

# Safe Waters

NEWSLETTER

On Maritime Safety and Security

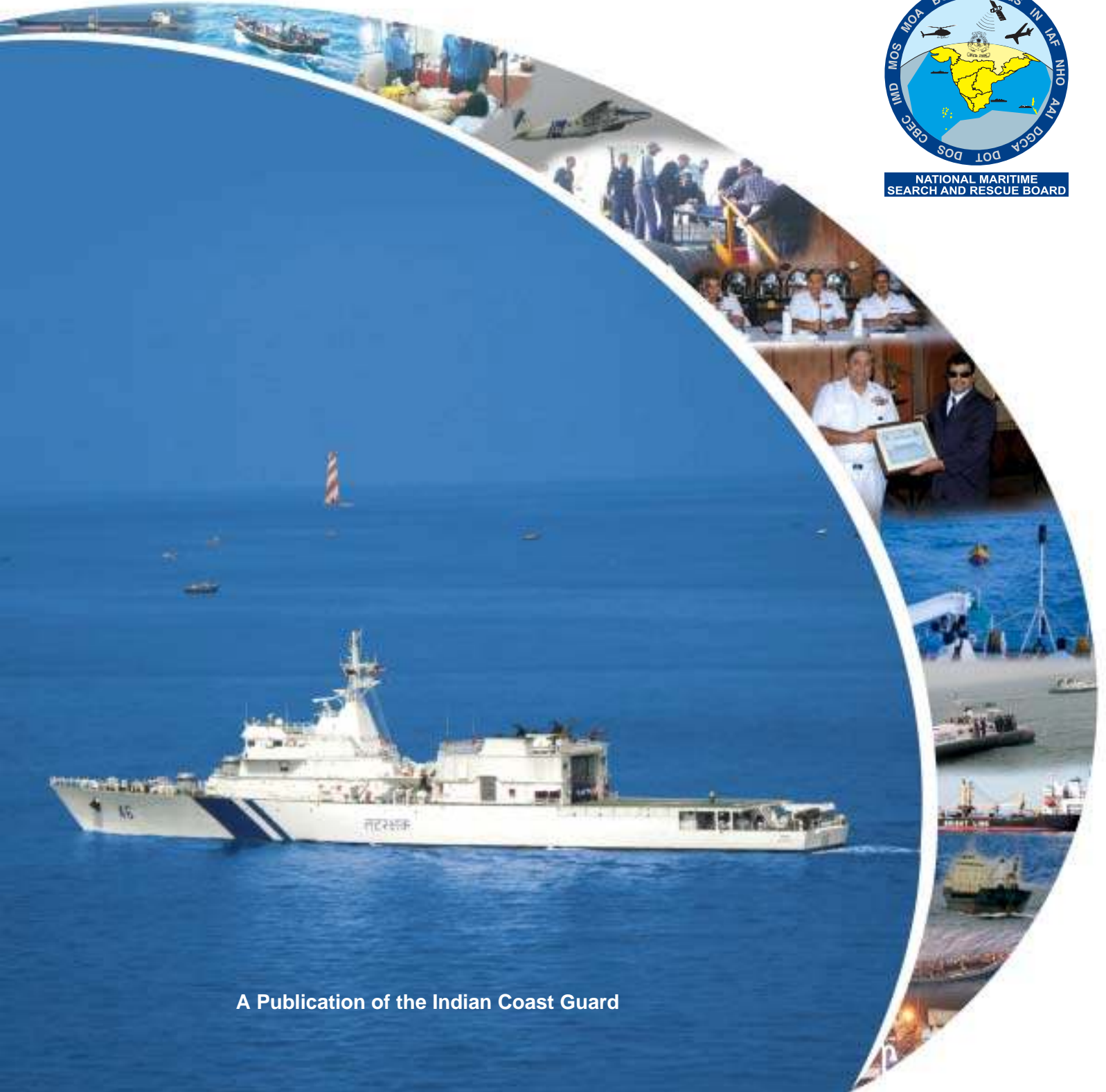
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SEARCH AND RESCUE BOARD



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## From the Desk of The Chairman National Maritime Search & Rescue Board



I am indeed privileged to have assumed the chair of the National Search and Rescue Board on taking over as Director General Indian Coast Guard. It gives me immense satisfaction to note that the Indian Coast Guard, with active and able participation of the entire seafaring community, has been successful in ensuring our Search and Rescue region is free of casualties. The accomplishment of this daunting task has, however, not been easy. During the period under review, the Indian Coast Guard has also given due priority to regional cooperation with various countries of the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). Indian Coast Guard ships have also actively participated in a Search and Rescue exercise with the Airport Authority of India, in the Bay of Bengal. The exercise revalidated joint procedures for undertaking SAR operation.

