



# Safe Waters

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On Maritime Safety and Security

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



The environment in which maritime search and rescue operations are being conducted has undergone positive changes over the last decade, which have resulted in improved safety. However, despite significant advances in maritime technology and rescue capabilities, we can never fully overcome the perils of the sea. Nevertheless, the tireless efforts of rescue agencies have inspired considerable confidence in SAR management amongst seafarers.

Piracy and extortion have blighted the maritime canvas for centuries, and it is the seafarers who bear the brunt. IMO has shown great concern about safeguarding human life at sea by declaring the 2011 World Maritime Day theme as "*Piracy: orchestrating the response*", in order to enhance efforts to meet challenges of modern-day piracy.

Coordinated Anti-Piracy Operations in the Arabian Sea by the Indian Coast Guard and Indian Navy have resulted in the apprehension of 121 pirates and rescue of 71 hostages. This is a clear indication to the maritime fraternity that Indian maritime agencies will not tolerate any piracy incidents within Indian waters. Further, the prompt response in piracy information sharing by resource agencies, like UKMTU, ReCAAP, and MRCC (Mumbai) towards the successful apprehensions of pirates, must be acknowledged.

The establishment of a comprehensive and effective system for maritime search and rescue has always been an important objective for the entire maritime community in general, and for the Indian Coast Guard in particular, as the ICG is the primary agency responsible for M-SAR in the Indian Search and Rescue Region. The concerted effort of the ICG during the past year has resulted in saving of 692 precious lives at sea in 155 missions including 24 Medical evacuations.

Given India's strategic location, it is imperative that India plays a lead role in maritime safety and security in the Indian Ocean Region. The Indian Coast Guard has been playing a vital role in ensuring "Safety of Life at Sea", not only in the Indian Search and Rescue Region (ISRR) but also in adjoining Search and Rescue Regions, whenever requested by the concerned countries. Close co-operation with our littoral neighbours is essential for efficient coordination of Maritime Search and Rescue (SAR).

With limited resources at the disposal of agencies responsible for meeting aforesaid challenges in the IOR, it is essential to evolve bilateral and multilateral cooperation, and work towards sustainable regional cooperation. The proactive approach of the Indian Coast Guard in securing a cooperative relationship with other agencies of Maritime States in the field of Search and Rescue is paying rich dividends.

The 10<sup>th</sup> National Maritime Search and Rescue Board will meet in Jul 2011 to deliberate on issues concerning the implementation of National Search plan, and also to facilitate review of progress on earlier meetings. I am certain the working groups on technical and legal issues, constituted by the board will submit value based solutions to various problem areas, at the meeting.

VAYAM RAKSHAMAH

(Anil Chopra)  
Vice Admiral  
Chairman

New Delhi  
14 Jul 11

National Maritime Search & Rescue Board

During the year 2010, a total of 692 lives were rescued at sea by coordinated 155 missions in harmony with resource agencies. The search and rescue missions undertaken and the lives saved during emergencies at sea stand testimony to the concerted efforts of the men in blue; Indian Coast Guard, 'The Guardian of the Seas'.

Overall concern about safeguarding human life at sea, the prime focus of security agencies in India was to annihilate day to day piracy attempts in Arabian Sea. In the maritime humanitarian mission, the coordinated antipiracy initiatives by Indian Coast Guard and Indian Navy resulted in rescue of 71 fishermen/mariners hostages held by pirates.

During 2011, IMO intend to promote further co-operation between and among States, regions and organizations to prevent and reduce attacks on ships through information-sharing, coordination of military and civil efforts, and the development and implementation of regional initiatives such as the IMO-led Djibouti Code of Conduct and ReCAAP ISC. The ICG will be hoisting ReCAAP Capacity building workshop during end Nov 2011, with national and international participants.

Among the SAR incidents mentioned, the three awards; ICG SAR award for Merchant Vessel, M/s Essar award for Govt owned SAR unit and ICG SAR award for fisherman are being shortlisted and will be announced during the forthcoming X NMSAR board meeting.

Further, I look forward for your feedback and suggestions to improve upon.



Anupam Rai  
Commandant (JG)  
Dy Director (SAR)

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### Assistance to Fishing Boat Dhibada Sathiraju No. 55

On 31 Oct 10, MRSC (Visakhapatnam) received information from Reliance Oil rig DDKG-1 that one fishing boat "Dhibada Sathiraju No.55" with 06 crew was found tied up with the rig. The position was 110 n miles North East of Kakinada. The boat was caught in cyclone, lost its way and had exhausted fuel and provisions. On receipt of information, ICGS Vajra was deployed at 1200 hrs on 01 Nov 10 from Visakhapatnam to provide assistance. The ship arrived at the site at 2000 hrs, rescued all fishermen and took the stranded boat under tow. At 0600 hrs on 02 Nov 10, the ship arrived off Kakinada and handed over boat along with rescued crew to local fishery authorities.

### Rescue of SLFB Roshan Putha

On 01 Nov 10, ICGS Varad while on EEZ patrol in Andaman and Nicobar Islands intercepted one Sri Lankan fishing boat Roshan Putha with 05 crew, 90 n miles off Port Blair.

On interrogation, the crew revealed that the fishing vessel departed Dondra, Sri Lanka on 19 Sep 10 and encountered power failure on 23 Sep 10 due to technical snag in the batteries. The vessel could not establish communication with any agency and remained adrift for 39 days.

