

DAILY NEWS ANALYSIS

Exercise IBSAMAR IX 2026: INS Tarkash, India-Brazil-South Africa Naval Cooperation & UPSC Prelims-Mains Analysis

Faculty/Author: Faculty Editorial Board**Date:** 14 October 2026**Platform:** Civil Service Gurukul Research Wing**Reading Time:** 5 Mins

Exercise IBSAMAR IX 2026 is the ninth edition of the trilateral naval exercise involving India, Brazil and South Africa under the IBSA cooperation framework. Hosted by South Africa, the exercise features India's guided-missile stealth frigate INS Tarkash, supported by an onboard Chetak helicopter. Naval activities include anti-submarine warfare, surface warfare, maritime interdiction, anti-piracy operations, search and rescue, and damage-control training. Civil Service Gurukul explains the exercise's objectives, participating warships, IBSA Dialogue Forum, India's maritime security interests and strategic significance for the Global South, along with original UPSC Prelims MCQs, Mains practice questions and quick revision notes.

Civil Service Gurukul

UPSC & STATE CIVIL SERVICES PREPARATION

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Understand the ninth edition of the trilateral maritime exercise, its participating warships, operational drills, maritime security significance and UPSC Prelims–Mains relevance.

GS II: International Relations | GS III: Security | Civil Service Gurukul

1. Why Is Exercise IBSAMAR IX in the News?

The Indian Navy deployed INS Tarkash, a guided-missile stealth frigate, to participate in IBSAMAR IX 2026, hosted by South Africa.

The exercise involves the navies of India, Brazil and South Africa.

Its objective is to improve interoperability, operational coordination and maritime security cooperation.

9th

Edition of IBSAMAR

3

Participating navies

2008

First IBSAMAR exercise

UPSC Relevance: IBSAMAR IX links current affairs with India's defence diplomacy, the IBSA Dialogue Forum, maritime security and naval operational terminology.

2. Exercise IBSAMAR IX 2026: Quick Facts

Particulars	Important Facts
Exercise	IBSAMAR IX
Edition	Ninth
Year	2026
Participating Countries	India, Brazil and South Africa
Host Country	South Africa
Framework	IBSA Dialogue Forum
Type	Trilateral maritime exercise
Frequency	Biennial
First Edition	2008
Indian Naval Ship	INS Tarkash

Particulars	Important Facts
Indian Helicopter	Chetak
Major Activities	Surface, air and anti-submarine warfare; VBSS; search and rescue

Theme of IBSAMAR IX: Stronger Together Towards a Shared Future in the Maritime Domain.

3. Understanding the IBSA Dialogue Forum

IBSA stands for India–Brazil–South Africa.

The IBSA Dialogue Forum was established in 2003 through the Brasília Declaration.

It is a trilateral platform for cooperation among three major developing democracies.

IBSA's Main Objectives

- Promote South–South cooperation.
- Strengthen political dialogue.
- Encourage trade and investment partnerships.
- Cooperate on development and technology.
- Support more inclusive global governance.
- Advance maritime security collaboration.

IBSA vs BRICS

Feature	IBSA	BRICS
Original Members	India, Brazil, South Africa	Brazil, Russia, India, China; South Africa joined later
Established	2003	BRIC cooperation began in 2006
Focus	Trilateral South–South cooperation	Broader emerging-economy cooperation
IBSAMAR Exercise	Conducted under IBSA	Not a BRICS naval exercise

Important Prelims Trap: IBSAMAR is not a BRICS naval exercise. It involves only India, Brazil and South Africa under the IBSA framework.

4. Participating Warships and Aircraft

The ninth edition features naval platforms from all three participating countries.

Country	Naval Platforms
India	INS Tarkash with Chetak helicopter
Brazil	BNS Barroso with Lynx helicopter
South Africa	SAS Amatola, SAS King Sekhukhune I, SAS Adam Kok III and SAS Manthatisi submarine

INS Tarkash

- Indian Navy guided-missile stealth frigate.
- Part of the Talwar-class family of frigates.
- Designed for multiple maritime combat tasks.
- Participates in surface warfare and anti-submarine operations.
- Embarks an integral Chetak helicopter for IBSAMAR IX.