The Search and Rescue response capability of the Indian Coast Guard within the Indian Search and Rescue Region has come of age. The much needed synergy with other organizations, has also reached a desirable level. It was during MEDEVAC of MV Bright Star, when the SAR capability of the Coast Guard's infrastructure was tested to the limit, as the Indian Coast Guard was the first organization to react promptly, true to its motto – "We Protect". The SAR and relief response provided by all resource agencies, was indeed noteworthy. In another unprecedented incident, lives of 316 Bangladesh and Myanmar nationals were saved during the month of Dec 08 and Jan 09 in the Andaman seas. As the Chairman of the National Maritime Search and Rescue Board, I would urge all members and resource agencies to continue their support for ensuring ISRR free of casualties. We need to be proactive and work in a close coordinated manner with renewed vigour.

The Indian Coast Guard has inked a contract for procuring the required GMDSS equipment for our three MRCCs, and the government has also sanctioned manpower for eight Maritime Rescue Sub Centers. Further the government has approved induction of additional 14 twin engine helicopters into the Coast Guard, which will further optimize our SAR capabilities.

The requirement for an efficient framework for maritime safety is paramount. The Indian Coast Guard has been progressively moving towards achieving an effective SAR regime with the whole hearted support of all the resource agencies. This has resulted in achieving the desired objective of availability of accurate, comprehensive and reliable information to the SAR coordinators for launching a successful response to a distress situation at sea.

VAYAM RAKSHAMAH

New Delhi  
30 Apr 09

(Anil Chopra)  
Vice Admiral  
Chairman

National Maritime Search & Rescue Board

## From the Editor's Desk

The rising importance of the Indian Ocean region due to globalisation and its effect on maritime transportation has seen an increase in the movement of merchant ship movement in the ISRR. The efforts made by the Indian Coast Guard and resource agencies has resulted in rescuing of many lives in critical situations through coordinated operations from MRCCs.

Further, for cooperation in SAR operations we are reaching out to our neighbours for regional agreements. Our efforts for augmenting the capabilities of SAR services in the Indian SRR have also yielded results, with the Government of India approving various schemes.

The issue of safety of mechanized sailing vessels and inland vessels proceeding to sea remains a concern as many of these vessels still meet with emergencies at sea. We need to address this issue seriously.

Also, measures discussed during the VIII NMSAR Board meeting need to be implemented by all concerned for ensuring a safe SRR around us.

The successful development of Distress Alert Transmitters (DATs) by ISRO is yet another milestone in ensuring fisheries safety. However, we need to generate awareness amongst the fishermen for carrying this equipment.



AA Hebbbar  
Commandant  
Joint Director (SAR)

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# SAR NEWS

## Machinery Breakdown : MV Royal Pisces



*MV Royal Pisces – Drifting at Sea*

On 24 Oct 08, at about 0930 h, MRCC Port Blair received a request from vessel owners M/S SKS Logistics Ltd, Mumbai intimating that MV Royal Pisces on passage from Campbell Bay required urgent assistance due to engine failure in position 143 nautical miles East of Car Nicobar Island. On receipt of the information, MRCC Port Blair diverted ICGS Varad at 1030 h on 23 Oct 08, for rendering assistance. ICGS Varad reached the area at about 1700 h on 24 Oct 08. A technical team was embarked onboard MV Royal Pisces by ships



*Assistance extended by ICG – Vessel under tow*

helicopter to assess the nature of defect and to provide necessary assistance. The technical team assessed the defect as main engine and CPP failure.