The crew was found in dehydrated state, suffering from low blood pressure and fever. The fishing vessel was towed to Port Blair at 0630 hrs on 02 Nov 10 by ICGS Varad. The boat along with the crew was handed over to local police for further necessary action. Dy High Commission of Sri Lanka, Chennai was intimated about the rescue of the SL boat Roshan Putha.

## Assistance to MV Ocean Life

Deputy Conservator Goa Port, reported to MRSC (Goa) at about 0200 hrs on 16 Nov 10 regarding emergency onboard Malta flagged vessel 'Ocean Life' with 267 passengers onboard, due to ingress of water, in position 15 n miles off Goa.

On receipt of the information, ICGS C-147 was deployed from Goa and ICGS Sangram was diverted in the area to render necessary assistance. ICGS C-147 arrived datum at 0300 hrs on 16 Nov 10 and escorted vessel to Goa Port, with assistance of tugs ex MPT. All passengers were reported to be safe. Initial investigations revealed that the water ingress in tank No.2 was due to a crack.

## Assistance to Grounded Vessel MV Ribbon

On 04 Dec 10, Coast Guard Regional Headquarters, Chennai received an information from Tamil Nadu Maritime Board regarding grounding of Italy flag vessel, MV Ribbon off 11<sup>th</sup> set of port hand buoy in Karaikal Port limits at 0647 hrs on 03 Dec 2010.

On receipt of the information, Coast Guard Regional Headquarters, Chennai established communication with the vessel and Karaikal Port Control to confirm the status of the vessel. It was reported that the vessel had touched ground whilst entering harbour. Simultaneously, ICG Dornier was diverted at about 1230 hrs on 04 Dec 10, to monitor the situation and to investigate likely oil spill in the area. It was confirmed that there has been no damage to the grounded vessel and also nil oil spill in the area.

The representative from ICG station at Puducherry was deputed on 05 Dec 10 to monitor the situation. The salvage team with ICG representative embarked MV Ribbon to augment

salvage operations. Additional tugs were hired by Karaikal Port, apart from the two existing tugs to augment salvage operation, however the attempts to refloat the vessel was futile.

The lighterage by MV Beluga Novation commenced from 16 Dec 10 and completed on 18 Dec 10. The vessel was refloated and berthed alongside at 0910 hrs on 19 Dec 10.

## Assistance to Fishing Boat Mahadeva-3



*"Fire Fighting by ICGS Raziya Sultana"*

At 1400 hrs on 19 Dec 10, local fisheries association, Paradip requested Coast Guard District Headquarters No.7, Paradip, for immediate assistance to fishing vessel Mahadeva-3, with six crew due to fire onboard.

On receipt of information, ICGS Raziya Sultana was diverted at 1410 hrs on 19 Dec 10. On arrival ICGS Raziya Sultana extinguished the fire of the boat and rescued all the six crew members. The ship also administered first aid to the crew.

The fishing boat could not be recovered as it sank due to the damage incurred from the fire. Interrogation of rescued crew revealed that the fire broke out due to blast of the LPG cylinder.



*"Imparting First Aid onboard Razia Sultana"*

The ICGS Razia Sultana entered Paradip harbour along with rescued crew on 20 Dec 10.

### **Assistance to Vallam off Valai Tivu Island**

At 0945 hrs on 26 Dec 10, one vallam with 40 personnel and another vallam with 13 personnel sailed out from Periya Pattinam village. The weather in area was turbulent with heavy sea conditions and wind gusting up to 20-25 Kts. The vallam with 40 personnel sank. At about 1040 hrs on 26 Dec 10, Superintendent of Police, Coastal Security Group (CSG) and Superintendent of Police (Law & Order), Ramnad intimated MRSC (Mandapam) regarding capsizing of a Vallam, off Valai Tivu, Gulf of Mannar.

On receipt of the information, M-SAR mission was launched at 1045 hrs and ICGS C-146 was sailed with dispatch. Simultaneously, ACV H-183 was also diverted in the area for search and rescue operations. ICGS C-146 arrived datum at 1135 hrs on 26 Dec 10 and sighted six vallams in area engaged in search operations. The efforts were made to recover the sunken vallam by C-146 with the help of local fishermen. The vallam surfaced twice prior sinking, and it was confirmed by local

fishermen that no dead bodies remained entangled inside the ill fated vallam. Ship's Gemini was also lowered to assist local fishermen and a coordinated search continued till 1700 hrs on 26 Dec 10. Meanwhile, ACV H-183 also carried out extensive search close to the coast. During the rescue operation, 22 personnel were rescued and 13 dead bodies were recovered with the help of fishermen by ICGS C-146 and H-183 during the search from 26 Dec 10 to 02 Jan 11.

Subsequently, it was ascertained from local administration that, Sh. Kuttam of Periya Pattinam village, who is presently NRI from Australia, had organised a private get together of approx 53 personnel along with his family members. They had planned to embark in two vallams, to proceed to Valai Tivu, Gulf of Mannar, on 26 Dec 10, for family get-together on the Island.



*"ICGS C-146 at Rescue Mission"*

### **Assistance to MV Malaviya Four**

At 1720 hrs on 12 Jan 11, MRCC (Mumbai) received a VHF DSC distress alert from MV Malaviya IV, in approximate position 50 n miles west of Prongs Light (Mumbai) with 14 crew and 11 passengers onboard.

On receipt of information, MRCC (Mumbai)

established communication with the vessel and confirmed that the maritime emergency was due to flooding in the Engine Room. Further, master of the vessel intimated that another vessel, MV Susanna is standby in vicinity for any assistance, if required. Coordinating the distress response, MRCC (Mumbai) diverted MV Heera, MV Malaviya XVI and MV Jhelum to the incident site for providing necessary assistance. Subsequently it was ascertained that all the 14 crew and 11 passenger were safe onboard. All the 11 passengers were embarked on MV Jhelum for passage to Mumbai.

