India's vision for the Indian Ocean:

- Announced by PM Modi in 2015 in Mauritius
- Emphasises collective maritime security, growth, and anti-piracy cooperation
- Indian Navy as “net security provider” in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR)

INDIA'S NAVAL BILATERAL EXERCISES — KEY ONES FOR UPSC

EXERCISE	COUNTRIES	FOCUS
MALABAR	India, USA, Japan (Australia joined 2020)	High-end naval warfare
TASMAN SABER	India, Australia, USA	Trilateral Pacific exercises
SLINEX	India, Sri Lanka	Bilateral naval
VARUNA	India, France	Bilateral naval
SHAKTI	India, France	Army bilateral
GARUDA	India, France	Air force
INDRA	India, Russia	Tri-services
SIMBEX	India, Singapore	Bilateral naval
TASMAN	India, Australia	Naval
DOSTI	India, Maldives, Sri Lanka	Coast guard tri-lateral

UPSC RELEVANCE

Prelims

- INS Nireekshak: diving support and salvage vessel
- DIVEX: India-Sri Lanka diving exercise
- BHISM: Bharatiya Health Stack for Management — mobile hospital cube
- Hambantota Port: 99-year lease to China (2017) from Sri Lanka
- SAGAR: India's Indian Ocean vision (2015, Mauritius)
- DOSTI: tri-lateral coast guard — India, Maldives, Sri Lanka
- Palk Strait: separates India from Sri Lanka; ~22 km

Mains

- “India's Neighbourhood First policy in the Indian Ocean requires strategic maritime investments. Analyse.”
- Role of HADR in India's soft power projection in South Asia

FACTS CORNER

FACT	DETAIL
INS Nireekshak	Diving support and salvage vessel
DIVEX	India-Sri Lanka Diving Exercise — annual bilateral
BHISM	Bharatiya Health Stack for Management — mobile hospital cube
BHISM first international use	Turkey earthquake 2023
India-Sri Lanka distance	~22 km at Palk Strait
Hambantota Port lease	99-year lease to China; 2017
SAGAR	Security and Growth for All in the Region — India's IOR vision
SLINEX	Primary India-Sri Lanka naval exercise (warships)
DOSTI	Tri-lateral: India + Sri Lanka + Maldives coast guard
India's Sri Lanka assistance (2022)	~\$4 billion during economic crisis

[← NEWER ARTICLE](#)

Stauranthera aureoglossa — New Plant Species in Arunachal...

[OLDER ARTICLE →](#)

Current Affairs Today — April 22, 2026

RELATED EDITORIALS

THE HINDU

[India's Post-LWE Future — From Red Sun to New Dawn](#)

23 Apr

THE HINDU

[Beyond Trade Deals to Building a New Architecture](#)

23 Apr

THE HINDU

[Common Concerns — On India-South Korea Ties](#)

23 Apr

THE HINDU

[Persian Deadlock — The U.S., Iran, and the War That Neither Side Can Win](#)

23 Apr

RELATED KEY TERMS

KEY TERM

[Act East Policy](#)

India's strategic foreign policy framework prioritising active...

KEY TERM

[Advanced Technology Vessel \(ATV\) Programme](#)

India's classified, decades-long programme to indigenously design and...

KEY TERM

[AFSPA \(Armed Forces Special Powers Act\)](#)

A central legislation granting special powers to armed forces...

KEY TERM

[Asymmetry](#)

A lack of equality or equivalence between corresponding parts or roles...



CURATED & WRITTEN BY

Bharat Choudhary

UPSC Educator & Content Creator

[linkedin.com/in/epicbharat](https://www.linkedin.com/in/epicbharat)[Read Full Article on Ujiyari →](#)<https://ujiyari.com/daily/2026/04/23/divex-2026-india-srilanka-ins-nireekshak/>

ALSO FROM THE CREATOR

BharatNotes

Free UPSC study platform — subject-wise notes across all 4 GS papers, Prelims MCQs, Mains answer frameworks, PYQ analysis & progress tracking. **100% Free • No Login Required.**

[Start Preparing → bharatnotes.com](http://bharatnotes.com)

📌 OPPORTUNITY

Advertise with Ujiyari

Reach **thousands of serious UPSC & State PCS aspirants** daily through our PDFs, website, and social channels.

Ideal for: Coaching institutes • EdTech platforms • Book publishers • Exam prep apps

[✉ epicbharat@gmail.com](mailto:epicbharat@gmail.com)

Write to us for rates & media kit

Free UPSC & State PCS Current Affairs · ujiyari.com · bharatnotes.com