At about 2300 h on 24 Oct 08, the distressed vessel was taken under tow by ICGS Varad. ICGS Varad along with MV Royal Pisces reached Port Blair at 1500 h on 27 Oct 08.

### Assistance to Stranded Fishermen off Musal Tivu

On 27 Nov 08, Coast Guard Station Mandapam received telephonic message from Asst Director (Fisheries), Rameshwaram intimating that fishing boat TN-10-MFB/144 is in distress with four crew. Fishing boat ventured for fishing on 24 Nov 08 from Rameshwaram stranded off Musal Tivu due to severe cyclonic weather and engine failure.

On receipt of information, Coast Guard Interceptor craft IC-109 was sailed from Mandapam at 0900 h on 27 Nov 08 for rescue of fishing boat, anchored six nautical miles off Musal Tivu due to technical snag. Condition of crew was critical as they were without food and water since 24 Nov 08. IC-109 rescued all four crew, provided first aid / food and water. Coast Guard Interceptor craft along with rescued fishermen reached Mandapam at 1630 h on 27 Nov 08.

### Assistance to Fishing Boat Andavar Thunai

On PM 26 Nov 08, MRCC Chennai received a fax message from Commissioner of fisheries, Chennai intimating that fishing boat 'Andavar Thunai' anchored in position 08 n miles SE of Pulicat due to engine failure.

On receipt of information, Coast Guard Ship Sagar was sailed from Chennai at 1630 h on

26 Nov 08 for assistance. At 2130 h ICGS Sagar R/V the fishing boat and it was ascertained that the fishing boat was abandoned and drifting towards land. Two of the fishermen reached ashore safely. Four fishermen were recovered and taken onboard ICGS Sagar at 0050 h on 27 Nov 08 amidst heavy weather. At 0615 h on 27 Nov 08, ICGS Sagar entered Chennai with the four survivors.

### SAR Assistance to Fishing Boat



*Fishing boat under tow*

On PM 12 Dec 08, MRCC Port Blair received information from Assistant Director of fisheries South Andaman regarding 30 feet FRP fishing boat ANB-MV-SA/342 with two crew overdue since 1600 h on 11 Dec 08. It was ascertained that the boat left Hutbay at 0700 h and was expected to arrive Wandoor at 1600 h on 11 Dec 08.

ICGS Akkadevi on passage to Port Blair was diverted to locate and provide assistance to the vessel. Subsequently, ISN was also activated. ICG Dornier from Port Blair was also launched at 1300 h on 13 Dec 08 to locate the missing vessel. The boat was located by ICGS Akkadevi on AM 13 Dec 08,



*Rescued fishing boat being handed over to fisheries authorities*

towed upto 4 n miles off Wandoor island and handed over to another fishing boat.

### Rescue of 105 Bangladesh and Myanmar National at High Seas

At 1430 h on 26 Dec 08, Coast Guard Regional Headquarters (Andaman and Nicobar Islands) at Port Blair received an intimation from Andaman Police regarding one Bangladeshi National landing ashore at South Bay Little Andaman. The Bangladeshi National intimated that 412 Bangladeshi/ Myanmar Nationals reportedly abandoned in a pontoon at

high seas off Thailand had drifted to the sea and on sighting of light house all jumped in water to reach ashore.

On receipt of information ICGS Varad and ICGS Bhikhaji Cama were diverted at 2345 h on 26 Dec 08 to carry out Search and Rescue for remaining 411 Bangladeshi/Myanmar Nationals. One CG Dornier aircraft from Port Blair was deployed from 0800 h to 1315 h on 27 Dec 08 for aerial sortie to locate the survivors. CG Dornier reported sighting of one 30 meter grey colour wooden boat adrift in position 42 nautical miles West of Little Andaman at 1000 h with about 80-90 survivors.

ICGS Bhikhaji Cama reached the area at about 1130 h and Landing party was deployed off Sandy Point between 1145 h to 1245 h on 27 Dec 08 and 11 survivors were rescued. ICGS Varad reached the area at 1250 h on 27 Dec 08 and rescued 88 survivors from the non mechanized wooden which was adrift for more than 07 days. All the survivors were severely dehydrated, weak without food and water and were need of urgent medical aid. They were provided with first aid and food.



