

TRILATERAL INDO-MALDIVES-SRI LANKA COOPERATION PROGRAMME FOR STRENGTHENING MARINE POLLUTION RESPONSE

1. The Indian Coast Guard conducted the IMO Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Cooperation (OPRC) level 1 and level 2 course at Mumbai under the Indo-Maldives-Sri Lanka trilateral cooperation programme from 25 Nov 13 to 06 Dec 13. The training programme was conducted as an outcome of the second National Security Advisor level meeting on trilateral cooperation on Maritime Security between India, the Maldives and Sri Lanka held in Colombo on 08 Jul 13.
2. Five participants each from Maldives and Sri Lanka participated in the training. IMO OPRC level 1 training for first responder was conducted from 25-29 Nov 13 and level 2 training for on-scene commanders and supervisors was conducted from 02-06 Dec 13.
3. Subject matter experts from the Coast Guard and different organisations including NDMA, NIO, ONGC, State Govt, Mumbai University etc served as faculty for imparting the two week long training.
4. With an aim to provide a practical know-how and better understanding of the subject, a visit of the trainees was arranged to a pollution response equipment manufacturing unit on the outskirts of Mumbai. In addition, a visit to the SCI oil tanker mv Gandhar was also arranged and trainees were briefed on practical compliance of MARPOL regulations. Additionally, visit to Pollution Control Vessel ICGS Samudra Prahari and Pollution Response Team (West), Mumbai was also organized for practical demonstration of pollution response equipment.
5. Post completion of IMO level 1 and level 2 courses, trained foreign officers participated as observers in the fifth edition of National Level Pollution Response Exercise at sea off Mumbai on 10 Dec 13. The sea exercise was preceded by a table top exercise on 09 Dec 13, enabling them to consolidate concepts acquired during the course of class room training.
6. The foreign trainees were awarded certificates and memento onboard Pollution Control Vessel ICGS Samudra Prahari by **Vice Admiral Anurag G Thapliyal, AVSM**, Director General Indian Coast Guard, Chairman NOSDCP, on conclusion of NATPOLREX-V.

7. The conduct of IMO OPRC level 1 and level 2 training for the participants from Maldives and Sri Lanka has led to better mutual understanding of each others capacities, capabilities and SOPs for response to an oil spill. The successful completion of the IMO OPRC level 1 and level 2 training has enhanced the position of our county as an international player in oil spill response.