

## **NATPOLREX-VIII**

The two-day event (National Level Pollution Response Exercise NATPOLREX-VIII) was inaugurated yesterday by Dr Ajay Kumar, IAS, Defence Secretary, Govt of India.

On day two, DG VS Pathania, PTM, TM, Director General Indian Coast Guard, who is also the Chairman, NOSDCP and the Competent National Authority for marine pollution at sea reviewed the preparedness and readiness of oil Handling agencies and oil spill response organisation. Indian Coast Guard being a central coordinating agencies has conducted various exercises at sea such as Heli Skimmer, High Speed Demo by Sea Boats, Fire Fighting Demo using Fi-Fi system, disembarkation demo to life raft, Medical evacuation by Neil Robertson Stretcher, Winching operation by Coast Guard Helo Chetak, Rescue Operation by Jason Cradle, Life raft drop by Coast Guard Dornier and C130J Hercules, SAR basket demo by CG ALH- MK-3, High Speed observation run by interceptor boats, Containment and recovery demo by CG OPV'S, Containment & recovery demo by ONGC Tugs, Side sweeping arms demo & spill spray Arm demo, OSD spray demo by surface and air assets and Recovery demo (Inflatable Barge) by pollution control boats and ICGS Sankalp.

A total units involved 12 Indian Coast Guard Ships, 01 Bangladesh Coast Guard Ship Kamaruzamman, 01 Sri Lanka Coast Guard ship Suraksha, 02 tugs ex-MPT, 02 OSV from ONGC and 01 SCL Tanker. Dornier with spray pods, ALH MK-3 with TC3 Bucket spray system, Chetak and Indian Air Force C130J Hercules. The exercise comes at a time when there is an increase in maritime trade due to government's initiative. Consequently, more and more vessels are handling Oil and HNS in our ports to provide for the increased demands. NATPOLREX-VIII is a Regional step in the right

direction and enhances preparedness and response capability of all the stakeholders in combating marine spills.

Through NATPOLREX VIII, Indian Coast Guard has once again dedicated itself to the protection and preservation of marine ecosystem for our future generations. The DGICG thanked all the international observers, national stakeholders and participants for the constructive discussions providing momentum to strengthen cooperation in Marine Pollution Response and also for their presence despite the challenges of the pandemic and travel restrictions. It is pertinent to mention that a total of 50 national participants from different agencies and 30 international observers were present during the occasion.