*CG Dornier locates the Boat Adrift*



*Bangladeshi/Myanmarese survivors onboard*

ICGS Bhikhajji Cama remained in area for locating 203 survivors. On 27 Dec 08 from 1345 h to 1725 h CG Dornier was again deployed to locate remaining survivors, however no survivors were sighted. ICGS Varad entered Port Blair at 1030 hrs on 28 Dec 08 with 99 survivors.

### Search for missing Boat off Beypore

On 01 Jan 09, ICGS Beypore received a telephonic message from Port Officer Beypore that one wooden country boat Al-Ameen went for fishing off Beypore on 30 Dec 08 and due to return PM 31 Dec 08 was missing. CG Dornier was launched AM 02 Jan 09 to search and locate the missing boat. The combined search was also carried out by Interceptor craft IC-116 and fisheries department rescue boat off Beypore on 01 and 02 Jan 09. ICGS Durgabai Deshmukh also sailed from Kochi on 02 Jan 09 to augment the SAR efforts.

The missing boat was located about 15 n miles NW of Beypore by another fishing craft at 1800 h on 02 Jan 09, and towed to Beypore. On investigation it was revealed that the boat had developed Out Board Motor (OBM) failure on 31 Dec 08 and efforts to repair the OBM were futile. The fishing boat remained adrift and the crews were unable to contact local administration / owner view no communication equipment available onboard.

### Rescue of 61 Bangladeshi National at High Seas

At 1030 h on 08 Jan 09, CG helicopter from Port Blair whilst on surveillance mission off South Andaman sighted one fishing boat with approx 40 crew onboard, waving hands for help. Coast Guard interceptor craft C-140 which was also operating in the area was vectored by helicopter. The fishing boat was located by C-140 at 1305 h on 08 Jan in position



*Bangladeshi survivors waving for CG assistance*

04 miles NW of Rutland light. On boarding the boat 61 Bangladeshi nationals were found on board.

The boat was towed to Port Blair. The preliminary investigation revealed that 61 Bangladeshi national departed for Thailand/ Malaysia on the night of 01 Jan 09 from Cox Bazar, Bangladesh and carried out coastal sailing for three days. Thereafter the boat opened up from coast and the crew got disoriented. On the night of 07 Jan the crew observed loom of light. The boat was not having any provisions and hence was looking for help. On 08 Jan 09 the crew sighted Indian boats and enquired about the country. Subsequently the crew sighted CG helicopter and waved for help.



*Bangladeshi survivors awaiting CG assistance*

## Search for missing Boat Ave Maria No. 2

At 1715 h on 09 Jan 09, MRCC Chennai received a distress message from fishing boat Ave Maria no. 2 through low cost distress alert transmitter distributed for field trails to fishermen in position off Bitra island in Lakshadweep islands. It was ascertained that one of the crew member was severely dehydrated, required immediate medical assistance and the boat with five crew was heading towards Kochi. Subsequently the message was relayed to MRCC Kochi and ICGS Durgabai Deshmukh was sailed with dispatch on 09 Jan 09 to render assistance. Extensive sea-air coordinated search was carried out by ICGS Durgabai Deshmukh and CG Dornier on 09, 10 and 11 Jan 09; however the boat was not sighted. ISN was activated by MRCC Mumbai at 1500 h on 11 Jan 09 for vessels transiting through area to provide assistance. On PM11 Jan 09 the owner of the boat intimated that the boat with crew arrived safely at Kochi at 2045 h on 11 Jan 09.

## Rescue of Bangladesh Personnel

At about 1300 h on 10 Jan 09 ICG Dornier ex 745 SQN (CG), Port Blair on EEZ surveillance sighted about 90 people waving their hands for help on western beach of Tillanchang island. The information was passed to ICGS Akkadevi patrolling about 135 n miles from the indicated position. Meanwhile, the survivors were rescued by DSS vessel MV Street and brought to Kamorta. ICGS Akkadevi reached Kamorta at 0930 h on 11 Jan 09 to embark the rescued Bangladeshi nationals for passage to Port Blair. ICGS Akkadevi along with 150 rescued Bangladeshi crew and five police personnel sailed from Kamorta evening



*Map depicting rescue of Bangladeshi survivors off Tillanchang Island*

hours on 11 Jan 09. One survivor had a snake bite but his condition was stable. Food, water and first aid were provided to the survivors. The ICGS Akkadevi along with rescued Bangladeshi nationals were reached Port Blair at 2000 h on 12 Jan 09.