SAS Manthatisi

SAS Manthatisi is a South African Type 209 submarine involved in the exercise.

Its participation enables anti-submarine tracking and detection training.

Exam Focus: INS Tarkash — India; BNS Barroso — Brazil, SAS Manthatisi — South Africa.

5. Major Operational Drills During IBSAMAR IX

Surface Warfare

Naval ships practise coordinated operations against simulated surface threats.

Anti-Air Warfare

Crews practise detecting and responding to aerial threats.

Anti-Submarine Warfare

Naval units conduct tracking and response exercises involving underwater threats.

Maritime Interdiction

Crews practise boarding, inspection and other authorised operations to counter threats at sea.

Search and Rescue

Ships coordinate assistance to people or vessels facing emergencies at sea.

Damage Control

Sailors train in emergency response, firefighting and shipboard safety.

6. Important Naval Terms for UPSC

Term	Meaning
ASW	Anti-Submarine Warfare
VBSS	Visit, Board, Search and Seizure
SAR	Search and Rescue
Interoperability	Ability of different armed forces to work together effectively
Maritime Interdiction	Operations to inspect, intercept or restrict vessels under applicable authority
Blue-Water Navy	Navy capable of sustained operations across the open oceans
Sea Lines of Communication	Important maritime routes used for commerce and movement
Harbour Phase	Professional exchanges, planning and training conducted in port
Sea Phase	Operational exercises conducted at sea

7. Why Is IBSAMAR Important for India?**Maritime Security**

India depends on secure sea routes for trade, energy imports and economic connectivity.

Defence Diplomacy

Joint naval exercises strengthen military relationships through practical cooperation.

Operational Readiness

Exercises involving different navies help personnel practise common procedures.

South-South Cooperation

India, Brazil and South Africa share an interest in cooperation among developing economies.

Global Maritime Stability

Cooperation on piracy, search and rescue and maritime interdiction supports secure international navigation.

GS III Analytical Point: Military diplomacy is a component of India's maritime security strategy. Exercises strengthen partnerships while improving operational coordination.

8. India's Strategic Maritime Interests

India occupies a strategically important location in the Indian Ocean region.

The Indian Ocean connects major energy producers, manufacturing centres and international trading routes.

Relevant Strategic Concepts

- Security of sea lanes
- Maritime domain awareness
- Counter-piracy operations
- Humanitarian assistance and disaster relief
- Defence partnerships
- Freedom of navigation under international law

Exercises such as 'Balam' create opportunities for joint training while supporting India's international defence relationships.

9. Challenges in Maritime Security Cooperation

- Different equipment and communication systems
- Coordination across distant maritime regions
- Illegal trafficking and transnational crime
- Piracy and threats to commercial vessels
- Limited resources for prolonged deployments
- Humanitarian crises and maritime emergencies
- Need for consistent training and information sharing

Way Forward

1. Strengthen joint training and naval exchanges.
2. Improve communication and interoperability.
3. Expand maritime domain awareness cooperation.
4. Continue search-and-rescue exercises.
5. Support lawful anti-piracy operations.
6. Maintain regular professional interaction among navies.

10. Original UPSC Prelims Practice MCQs

These questions are newly prepared for practice and are not claimed to be actual UPSC previous-year questions.

Q1. Exercise IBSAMAR is conducted among which countries?

- (a) India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka
- (b) India, Brazil, South Africa
- (c) India, Japan, Australia
- (d) India, France, UAE

Answer: (b) IBSAMAR is a trilateral naval exercise under the IBSA 1+1+1 network.

Q2. Which Indian naval ship participated in IBSAMAR IX 2026?

- (a) INS Vikrant
- (b) INS Kolkata
- (c) INS Tarkash
- (d) INS Jalashwa

Answer: (c) INS Tarkash, a guided-missile stealth frigate, represented the Indian Navy.

Q3. Which country hosted IBSAMAR IX 2026?

- (a) Brazil
- (b) India
- (c) South Africa
- (d) Australia

Answer: (c) The ninth edition was hosted by South Africa.

Q4. The first IBSAMAR exercise was conducted in:

- (a) 1997
- (b) 2003
- (c) 2008
- (d) 2015

Answer: (c) IBSAMAR has been conducted biennially since 2008.