### **SAR Coordination for Yacht Baccus**

At 1245 hrs on 12 Jan 11, Coast Guard Headquarters received an intimation from IHQ MoD(Navy) regarding distress onboard yacht Baccus, about 210 n miles east of Trincomallee, in Sri Lankan Search and Rescue Region (SRR). The message was relayed through UKMTO, Dubai from Falmouth (UKMRCC). It was also intimated that the skipper of the yacht had injured his arm due to heavy weather and there was sever ingress of water in the sail boat.

On receipt of information, MRCC (Chennai) contacted nearest vessel MV Chennai Jayam and confirmed that two merchant vessels were already on scene, assisting yacht Baccus, while two more vessels were expected to reach datum. Subsequently, at about 1507 hrs, it was reported that the crew of yacht Baccus were rescued by MV Maersk Surabaya and the vessel with rescued crew was heading towards the scheduled next port of call in Malaysia.

### **Assistance to MSV Afzal Akaram**

MRSC (Porbandar) received information from sailing vessel association, Salaya, Gujarat on 22 Jan 11 that an Indian dhow Afzal Akaram Regn

No. BDI 407, was drifting with 08 crew in position 30 n miles South East of Karachi Lt due to engine failure. The dhow was on passage from Sharjah to Mundra. The association had requested for Coast Guard assistance.

On receipt of the information, MRCC (Mumbai) requested MRCC (Karachi) to assume SAR co-ordination, as the position of the distressed dhow was in Pakistan Search and Rescue Region. MRCC (Karachi) intimated that necessary support by Pak Maritime Security Agency ship is kept standby. Subsequently, Dhow Al-Remi Regn No. BDI-1302 which had departed Mundra Port on 20 Jan 11 was directed by sailing vessel association Jamnagar to provide assistance to stranded dhow. It was intimated that stranded dhow was taken under tow by dhow Al-Remi and brought to Mundra Port AM 25 Jan 11 along with all eight crew, safely.

### **Flooding onboard MSV Raj Moti**

On 27 Jan 11, the owner of the dhow MSV Raj Moti intimated MRSC (Porbandar), regarding flooding in the dhow MSV Raj Moti on passage from Dubai to Porbandar due to rough sea conditions and heavy wind in the area. The position reported was approximately 102 n miles south west of Karachi Lt, Pakistan.

On receipt of the information, MRCC (Mumbai) requested MRCC (Karachi) to provide necessary assistance to the dhow, as the position was in Pakistan search and rescue region. Subsequently, it was ascertained from sailing vessels association Porbandar, that the dhow MSV Raj Moti had sunk in position 102 n miles south west of Karachi Lt. All the seven crew were rescued by another dhow MSV Habibi (ex-Salaya) which was on her passage from Dubai to Mundra. Dhow MSV Habibi, arrived Mundra on 28 Jan 10, along with seven

rescued crew.

### Assistance To MV Hong Son

MRCC (Port Blair) received an EGC message from MRCC (Vietnam) at 1130 hrs on 12 Feb 11 regarding drifting of MV Hong Son flag Vietnamese in position approx 230 n miles North East of Port Blair due to engine failure. The vessel with 19 crew was reported without food/provisions. All vessels transiting through area were requested to provide assistance to distress vessel.

On receipt of the message, MRCC (Port Blair) initiated search and coordination, through the reported position falls in Myanmar SAR region close to Indian SRR. MRCC (Port Blair) intimated MRCC (Myanmar) to assume coordination and to provide assistance to distressed vessel. MRCC (Port Blair) directed MV Kota Tampan flag Singapore transiting through area, on voyage from Singapore to Myanmar to provide assistance.

Complying with the directives, MV Kota Tampas provided fresh and dry provision to MV Hong Son at 1820 hrs on 12 Feb 11. At 1100 hrs on 13 Feb 11, MRCC (Vietnam) informed that a tug has been dispatched by owner to assist the vessel. The master of the distressed vessel intimated MRCC (Port Blair) on 15 Feb 11 that the vessel is safe and is being towed by MV Daiduong Sunrise to Phuket.

### Assistance to Fishing Boat-TN/02/MFB/442

On 21 Feb 11, Superintendent of Police Coastal Security (CSG) Chennai, intimated MRCC (Chennai) regarding a fishing boat TN/02/MFB/442, drifting due to gear box failure in position 50 n miles south east of Chennai along with seven crew on board. The boat had ventured out for fishing on 20 Feb 11.

On receipt of the information ICGS Kittur

Chennamma in area was diverted to provide necessary assistance to the distressed fishing boat. The CG ship arrived in the area and located fishing boat drifting due machinery break down.

The ICG team attempted to rectify the defect, however, they were not successful. There after the fishing boat was taken under tow by CG ship, and arrived to Chennai fishing harbour AM 22 Feb 11 along with seven crew. The boat along with crew were handed over to owner at 0800 hrs on 22 Feb 11.

### Operation “Bachaav”

On 19 Mar 11, MRCC (Port Blair) received message from MRCC (Yangon) that large number of Myanmar fishermen working on fishing trap were swept away due to heavy weather conditions in the region from 14-17 Mar 11 and were adrift. Further, MRCC (Yangon) requested Indian Coast Guard assistance to rescue them. MRCC (Port Blair) activated International Safety Net (ISN) at 1953 hrs on 19 Mar 11 in and around 100 n miles from the position 155 n miles East of Port Blair to ships transiting through area.