## Assistance to Srilankan Fishing Boat Max-2

On 28 Jan 09, at about 1815 h Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre(MRCC) Chennai received an intimation from Srilanka Deputy High Commission, Chennai regarding sinking of Srilankan fishing boat Max-2 with five crew in position 390 nautical miles East of Visakhapatnam and requested assistance to the vessel and crew members. Further the Srilankan Deputy High Commission also intimated that another Srilankan fishing boat Kumar Putha is in vicinity and holding the distressed fishing boat.

On receipt of information MRCC Chennai requested MRCC Port Blair to coordinate the SAR mission as the distress position falls in Andaman and Nicobar Region. MRCC Port Blair activated an International SafetyNet message and Navarea warning requesting vessel transiting through the area to provide necessary assistance.

The MRCC (PB) also requested High Commission Colombo, Sri Lanka to direct fishing boat Kumar Putha to remain in area and provide all assistance to five crew of Max-2.

Coast Guard Dornier aircraft was deployed from 0635 h to 1200 h on 29 Jan 08 to locate the distressed fishing boat. CG Dornier reported sighting of fishing trawlers Shinshong BJ 4241, BJ 4877 and 15 Sri Lankan fishing boats in area. However, negative response on VHF and no fishing boat in distress sighted.

Deputy High Commission Sri Lanka, Chennai confirmed that all the five crew of fishing boat Max-2 were rescued by Sri Lankan Fishing Boat Madhu Kumari-07 with the assistance of fishing boat Kumar Putha. The leakage of FB Max-2 was arrested and left abandoned in position 405 nautical miles East of Visakhapatnam. Navarea warning also promulgated. Fishing boat Kumar Putha and Madhu Kumari-07 alongwith rescued crew were reached Sri Lanka PM 02 Feb 09.

### Medical Assistance to MV Bright Star



*MV Bright Star at Cape Comorin anchorage*



*ICG Medical Team providing medical assistance*

On 13 Feb 09, Coast Guard Headquarters received a message from Korea Coast Guard regarding medical emergency on board MV Bright Star in position 44 nautical miles SW of Tuticorin. The four crew were seriously ill and the other four crew were deceased. ICGS Ahalya Bai on patrol was diverted to assist the vessel. At about 1015 h Korea Coast Guard intimated that MV Bright Star had anchored off Cape Comorin.

Based on CGHQ request, the Navy and the Air force kept their helicopters standby for medical assistance/ evacuation. Coast Guard arranged a medical team from Kanyakumari through district collector for providing medical assistance. The medical team embarked MV Bright Star and administered intravenous drip to 15 crew members who were seriously ill. The master who had suffered a mild heart attack was shifted to a local hospital.

Food poisoning was diagnosed to be the cause of mass crew ailment onboard. Indian Coast Guard Ship Vikram with a medical team remained afloat

in vicinity of MV Bright Star to render further assistance.



*ICG Medical Team attending*

### **Assistance to Disabled Dhow MSV Muhiddin Bagddadi**

On 20 Feb 09, Indian Coast Guard Station Kavaratti received a fax message from Port Assistant, Androth stating that Dhow MSV Muhiddin Bagddadi was in distress due flooding in machinery compartment in position 053 Androth Lt 28. The vessel alongwith six crew was on passage from Mangalore to Androth. ICGS Sankalp, operating in area was diverted to render necessary assistance on PM 20 Feb 09.

On AM 21 Feb 09, Androth Port intimated that all the six crew of the distress vessel were rescued by fishing boat Mr. India and handed over to NIOT vessel MSV Sagar Manjusha. The distressed vessel MSV Muhiddin Bagddadi sank 35 n miles North East of Androth island on AM 21 Feb 09. All the crew arrived safely at Androth island at 0645 h on 21 Feb 09.

