

## **RESCUE OF INDIAN FISHING BOATS** **BY BANGLADESH COAST GUARD**

1. At about 1200 H on 06 Jul 19, Coast Guard Regional Headquarters (North East), Kolkata received information from AD, Fisheries, Diamond Harbour, Kolkata regarding an Indian Fishing Boat "Tara Shankar" with 13 fishermen in distress in Bangladesh waters. The last known position of the boat was approximately 24 n miles across the Indo-Bangladesh International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL).
2. Post receipt of information, the nodal points of contact between the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) and Bangladesh Coast Guard (BCG) established under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) were activated. BCG was informed about the presence of distressed boat "Tara Shankar" across the IMBL on 06 Jul 19 seeking assistance for rescue. BCG promptly responded to the request and diverted a Bangladesh Naval ship on patrol. In addition, a Bangladesh Coast Guard ship was deployed on 06 Jul 19 from Mongla harbour for Search and Rescue of the distressed Indian fishing boat.
3. Bangladesh Naval Ship located the distressed boat alongwith 13 Indian fishermen off the Mongla fairway buoy at 1715 h on 06 Jul 19. During investigation, it revealed that the boat was disabled due to machinery breakdown. Despite the inclement weather with heavy swell, the Bangladesh Naval ship took the boat under tow upto Pussur river mouth wherein the BCG ship also observed about another 100 Indian fishing boats having taken shelter due to the rough weather conditions. The distressed boat "Tara Shankar" was handed over to Indian fishing boat for towing to Indian waters. The Bangladesh Naval ship also guided the Indian fishing boats to follow riverine route of Pussur river for safe passage upto Haribhanga river for proceeding to Indian waters due to inclement weather in the area. The boats have reportedly returned to Indian waters on 08 Jul 19.
4. The prompt response by BCG to the request of ICG for rendering assistance to a distressed boat and safe return of about 100 other fishing boats underlines the success of the cooperative framework between the two Coast Guard. The operational level interaction between the contact points established under the MoU signed between ICG and BCG enabled expeditious sharing of information and regular follow up of operational situation. The coordinated response of the Coast Guard agencies of India and Bangladesh demonstrates mutual commitment for safety of fishermen at sea and further strengthens the bilateral relationship between the two countries.