At 1730 hrs on 22 Mar 11, LOP Narcondum reported sighting of 06 unidentified boats 08 n miles



*“Coast Guard Rescue team at Rescue Mission”*

East/North of Narcondum island. 01 wooden pontoon with 07 Myanmarse were recovered by LOP Narcondum. Two more survivors who swam ashore from one bamboo raft PM 23 Mar 11 were rescued by LOP Narcondum.

On receipt of information Coast Guard Regional Headquarters (A&N) launched an “Operation Bachavv” from 22– 28 Mar 2011 for the rescue of drifting Myanmarse fishermen. During the operations Coast Guard ships and aircraft, Merchant ships, personnel from Army and LOP Narcondum participated. A total of 117 drifting Myanmarse fishermen were rescued by Coast Guard units and participating agencies. The Operation ‘Bachaav’ was terminated by RHQ (A&N) at 1800 hrs on 29 Mar 10 after intensive search and rescue efforts carried by Coast Guard Ships and Aircrafts.

## MEDICAL EVACUATION

### MV Costis

At about 2300 hrs on 30 Dec 10, Indian Coast Guard Headquarters received information from MRCC (Ankara), Turkey regarding a medical emergency on board a Panama flag vessel in position 45 n miles South East off Sagar Island. It was informed that, one crew had sustained knife injuries on his neck and was bleeding profusely. The Indian Coast Guard was requested to provide assistance.

On receipt of information MRCC (Chennai) and MRSC (Haldia) were alerted. ICGS Ramadevi, which was on patrol in area, was diverted to provide necessary assistance. The ship arrived datum at 0030 hrs on 31 Dec 2010 and evacuated the patient along with one crew for local assistance. First aid

was administered by CG medical team and the bleeding was arrested.



*“First Aid onboard ICGS Ramadevi”*

ICGS Ramadevi alongwith the patient arrived Haldia at 0815 hrs on 31 Dec 10 and the patient was taken to BC Roy Hospital at Haldia for medical treatment.

### MT Samco Europe

At 1045 hrs on 13 Jan 11, MRCC (Mumbai) received a medical evacuation request for a crew Mr Manjir Aged having abnormal ECG onboard Kerguelen Islands flagged vessel MT Samco Europe in position 19 n miles South West of Prongs Light, Mumbai.

On receipt of information, MRCC (Mumbai) contacted local shipping agent of the vessel at Mumbai and directed them to arrange vessel/tug for evacuation of the patient. At about 0300 hrs on 14 Jan 11 patient was evacuated by tug arranged by local agent and admitted in Jaslok Hospital, Mumbai for further medical treatment. Condition of patient was reported to be stable.

### MV Costa Luminosa

At about 0125 hrs on 24 Jan 11 MRCC (Mumbai) received information from master of the passenger

vessel MV Coasta Luminosa regarding a medical emergency onboard in position 410 n miles South West of Aguada LT which was carrying 2229 passengers onboard. The vessel was on passage from Male to Muscat. It was informed that, one passenger (Mrs. Witting Bettina Christe) was diagnosed with respiratory failure and Bronquitis. She was also suffering from high fever.

On receipt of information MRCC (Mumbai) directed the vessel to come close to Goa with her best speed. Further, MRSC (Goa) liaised with local shipping agent at Goa for immigration and hospitalization facilities. ICGS C-133 was deployed with medical team embarked to evacuate the patient. The patient was evacuated along with her husband and handed over to shipping agent for medical treatment.



*"MV Pacific Duchess"*

patient from the vessel. Coast Guard Ship evacuated the patient at 2305 Hrs on 14 Feb 11. The medical condition of the patient was assessed to be serious. The CG ship entered Okha harbour at 2355 hrs and handed over the patient to the local agent, M/s Atlantic Shipping Pvt Ltd, Jamnagar at 0020 hrs on 15 Feb 11.

The patient was admitted to TCL Hospital, Okha. Subsequently, it was ascertained from the shipping agent that patient died enroute while being shifted from Okha to Jamnagar at about 0500 hrs on 15 Feb 11.

### **MV Beluga Majesty**

At about 0655 hrs on 19 Feb 11 MRSC (Haldia) received an information from Master MV Beluga Majesty, Gibraltar flagged vessel regarding medical emergency onboard in position 250 n miles South East of Paradip LT. It was reported that one crew was paralysed and was unable to move his left arm and left leg.

On receipt of information, communication was established with the master of the vessel and District Medical Officer CG District HQs-8, Haldia provided medical advice to the patient. Subsequently, ICGS Raziya Sultana in area was diverted for evacuation of the patient from MV Beluga Majesty. The local



*"MV Costa Luminosa"*

### **MV Pacific Duchess**

MRCC (Mumbai) received an information from Master of MV Pacific Duchess at 1852 hrs on 14 Feb 11 regarding medical emergency onboard in position 186 Chhachi Lt 10 n miles, Gujarat (North of Okha Port, at anchorage). It was reported that one crew was suffering from severe stomach pain.

On receipt of the information, ICGS C-149 was deployed with dispatch at 1900 hrs to evacuate the



*"Ships Gemini at Casualty Evacuation"*

shipping agent was informed to make necessary arrangement for further medical management at Paradip.

ICGS Raziya Sultana arrived area at 1700 hrs on 19 Feb 11. The patient was evacuated at 1710 hrs and first-aid was provided by CG medical team.



*"First Aid onboard ICGS Razia Sultana"*

ICGS Raziya Sultana entered Paradip Harbour at 0100 hrs on 20 Feb 11 and handed over patient to local shipping agent for further medical treatment.