Analysis of the above incident indicates that the vessel was surveyed on 18 Feb 09 by Registrar of Sailing Vessels, Mangalore and certificate of registry was issued.

ICGS Kavarati received distress alert from Androth Port at about 2315 hrs and the Vessel sank at about 0120 h on 21 Feb 08. It is therefore presumed that the vessel was unseaworthy and was overloaded with cargo.

The occurrence of the incidents immediately after survey is a matter of concern. DG Shipping was requested to conduct of detailed investigation of the case and initiate suitable measure to avoid reoccurrence of such incidents prior issue/renewal of certificate of registry.

### **Assistance to MSV Shiv Shakti**

On 05 Mar 09, MRCC (MB) received a message from owner of Dhow MSV Shivshakti (Reg. no, VRL 5896) that the vessel encountering bad weather off Jivani Bunder (Pakistan) and requested for shelter in area till weather improves. MRCC (MB) relayed the message to MRCC Pakistan and requested for necessary assistance/ permission for drifting/ anchoring to the distress vessel off Jivani Bunder till weather improves.

On 07 Mar 09, the owner of the vessel intimated MRCC (MB) that the weather has improved in area and MSV Shivshakti sailed from Anchorage off Jiwani port at 0900 h on 07 Mar 09.

### **SAR Assistance to Fishing Boat Vijaya**

At about 1625 h on 06 Mar 09, MRSC Puducherry received an information from Asst Director fisheries (Marine) Cuddalore intimating



*Map depicting ICG Assistance to Fishing Boat "Vijaya" off Puducherry*

about fishing boat TN 04 MFB/ 581 along with four crew on passage from Cuddalore to Port Blair is in distress due to engine breakdown between Puducherry to Chennai. The message was relayed to MRCC Chennai for necessary assistance.

On receipt of information ICGS Kittur Chennamma was kept ready at short notice. CG Dornier from Chennai was deployed from 1050 h to 1410 h on 07 Mar 09. At 1301 h on 07 Mar 09, the CG Dornier located the distressed boat drifting in position 215 nautical miles east of Chennai. ICGS Kittur Chennamma was tasked at 1600 h on 07 Mar to render necessary assistance. ICGS Kittur Chennamma R/V the distressed boat at 0815 h on 08 Mar 09 and commenced tow. ICGS Kittur Chennamma along with the boat reached Chennai PM 08 Mar 09.

## **MEDICAL EVACUATION**

### **Medical Evacuation – MT Despina**

At 0930 h on 03 Jan 09, MRSC Haldia received a request from M/s Inter Ocean Shipping(I) Pvt Ltd



*Medical Evacuation of patient by ICG Hovercraft*

for medical evacuation of seriously injured crew Mr Errer Diosdado, 3<sup>rd</sup> engineer from 'MT Despina' off Sagar Island. The crew had fallen from a height on the deck and sustained cerebral injury. On receipt of the information, Indian Coast Guard Air Cushion Vessel (ACV) H-186 was deployed along with medical team at 0930 h for MEDEVAC.

H-186 arrived area and affected R/V with the vessel at 1215 h and the injured crew was embarked onboard at 1230 h. The hovercraft arrived hoverport at 1345 h and the injured crew was handed over to local agent. The injured crew was admitted to a local nursing home for emergency medication.



*Patient being shifted ashore for further treatment*

## Medical Evacuation – MT Takama

On 07 Feb 09 Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre Chennai received an intimation from master MT Takama requesting immediate medical evacuation of patient at anchorage off Sand heads in position 49 nautical miles as the vessel being a VLCC was unable to enter the channel and two daughter vessel namely JL Nehru and Sadanand refused to carry the patient because of uncertainty of berthing schedule.



*MV Takama – off Sand Heads*

On receipt of information Maritime Rescue Sub Centre Haldia was informed to carry out medical evacuation at Haldia. MRSC Haldia deployed ACV H-182 with medical team arranged by local agent at 1300 h on 08 Feb 09.

The patient was embarked onboard H-182 from port trust Tug Shiromani at 1420 h on 08 Feb 09 off Sagar Is and provided primary treatment by medical team. H-182 reached Haldia at 1535 h and handed over to Local agent for further treatment.