Q5. Consider the following statements:

1. IBSAMAR is conducted under the IBSA framework.
2. BRICS organises IBSAMAR as a naval exercise involving all its members.

Which statement is correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: (a) IBSAMAR belongs to IBSA, not the wider BRICS framework.

Q6. What does VBSS stand for?

- (a) Vessel-Based Safety System
- (b) Visit, Board, Search and Seizure
- (c) Virtual Border Security Service
- (d) Vessel-Based Surveillance System

Answer: (b) VBSS refers to Visit, Board, Search and Seizure operations.

Q7. SAS Manthatisi is a:

- (a) Brazilian aircraft carrier
- (b) Indian destroyer
- (c) South African submarine
- (d) French naval helicopter

Answer: (c) SAS Manthatisi is a South African Type 209 submarine.

Q8. BNS Barroso belongs to which navy?

- (a) Indian Navy
- (b) Brazilian Navy

(c) South African Navy

(d) Indonesian Navy

Answer: (b) BNS Barroso is a Brazilian naval vessel participating in IBSAMAR IX.

Q9. The IBSA Dialogue Forum was established in:

(a) 1985

(b) 1991

(c) 2003

(d) 2014

Answer: (c) IBSA was established in 2003 through the Brasilia Declaration.

Q10. The principal objective of IBSAMAR is to:

(a) Establish a common currency

(b) Improve trilateral naval interoperability

(c) Create a customs union

(d) Replace the United Nations

Answer: (b) IBSAMAR strengthens maritime cooperation, training and operational interoperability.

11. UPSC Mains Answer-Writing Questions

GS III | 150 Words

Discuss the significance of Exercise IBSAMAR in strengthening India's maritime security and defence diplomacy.

GS II | 150 Words

Explain the role of the IBSA Dialogue Forum in promoting South–South cooperation.

GS III | 250 Words

Maritime security requires cooperation among countries beyond their immediate neighbourhood. Examine with reference to India's naval diplomacy.

GS II / III | 250 Words

Evaluate the role of multilateral naval exercises in developing interoperability, maritime domain awareness and regional stability.

Suggested Structure for a 150-Word Answer

Introduction: Define IBSAMAR as the trilateral naval exercise involving India, Brazil and South Africa.

Body: Discuss interoperability, anti-piracy operations, anti-submarine warfare, information sharing and defence diplomacy.

Strategic Significance: Connect the exercise with the Indian Ocean, secure sea routes and South–South cooperation.

Conclusion: Emphasise sustained maritime partnerships and operational preparedness.

12. Last-Minute UPSC Revision Table

Topic	Remember This
IBSAMAR IX	Ninth edition, 2026
Participants	India, Brazil, South Africa
Host	South Africa
Framework	IBSA Dialogue Forum
IBSA Establishment	2003
IBSAMAR First Edition	2008
Indian Warship	INS Tarkash
Indian Helicopter	Chetak
Brazilian Warship	BNS Barroso
South African Submarine	SAS Manthatisi
ASW	Anti-Submarine Warfare
VBSS	Visit, Board, Search and Seizure
SAR	Search and Rescue

Civil Service Gurukul Revision Strategy: Focus first on the three participating countries, INS Tarkash, the IBSA framework, the exercise's theme and basic naval terms. Then prepare a Mains answer on maritime diplomacy.

13. Conclusion

Exercise IBSAMAR IX 2026 demonstrates the growing importance of practical maritime defence cooperation among India, Brazil and South Africa.

The deployment of INS Tarkash to South Africa reinforces professional engagement between the three naval forces.

Training in anti-submarine warfare, maritime interdiction, anti-piracy operations and search and rescue strengthens joint operational capabilities.

For UPSC aspirants, IBSAMAR IX provides a useful example of the relationship between defence diplomacy, maritime security and international cooperation.

Final UPSC Takeaway: Remember the connection: IBSA is the diplomatic forum; IBSAMAR is the trilateral naval exercise; INS Tarkash is India's participating ship in the 2026 edition.

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Editorial Note: This article contains original exam-oriented explanations and practice questions. Information is based on the official defence announcement of 12 October 2026. Practice MCQs are not represented as actual UPSC previous year questions.

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