### **SV Harmattan**

At about 0030 hrs on 22 Feb 11, MRCC (Gris

Nez), France intimated MRCC (Chennai) regarding medical emergency on board Sailing Vessel Harmattan in position 350 n miles east of Chennai. The vessel had two crew on board out of which one of the crew had sustained leg injury.

MRCC (Chennai) established communication with MRCC (Gris Nez) and it was ascertained that medical evacuation was not possible because the other crew cannot stay alone due to of self dialysis treatment undertaken by him. MRCC (Gris Nez) requested MRCC (Chennai) for providing medical assistance to the patient.

ICGS Sagar which was in the area was diverted at 0235 hrs on 22 Feb 11 to render necessary assistance to the sailing vessel. The CG ship effected R/V with the sailing vessel in position 094-Chennai Lt-240 and medical party boarded the vessel for providing assistance. Crew (Mr Jacky Peudevin age 62 yrs) was suffering from trauma on right foot. The infection was not responding to oral antibiotics and it was suspected to be cellulites on the right foot. Patient was administered with intravenous therapy.

ICGS Sagar evacuated the patient and proceeded with max speed for further treatment ashore. The ship entered Chennai harbour at 1500 hrs on 23 Feb 2011 and the patient was admitted to Rama Chandra Hospital, Chennai for further treatment.

### **MV Athena**

At 2215 hrs on 22 Mar 11, MRSC (Kochi) received a medical evacuation request for a crew having cerebral vascular accident/hemorrhage intracranial heart insufficiency onboard MV Athena, off Trivandrum. The vessel was on passage from Colombo to Suez.

On receipt of information, ICGS Vizhinjam contacted the vessel and directed the Master to arrive off Vizhinjam. ICGS Vizhinjam sailed ICGS C-134 on 23 Mar 11, with Medical team embarked at 0500 hrs and evacuated the patient at 0635 hrs same day. The patient was taken to Government Medical College Hospital, Thiruvananthapuram for further treatment.

## **AID TO PORT & CIVIL AUTHORITY**

### **Fire onboard barge PFS Prosperity**

While leaving Goa harbour at about 1735 hrs on 10 Jun 11, ICGS Samudra Prahari observed fire onboard barge which was in dry dock. The dense smoke emanated from the barge in the floating dock. The CG ship immediately operated External Fire Fighting system and sprayed sea water on the barge and two CG fire fighting teams were lowered on the barge through yard crane bucket to attack the fire.

CG team brought the fire under control at 1840 hrs and directed yard to deploy personnel for cooling of boundary and removal of burning material. The swift action by ICGS Samudra Prahari saved



*"Fire Fighting Assistance by ICGS Samudra Prahari"*

the vessel and averted the major fire incident in Goa harbour.

### **Assistance during Flood – Kuzhithurai River (Kanyakumari)**

On 08 Dec 2010 Coast Guard Station Vizhinjam received a request from district collector for assistance in flood affected area of Kanyakumari District.

CG Rescue Team from Indian Coast Guard Station Vizhinjam dispatched by road along with Gemini (inflatable boat) at 1730 hrs on 08 Dec 10. The team reached Munchirai at 1900 hrs on 08 Dec 10 and commenced rescue operation under supervision of District Collector, Kanyakumari. Rescue efforts were augmented by divers from Kochi. The team arrived the affected area at 0200 hrs on 09 Dec 10 and commenced rescue operation.

One Coast Guard Helicopter from Goa was positioned at Thiruvananthapuram to augment rescue efforts.

Coast Guard dornier ex New Mangalore was deployed to undertake aerial recce of affected area to locate marooned personnel in flood affected area from 0700 hrs to 1017 hrs on 10 Dec 10. On 11 Dec 10, the civil administration intimates that the water has receded considerably and the roads have become motorable, which facilitated rescue operation by local administration.

### **Assistance during Fire incident at Diglipur**

CG District HQs-9, Diglipur received a request from Assistant Commissioner, Diglipur regarding assistance to local fire department in extinguishing major fire at Diglipur Local Civil Market at about

1500 hrs on 07 Mar 11. On receipt of information, the Coast Guard fire fighting team was deployed along with necessary vehicles and equipment duly mobilized.

The assistance arrived on scene of fire at 1510 hrs, within 10 minutes. The Coast Guard Fire Fighting Team equipped with Water Bowser, Ambulance, Two 45 Ltrs AFFF Fire Extinguishers, Ten 9 Ltr AFFF Fire Extinguishers and Three CO<sub>2</sub> Extinguishers joined the hands with the local fire department. The Coast Guard fire fighting team played an effective role to prevent spread of fire by continuous and tireless efforts.



*“CG Personnel fighting fire at Scene”*

Both local fire department and Coast Guard personnel duly supported by local populace contained fire by 1615 hrs and completely extinguished by 1700 hrs. The assistant commissioner had expressed appreciation to Coast Guard for timely assistance in preventing major disaster view limited resource available with the local fire department.

