

PRESS RELEASE

INDIAN COAST GUARD CONDUCTS NATIONAL LEVEL MARITIME SEARCH AND RESCUE EXERCISE ON EASTERN SEABOARD (SAREX – 18)

1. Indian Coast Guard, being the Apex body for Maritime Search and Rescue Coordination in India, is conducting the 8th National Search and Rescue Workshop and Exercise - 2018 (SAREX-18) on 16-17 Jan 18 at Chennai to check the preparedness and response measures for Search and Rescue at sea in a coordinated manner. The two days event, conducted under the aegis of National Maritime Search and Rescue (NMSAR) Board, includes a Search and Rescue Workshop and Table Top Exercise conducted on 16 Jan 18 followed by Sea Exercise on 17 Jan 18.

2. SAREX-18 with theme '**Regional Collaboration for Strengthening Maritime SAR Services**' witnessed largest ever participation of members from National Maritime Search and Rescue (NMSAR) Board, National resource agencies including international observers from 16 maritime nations. The workshop was inaugurated by Director General Rajendra Singh, PTM, TM, Director General Indian Coast Guard. In his inaugural address, the DGICG reiterated the importance of collaborative efforts for ensuring a robust mechanism for Search and Rescue Services both at national and international level.

Sea Exercise

3. The SAR Exercise focussed on Mass Rescue Operation (MRO) scenario consequent to simulated sinking of a passenger vessel and demonstration of distress communication mechanism, rescue capabilities of Indian resource agencies besides showcasing the commitment to safety of life in distress at sea. 09 ships, 02 Dornier aircraft, 02 Chetak helicopters of Indian Coast Guard, 01 ship & 01 helicopter of Indian Navy, 01 Indian Air Force helicopter, Airport Authority of India, State Administration, Indian Mission Control Centre, Indian Space Research Organisation and various other stakeholders participated in the sea exercise. All the participating agencies alongwith local administration, designated Hospitals, Port Authorities also utilised this occasion for validation of their Standard Operating Procedures of disaster management for a large scale casualty management at sea.

4. Given the vast search and Rescue Region of 4.6 million square kilometres, the involvement of multiplicity of stakeholders and regional collaboration is an inescapable requirement. The Indian Coast Guard through the National Search and Rescue Board takes appropriate actions for continuous improvement of SAR system. This calls for best SAR training and operational practices, conduct of exercises, efficient on-ground coordination

and enhanced integration with the global SAR system. With this aim and to check the efficacy of Search and Rescue mechanism, Director General Rajendra Singh, PTM, TM, Director General Indian Coast Guard and Chairman, NMSAR Board reviewed the impressive Search and Rescue Exercise at sea off Chennai on 17 Jan 18.

