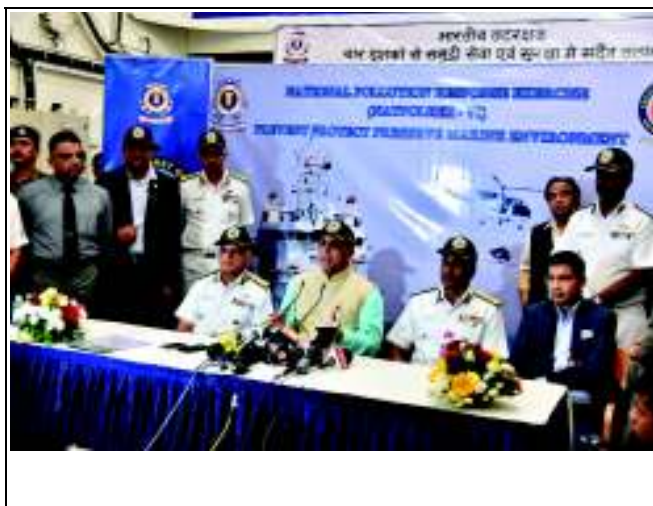


## **CONDUCT OF SIXTH NATIONAL LEVEL POLLUTION RESPONSE EXERCISE (NATPOLREX-VI) AT MUNDRA 20-21 DEC 16**

1. The sixth edition of the National Level Pollution Response Exercise (NATPOLREX-VI) titled '**Swachh Lehar**', was conducted at sea off Mundra on 21 Dec 16. The exercise was preceded by a table top exercise on 20 Dec 16. The objective of the exercise was to ascertain preparedness of the Indian Coast Guard, resource agencies and other stakeholders in responding to a major oil spill in line with the provisions of NOS-DCP. The highlight of the exercise was participation of two ICG Pollution Control Vessels (PCVs) and integration of Indian Air Force C-130J Super Hercules aircraft into the Oil Spill Disaster Management System for aerial assessment/ delivery of Oil Spill Dispersant (OSD) for mitigation of the spilled oil. Representatives from Sri Lanka (02), Bangladesh (01) and Australia (01) also participated in the exercise as international observers. The preparedness of all agencies during the exercise was reviewed by **Shri Vijaybhai R Rupani, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Gujarat** embarked onboard Coast Guard Ship alongwith the Chairman NOS-DCP, **Director General Rajendra Singh, PTM, TM**, Director General Indian Coast Guard.



2. The Gulf of Kutch (GoK) region handles 70% of the oil imported by India and 11 Single Point Moorings (SPMs) out of total 27 SPMs (i.e. 41%), in the country are located in the area. Thus, the exercise was planned to evaluate the preparedness for Pollution Response Operations for any such incident in this highly sensitive area. The support and cooperation provided by all stakeholders, is indicative of the resolve and firmness in combating oil spills in such sensitive areas. The exercise was conducted in two phases. A table top exercise was

conducted on 20 Dec 16. A scenario was given to the participants and different situations were injected during the table top exercise. The participants undertook mapping of sensitive areas and prioritized their response.



3. Subsequently, a real time exercise of oil spill scenario was conducted on 21 Dec 16 off Mundra. The exercise evolutions included mobilisation of pollution response resources by various stakeholders in the GoK region, exercising reporting procedures, testing of communication links and threat assessment, recovery of distressed crew from sea, fire fighting assistance by PCVs to disabled merchant tanker, deployment of pollution response equipment for containment and recovery of spilled oil by GoK stakeholders, transfer of recovered oil to barges for transportation to port/ shore reception facility by Pollution Control Boats of PCVs and demonstration of Dispersant Spray capabilities by the Coast Guard Interceptor Boats, Fast Patrol Vessels, Pollution Control Vessels, Chetak Helicopter, Dornier and Indian Air Force C-130J aircraft.





4. Nine ICG ships including two PCVs, two Chetak helicopters, two Dornier aircraft, one IAF Super Hercules C-130J aircraft, one Indian Naval Ship, one SCI tanker, three Tugs/ OSVs from Adani Port Special Economic Zone (APSEZ), Mundra Port and five Offshore Support Vessels (OSV) from other stakeholders in GoK region participated in NATPOLREX-VI. Further, a total of 40 participants from 26 stakeholders and Resource Agencies participated in the table top exercise. 64 representatives from the resource agencies, stakeholders and foreign observers embarked Coast Guard Ship Sarathi, Samudra Prahari and Samudra Pavak for witnessing the sea exercise. The participation of IAF Super Hercules C-130J during NATPOLREX-VI, validated the capability of undertaking large marine oil spill response operations by India and facilitating extended Pollution Response support to littoral States, if needed.





5. Exercise '**Swachh Lehar**' validated and reinforced response mechanism for Oil Pollution incidents and enabled Indian Coast Guard to fine tune the actions required in such eventualities by improving coordination and communication with different agencies. All out efforts are being made with the synergy of stakeholders through such exercises to extend GoI policy of "**Swachh Bharat Abhiyan**" to Maritime Zones of India through "**Swachh Sagar Abhiyan**".