## **PIRACY ACTIVITIES WEST OFF LAKSHADWEEP & MINICOY ISLAND**

### Background

Piracy off the Somali Coast has been a threat to international shipping since the second phase of the Somali Civil War in the early 21st century. Since 2005, many international organizations, including the International Maritime Organization and the World Food Programme have expressed concern over the rise in acts of piracy. Piracy has contributed to an increase in shipping costs and impeded the delivery of food aid shipments. Ninety percent of the World Food Programme’s shipments arrive by sea, and ships plying into this area now require a military escort. View ineffective Somali national Coast Guard and out break of civil war the coastal fishing community resorted to armed guards influenced by feudalistic War Lords for protection of rich fishing grounds around Somali coast. Gradually, these armed guards maraud upon maritime merchandise and became outlaws, which resulted in increase of piracy off Somali coast. Between 2003–2004, Somalia lost about \$100 million dollars in revenue due to illegal tuna and shrimp fishing in the country’s exclusive economic zone by foreign trawlers. In addition, clashes have been reported between Somalia’s Islamist fighters, who are opposed to the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and the pirates. The TFG has made some efforts to combat piracy, occasionally allowing foreign naval vessels into Somali territorial waters. However, more often than not, foreign naval vessels chasing pirates were forced to break off when the pirates entered Somali territorial waters. The government of Puntland has made more progress in combating piracy, evident in recent interventions.

The Indian Coast Guard with technologically proven state of art MRCCs has been designated as the Focal Point of ReCAAP ISC for Information Sharing on Piracy related issues in Asia. Further, the organizations like IMB also proactively obtained information on piracy and shared with coastal states to prevent the menace. With the increasing trend of piracy in the Gulf of Aden and adjacent waters, the Indian Navy responded to these concerns by deploying a warship to the region on 23 October 2008. Many countries joined the coalition forces:-

- ✓ Canadian Forces Maritime Command
- ✓ French Navy
- ✓ German Navy
- ✓ Greek Navy
- ✓ Indian Navy
- ✓ Islamic Republic of Iran Navy
- ✓ Italian Navy
- ✓ People's Liberation Army Navy (China)
- ✓ Royal Navy
- ✓ Royal Danish Navy Republic of Korea
- ✓ Royal Netherlands Navy
- ✓ Royal Saudi Navy
- ✓ Russian Navy
- ✓ Spanish Navy
- ✓ Swedish Navy
- ✓ Turkish Navy
- ✓ United States Navy
- ✓ Japan Maritime Self Defence Force

The pirates are changing their modus operandi and tactics very frequently. Initially they were operating in small groups of between four to five men in fast moving skiffs with speeds up to 25 Knots. These men were armed with automatic weapons, RPGs or tank rocket launchers. They approach any unsuspecting vulnerable merchant ship when in sight resorting to small arms fire to intimidate the crew into submission. Using the ladder carried onboard the skiffs, they forced their way up the vessel and took charge of the proceedings thereafter.

In the development of tactics and evolving of their operations, the pirates have enhanced their reach by employment of mother ships resulting in significant extension of their operational range. In addition to the enhanced range of operation, they are technically upgrading themselves with hand held GPS receivers, portable radio communication equipments and satellite phones, giving them the advantage of ascertaining exact locations and real time communication linkages. It has also been observed that the pirates use the weather and tidal current to their advantage to augment their endurance and range.

The pirates are also using two or more skiffs in attacks, usually approaching from either quarter of the target vessel. Some times to bring in the element of surprise, the pirates are also using screen of skiffs on the forward part of the vessel to mask the actual attacking skiff from the astern or quarter. Identification of these skiffs becomes difficult till in close proximity because of large number of similar fishing boats in the vicinity. With the limited crew on board, the diversionary tactics of masking works in the advantage of the pirates.

Mostly the attacks happen at dawn or dusk, with majority occurring at dawn. However the attacks at night under bright moonlight have also been reported. The gang members of pirates remain generally inactive during major part of the day. This may be attributed to excessive consumption of locally produced drug similar to cannabis which reduces their effectiveness in the day time. This trick of doping the pirates is also generally used by their bosses as part of the strategy to smoothen the effect of harsh conditions at sea, by making them relatively inactive in inebriated condition during transit or period of inactivity.

In the most recent incidents related to reporting of attempted piracy, the pirates have utilised captured trawlers or Dhows or merchant vessels to intercept and target vessels. In all the cases, use of skiffs is also reported. In a recent incident on 18 Feb 11, in a pirated US Yacht Quest, 19 pirates killed all 4 American crew. This attitude of the pirate is cause of concern.

### Trends in Piracy

A close analysis of the general area of operations by the pirates reveals that the pirates have chosen a box of 1200 x 600 n miles between the Gulf of Aden and the Lakshadweep and Minicoy Islands. This rectangle is extendable in the North South direction subject to presence of task forces or the routing of SLOCs. There is no doubt that piracy emanating out of Somalia has been shifting eastward increasing ranges as well southward. The merchant mariners have also chosen detoured routing to maintain trade at sea without falling prey to pirates. In the process, the vessels are plotted to take paths, which transit northwards and tend to close the Islands on the Western Seaboard of India.

Baring reduction in piracy attacks during the time

of Southwest monsoon, the trend in piracy as increased in area close to Lakshadweep and Minicoy Islands in the year 2010 as compared to 2009. Further, the trend indicates that in the last two years while the incidents of armed robbery reduced from 14 to 05, incidents of attempted piracy has increased by 13 times and the actual piracy attacks are 14 in the current year as compared to nil in 2009.

The interdiction of pirates at sea off the Gulf of Aden and Lakshadweep and Minicoy Island by Indian Coast Guard/Indian Navy, Malaysian Navy, South Korean Navy and the confrontation of the pirates with other forces operating has resulted in the pirates attacking ships off the Gulf of Oman.

### Actions Initiated

The Indian Coast Guard appreciating the trend in increased piracy attempts close to Lakshadweep and Minicoy Islands, conducted round the clock surveillance by deploying ICG Ships and aircraft in the EEZ to create deterrence as well as build confidence in the minds of merchant men. Accordingly, specific exercises inducing antipiracy measures as well as dovetailing anti piracy actions in Coastal Security exercises were undertaken. In addition, based on report on piracy attempts, anti piracy operations were also undertaken on two occasions in the last two months.