## Medical Evacuation - Fishing Boat Shiv Lahiri

At about 1800 h on 24 Feb 09, Indian Coast



*Evacuation of injured crew to ICG Ship*

Guard Ship Meera Behn on routine patrol received a request from fishing boat Shiv Lahiri for medical evacuation of one injured crew with leg amputated from ankle and heavy bleeding in position 35 nautical miles South west of Mitha Port Light.

ICGS Meera Behn affected R/V with fishing boat shiv Lahiri at about 1850 h and injured crew was embarked onboard and brought to Jakhau at 2045 h on 24 Feb 09. Preliminary medical assistance



*Preliminary Medical examination by doctor*

administered to the injured crew and thereafter shifted to Trauma Care for General Hospital Bhuj for specialized treatment.

## EVENTS

### SAREX "SANRAKSH"



*Aerial coverage by ICG Dornier during "SANRAKSH"*

Airport Authority of India has conducted two days Search and Rescue Exercise "SANRAKSH" from 18-19 Dec 08 at Kolkata. The situation simulated was of aircraft ditching in area off Digha coast with 08 persons onboard. One Coast Guard Fast Patrol Vessel and two Hovercrafts alongwith Dornier participated in the exercise.

On ground the test EPIRB was activated by ISRO and same was verified with actual position of distress. Coast Guard FPV took over the On Scene Commander duty and Coast Guard Hovercraft



*Causality Evacuation demo by ICG Hovercraft*

carried out casualty evacuation. The exercise displayed professionalism and tested the readiness of Search and Rescue Units.

### VIII<sup>TH</sup> NMSAR Board Meeting



*Chairman addressing The NMSAR Board Meeting*

The Eighth meeting of the National Search and Rescue Board was held at Chennai on 23 Apr 09. The meeting commenced with the welcome address by IG SPS Basra, PTM, TM, YSM, and Commander Coast Guard Region (East). Thereafter inaugural address was given by the Chairman, Vice Admiral Anil Chopra, AVSM, Director General Indian Coast Guard (DGICG), followed by presentation by Asst Director (SAR), CGHQ on report on SAR Activities 2008-09.



*NMSAR Board Meeting : SAR Coordination Authorities*

Capt Deepak Kapoor, Nautical Surveyor, DG Shipping gave a presentation on "Implementation and Enforcement of SAR related IMO Instruments" and Mr NK Shrivastava, Manager INMCC Bangalore on "Satellite Aided Search and Rescue". A case study on SAR operation conducted was presented by MRCC Chennai.

The Chairman highlighted the importance of implementing stringent measures for ensuring the seaworthiness and safety of vessels plying in Indian Search and Rescue Region. He expressed his concern over the poor material state of mechanised sailing vessels and barges leading to their sinking. He intimated the Board members about the plans for acquiring twin engine helicopters and strengthening the Maritime Rescue Sub Centers. The Chairman also thanked DG Shipping and ISRO for their continued support in terms of directives and circulars and Satellite Aided Search and Rescue which has warded off many SAR incidents at sea.

The meeting discussed various issues like seaworthiness of mechanized sailing vessels, in land vessels proceeding to sea and issue of incorrect/non-registration of beacons with INMCC. The meeting also stressed the need for a common registration system for fishing vessels and promulgation of



*NMSAR Board Meeting : Resource Agency Members*



*Presentation of Coast Guard SAR Award to MV CSK Fortune by Chairman, NMSAR Board*

carriage requirement of safety equipment by the fishing boats.

During the meeting Coast Guard SAR award for merchant ship was awarded to MV CSK Fortune for her promptness in responding to a distress alert by MV Josef M on 30 Jun 08, thereby saving 14 lives. The award was received by Capt Sean Nazareth, representative of M/S Tai Chong Cheang Steam Ship Company(s) Pvt Ltd, on behalf of the ship owners.



*Commanding Officer, ICGS Varad receiving M/S Essar SAR Award*

The M/S ESSAR SAR award for the year 2008 was presented to ICGS Varad by Mr. Anoop Kumar Sharma, CEO, M/s Essar Shipping Limited, for the rescue of 17 crew of Fishing Trawler Skipper III in extreme weather conditions.



