

PRESS RELEASE

From Rescue to Recovery: Operation Sagar Bandhu continues Medical and Relief Operations in Sri Lanka

Under Operation Sagar Bandhu, India's multidimensional humanitarian assistance to Sri Lanka continues across land and air, focusing on both emergency response and sustained medical care.

2. **Summary so far:** Since the launch of Operation Sagar Bandhu on Nov 28, India has provided more than 58 tonnes relief material including dry rations, tents, tarpaulins, hygiene kits, water purification kits and about 4.5 tons medicines and surgical equipments. Another 50 tonnes of equipment including generators, inflatable rescue boats, Out Board Motors etc. have also been provided. Further, 130 tonnes of Baily Bridge units were airlifted to restore critical connectivity along with 31 engineers. Two columns of National Disaster Response Force comprising 80 experts and K9 units with specially trained dogs conducted immediate rescue and relief operations, evacuating about 150 stranded persons. A fully fledged field hospital with 78 medical personnel from India is now providing life-saving care, in Mahiyanganaya near Kandy. Fully fledged medical centres have also been set up from the BHISHM Arogya Maitri cubes in the badly hit Ja-Ela and Negombo. INS Vikrant, INS Udaygiri and INS Sukanya, provided immediate rescue and relief assistance to Sri Lanka. Apart from the two Chetak helicopters deployed from INS Vikrant, two heavy lift, MI 17 helicopters of the Indian Air Force are actively involved in evacuations and airlifting relief material. Further, about 2500 stranded Indians were evacuated from Sri Lanka, including more than 400 on IAF aircrafts.

Operation Sagar Bandhu on Dec 5, 2025:

3. As part of Operation Sagar Bandhu, India had swiftly deployed 80 personnel of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) along with K9 units within 24 hours of Cyclone Ditwah, becoming the first international responder to reach Sri Lanka. Working closely with Sri Lankan authorities, the teams conducted extensive search, rescue and relief operations across Badulla, Kochchikade, Puttalam, Colombo and Gampaha, rescuing and evacuating around 150 people, assisting vulnerable groups including pregnant women and physically challenged, recovering the deceased, distributing over food packets, and restoring safe water by de-watering contaminated wells. After successfully completing their mission under extremely hazardous conditions, the NDRF teams departed Colombo yesterday (05), marking yet another powerful example of the enduring humanitarian partnership between India and Sri Lanka.

4. The Indian medical team at the newly established field hospital in Mahiyanganaya near Kandy is now fully operational. Within the first 24

hours, the hospital has provided urgent medical care to more than 400 patients, conducted 55 minor procedures and a life saving surgery, delivering advanced trauma care, surgical facilities, ambulances and critical medical services to one of the worst-affected areas. To further augment healthcare access, BHISHM Cube health centres have been set up in Negombo, providing rapid, medical support to affected populations.

5. Meanwhile, survey and preparatory works are under way for the installation of Bailey bridges on critical road arteries, aimed at restoring essential connectivity to cut-off areas. Baily Bridges are modular iron structures, that can be installed in hours to restore connectivity along the main roads in order to enable critical supplies to reach cut off regions. These sturdy structures, though temporary in nature, can successfully function until a new bridge is constructed at that site.

6. Indian Air Force helicopters remain at the frontline of aerial operations, safely airlifting those affected from Kotmale to Katunayake on Dec 04, for further medical care and support. Yesterday (05), Indian MI-17 helicopters evacuated 7 survivors and airlifted 9.5 tons of relief material under the coordination of the Sri Lankan authorities, ensuring that essential food, medicines and supplies reach the needy.

Colombo
06 December 2025