The Indian Coast Guard has been closely working with the Indian Navy on all issues concerning piracy at sea and recommends joint operations.

### Anti-Piracy Ops

During the past year, major thrust has been accorded by the Coast Guard for anti-piracy operations. Both patrolling and surveillance have been enhanced exponentially in order to

achieve the desired deterrence, within the available resources. Further, the apprehension of Somali nationals on the beach, with skiffs off Minicoy, operation of mother vessel like Prantalaya-14 which was hijacked by Somalian pirates during the month of Apr 2010 and the capture of Bangladeshi merchant vessel Johan Moni by pirates off Minicoy has upped the ante with concerns of the crawling acts of piracy towards L&M shores. This precipitated into launching of 'Op Island Watch' by the Coast Guard with Indian Navy from 13 Dec 10, for a duration of one month. Further, analysis of the operation, obligated the two maritime forces to enhance the period of Operation till 31 May 11, till commencement of SW Monsoon.

### Sinking of Pirate Mother Vessel Prantalay: 14-28 Jan 11



*"Pirate Action Group at scene off L&M Island"*

On 28 Jan 11, ICG Dornier (CG-763) ex-747 SQN (CG), Kochi whilst on surveillance off Lakshadweep & Minicoy islands, under 'Op Island Watch', reported sighting of piracy attack by two skiffs on a Bahaman registered Container Carrier MV CMA CGM Verdi, on voyage from Malta to Port Chiwan, China in position 130 Suheli Par Lt 56 (65 n miles North of Minicoy). The Coast Guard aircraft also reported presence of mother ship named Prantalay.

### *Piracy Attempt averted by CG Dornier*

The ICG Dornier prevented the attack on MV CGA CGM Verdi by frequent low passes. Due to the efforts of CGDO the pirates abandoned the attack. Thereafter, the merchant vessel reported safe and resumed its intended voyage. Later, the pirate's skiffs were taken under tow by mother vessel Prantalay. Subsequently, the mother vessel stopped at 1156 hrs and hoisted the skiffs onboard. The ICG Dornier maintained overhead to shadow the mother vessel and departed area at 1315 hrs after passing contact details to Naval Dornier operating in the area.

### *Interdiction by ICG Ship*

ICGS Sankalp, which was on anti-piracy patrol under 'Op Island Watch' was deployed for interdiction. Second CG Dornier sortie in armed configuration was launched at 1720 hrs on 28 Jan 11 from Kochi, which reported the mother vessel Prantalay engulfed in fire due to retaliatory fire by INS Cankarso in position 255 Kochi Lt 230. All persons from the mother vessel jumped overboard and 20 Thai crew out of 22 were recovered by IN Ship while 15 Somali Pirates, out of 21, were provided life rafts for their rescue and sea survival.



*"PAG Engaged by law enforcement agency"*

ICGS Sankalp picked up 15 Somali Pirates from two life rafts at about 0930 hrs and carried out search in the area for missing person. The CG Ship proceeded to Mumbai with rescued Somali Pirates for further investigation and legal formalities. INS Cankarso arrived Kochi with 20 rescued fishermen on PM 29 Jan 11.

### *Investigation and Handing over*

ICGS Sankalp departed area 1000 hrs on 29 Jan 11 for handing over pirates to police for further legal actions at Mumbai. Initially interrogation by Sankalp it revealed that 25 Somali/Ethopian origin pirates were onboard Prantalay at time of interception and 10 died during Sinking/Damage to the mother vessel. 23 AK 47, 02 Rocket launchers and 07 Grenades were also onboard with Pirates which went down with the vessel.

ICGS Sankalp arrived Mumbai harbour at 0715 hrs on 31 Jan 11 along with 15 rescued Somali/Ethopian pirates. The pirates disembarked at anchorage and were handed over to Yellow Gate police station at 1300 hrs on 31 Jan 11. Further, the 20 rescued fishermen with Indian Navy have also been handed over to the Yellow Gate police station.

### *Apprehension of Parantalay-11 : 06 Feb 11*

MRCC (Mumbai) received an information from the ReCAAP, Information Sharing Centre, Singapore at about 1600 hrs on 05 Feb 11 that MT Chios, a Greece flagged crude oil tanker was attacked by the pirates in position about 82 n miles west of Suheli Par Island in the Lakshadweep & Minicoy Islands.

On receipt of the information, MRCC (Mumbai) contacted the vessel to ascertain the ongoing situation. The vessel reported that one skiff with

05 heavily armed pirates attempted to hijack the vessel. The attack was thwarted by the ship through antipiracy measures. The vessel was reported to be safe. However, one mother ship along with a skiff was suspected to be operating in area.

### *Interdiction by ICG Ship*

ICGS Samar on routine patrol off the Lakshadweep Islands was diverted with dispatch at 1845 hrs on 05 Feb 11 for sanitizing the area. The ship proceeded at maximum speed, arrived the area and commenced search for the suspected pirate mother ship operating in area. It was also reported that an IN dornier was launched from 1830 hrs on 05 Feb 11. At about 0510 hrs on 06 Feb 11, the ship encountered an unlit contact operating in the area suspected to be the pirate mother ship. ICGS Samar commenced shadowing the vessel. In the meantime, a small contact approached the ICG ship from the stern at high speed. The ICG ship fired at the contact and thereafter it broke off its chase and returned to the suspected mother vessel.