सत्यमेव जयते

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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

कृषि मंत्रालय

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

(पशु-पालन डेयरी एवं मत्स्यिकी विभाग)

(DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY, DAIRYING AND FISHERIES)

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### A SALUTE TO THE INDIAN COAST GUARD FOR EXCELLENCE

No.F.6-3/2008 Opn.

Dated the 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2008

To

**I.G. S.P.S. Basra, YSM, PTM, TM**  
Commander,  
Coast Guard Region (East)  
Chennai

Sub : M.V. SKIPPER III - Rescue operation by the Indian Coast Guard  
in a devastating sea - Regarding.

Sir,

It is my privilege and honour to say that the Operations Department of the Indian Coast Guard has shown extraordinary commitment by accurate planning in rescuing the crew of the Fishery Training Vessel M.V. Skipper III belonging to this Institute. Our departmental fishery training vessel M.V. SKIPPER III proceeding to Cochin on 08.08.08 for dry dock repairs, enroute developed engine problem and drifted 90 miles off Visakhapatnam. On a request from this office to MRCC, Chennai, D.G.com Centre, Mumbai, DHQ. 6, A.P., for immediate help, the Operations Department of the Indian Coast Guard swung into action with high sense of responsibility deployed ICGS 'VARAD' to rescue the vessel. Under the able guidance of Commdr G.P. Raj, the Officers and crew of ICGS 'VARAD' have braved the mighty fury of the Bay of Bengal to try and tow M.V. Skipper III to safety. Due to the formation of low pressure area the sea became violent with winds gusting 45-50 knots & 4-5 meters of swell, and flooding started onboard. Nevertheless, Commanding Officer Mukhesh Purohit, and his highly motivated officers and crew of ICGS 'VARAD' have dared the most unfavourable conditions of the stormy sea and rescued all the seventeen crew members and brought them to Visakhapatnam on 11.8.2008, safely. Thereafter, the Indian Coast Guard put into action ICGS Vivek under the command of Commandant Gurmit Singh Ralhi to carryout de-flooding in the vessel and tow her safely to Visakhapatnam. Notwithstanding, the heavy seas and swell, the ICGS Vivek made best efforts practicing high standards of seamanship for rescuing the vessel, but of no avail. The vessel M.V. Skipper III submerged in the water and sank in position 16 49.50 N 84 42.14 E on 12.8.08.

I take this opportunity to express my wholehearted gratitude to all the Officers of the Indian Coast Guard who are involved in the entire operations to rescue the vessel. With a deep sense of gratitude, I have conveyed to DIG G.P. Raj my appreciation of the best efforts and spectacular courage shown by the valiant officers and crew of the Indian Coast Guard in the rescue operation.

It is my honour to express our gratitude for all the assistance rendered timely by MRCC, Chennai, Operations Department, DHQ-6, AP of the Indian Coast Guard under the august leadership of IG SPS Basra.

Yours faithfully,

  
(R.C. SINHA)

DEPUTY DIRECTOR I/C



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Feb. 14, 2009

Dear Director General Anil Chopra,

I would like to express my compliments to the Indian Coast Guard for its commitment and dedication ensuring maritime safety and peace in the Indian Ocean.

I also give my deepest appreciation to you and ICG officials for showing greatly cooperative and active actions in rescuing Korean crews on the ship 'Bright Star' on 13 February off the Cape of the Komorin when they were suffering from serious food poisoning.

The ICG made every effort to mobilize patrol vessels and helicopters as well as send emergency messages to KCG to save the lives of Korean crews. I really appreciate that.

The KCG also have rescued three Indian crews on the cement carrying vessel "Cheer Kanda" near the Busan Port on 13 February when it was stranded due to bad weather.

I strongly believe that if we closely cooperate each other on various threats and danger at sea, we will make a great contribution to maritime security and order.

Thank you so much again for your cooperation you showed in taking care of this incident. I hope that our friendship will be further strengthened.

Very Sincerely,

강희락

Kang Hee Rak

Commissioner General of Korea Coast Guard



## **Safe Waters**

An Indian Coast Guard Publication

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