### *Engaging Pirated Vessel*

ICGS Samar continued shadowing of the suspected pirate vessel till day break. The efforts of the ship to contact the mother vessel on MMB



*"Eagle eye view of Prantalaya-11"*

channel 16 did not yield any result. INS Tir reportedly in the area, joined the coordinated anti piracy operation with the ICG ship. At day break, the vessel was sighted picking up the speed and proceeding westwards.

ICGS Samar commenced hot pursuit of the vessel and fired warning shots across the bows and ahead of the fleeing vessel to compel her to stop.

ICGS Samar closed in towards the suspected vessel and identified her as Prantalaya-11 (Thailand flagged fishing vessel hijacked by Somalian pirates in Apr 10). Further, men with arms were observed on the upper decks of the vessel. The vessel subsequently stopped due to firing by ICGS Samar. After firing by ICGS Samar, the crew of the pirate vessel surrendered by hoisting a white flag and mustered on the forward portion of the ship. The 28 pirates and 24 rescued crew as recovered by ICGS Samar and INS Tir were taken onboard ICGS Samar for transit to Mumbai.

ICGS Samar along with 24 rescued crew, seized pirated vessel and 28 pirates arrived Mumbai at about 1840 hrs on 09 Feb 11. The pirates along with seized pirate vessel and the crew were handed over to Mumbai Police at about 1030 hrs on 10 Feb 11.



*"Craft used by Somali pirates"*

## [FV Vega-5](#)

As a follow up to the three incidents of piracy between 11-12 Mar 2011, INS Khukri, INS Kalpeni and IN Dornier aircraft were designated to investigate the area. Suspicious contact as reported by the Dornier aircraft was approached by INS Kalpeni at about 2115 hrs on 12 Mar 11. The contact was later identified as MV Vega-5, a Mozambique flagged fishing vessel hijacked on 28 Dec 2010 off the Mozambique coast and being used as pirate mother ship since Feb 2011. The pirate mother vessel launched two skiffs towards INS Kalpeni and the skiffs opened fire on the IN ship. INS Kalpeni returned fire in self defence. The crew of the mother vessel was thereafter observed to be abandoning the vessel after the mother ship caught fire. INS Khukri came closer with INS Kalpeni at about 2330 hrs on 12 Mar 11. Life rafts were lowered by both the ships for rescuing the personnel in the water.



*"Pirated Vessel MT Vega-5"*

A total of 74 personnel were recovered onboard INS Khukri by the morning of 13 Mar 11. The fire on board Pirate mother vessel was observed to be reducing, however, some random explosions on board were reported in the forenoon of 13 Mar 11. One abandoned skiff along with OBM was sighted

and brought close to INS Khukri whilst the second skiff was likely to be onboard the mother vessel. Of the total 74 personnel recovered, 61 are pirates. 13 personnel are of the original crew and being used by the pirates as hostages.

### MV Morteza

On 26 Mar 11 that TU aircraft while on MR surveillance had reported attempted piracy attack onboard MV Maersk Ensigton in position 260 Agatti Lt 290 and suspected mother vessel MV Morteza alongwith skiff operating in area. INS Suvarna and ICGS Sangram were directed to sanitize the area/ coordinate the anti piracy operation.



*“MV Morteza at Scene”*

INS Suvarna intercepted the mother vessel MV Morteza and ordered her to stop at 1530 hrs on 26 Mar 11. Mother vessel fired on INS Suvarna and naval ship retaliated in self defence. Subsequently, the pirate vessel caught fire and Intermittent explosions were observed onboard MV Morteza. Sangram arrived at datum 2100 hrs and undertook fire fighting operation with External Fire Fighting (EFF) system. It was reported that the mother vessel sank in position 260 Agatti Lt 340 n miles at

2203 hrs, post major fire along with two skiffs. All 31 survivors including 14 Iranian and 17 Somali pirates were recovered by INS Suvarna.

### Conclusion

Indian Coast Guard and Indian Navy started antipiracy operation “Op Island Watch” on 13 Dec 10 due to sudden increase in piracy activity close to L&M Islands and confirmed reports of activities of Piracy Action Groups (PAG) based on the input provided by ReCAAP ISC through MRCC (Mumbai). These inputs were also corroborated by International Maritime Bureau (IMB) and other International Agencies operating in Gulf of Aden and off Somalia. The presence of Indian Maritime Forces acted as a deterrent which resulted in shift of piracy activity west and northward closer to Gulf of Oman.

Encouraged by the initial results of Op Island Watch, the operation was extended till onset of SW Monsoon. This extension resulted in thwarting two piracy attacks off L&M Islands and apprehension of 121 pirates along with one pirated vessel. The rescue of 71 Thai/ Myanmarese/Iranian crew has also ended their ordeal under the captivity of the pirates.

*Prithvi*  
*(Commandant)*

Mayer. N. Navar (075)  
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KW	: 13700

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 S. RAMESH (A/B)  
 PRANJAN BABU  
 D. S. TANGEL (A/B)  
 PRANJAN BABU  
 CCK

17th July 2010 / Off Great Nicobar island

We onboard the VLGC British Confidence express our heartfelt thanks to the Master and Staff of the Indian Coast Guard Ship 40 - Varad for the exemplary conduct and co-operation rendered to us during the medical evacuation of one of our shipmates. It has been an honour to interact with you. Gentlemen, you made us proud!

With deep regards and respects from all onboard the British Confidence.

*(Chow gk)*

*(OR) Smt's down*



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BRITISH CONFIDENCE	
Master	

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 V. BABURAO BSN  
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