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Sagar Maitri Mission

Published On: 14-10-2023

Why is in news? DRDO's oceanographic research vessel 'INS Sagardhwani' embarks on Sagar Maitri Mission-4 to establish long-term scientific partnerships with Indian Ocean Rim countries in 'Ocean Research & Development'

INS Sagardhwani, an oceanographic research vessel of Naval Physical & Oceanographic Laboratory (NPOL) of DRDO, embarked on a two-month long Sagar Maitri (SM) Mission-4 from South Jetty, Southern Naval Command (SNC), Kochi on October 12, 2023.

About:

Sagar Maitri is a **novel initiative of DRDO** that supports the broad objective of Prime Minister's policy declaration '**Safety and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR)**' to **promote closer cooperation in socio-economic aspects** as well as more significant scientific interaction, **especially in ocean research among Indian Ocean Rim (IOR) countries.**

Under the aegis of this policy, DRDO initiated a scientific component named **MAITRI (Marine and Allied Interdisciplinary Training and Research Initiative).**

The prime objectives of the SAGAR MAITRI Mission are **data collection from the entire North Indian Ocean**, focussing on the **Andaman Sea and adjoining seas** and establishing a long-term collaboration with eight IOR countries in the field of ocean research and development.

The programme also aims at **establishing long term scientific collaboration** with these countries **in the field of 'Ocean Research & Development'** and data collection with a focus on the Andaman Sea.

In the SAGAR MAITRI programme, INS Sagardhwani will retrace the tracks of INS Kistna, which participated in the International Indian Ocean Expedition during 1962-65.

The missions aim to **establish long-term scientific partnerships and collaborations** with Oman, the Maldives, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and Myanmar — the eight IOR countries.

In earlier SAGAR MAITRI missions, the delegation visited Yangon (Myanmar) in April 2019, followed by the second mission (SM-2) to Klang (Malaysia) in August 2019 & Singapore in September 2019, including the conduct of one-day scientific seminars in all three countries.

In February 2020, the NPOL conducted oceanographic studies in the Southern Indian Ocean, including an equatorial transect, as part of the third mission (SM-3).

The current mission (SM-4) plan includes scientific deployments onboard INS Sagardhwani in the Northern Arabian Sea and initiating collaborative research programmes with the Department of Marine Sciences & Fisheries at Sultan Qaboos University, Oman.

These missions give the scientists an **opportunity to cooperate and build strong working relationships** with their IOR counterparts studying the oceans.

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INS Sagardhwani:

INS Sagardhwani is the **Oceanographic research vessel** of DRDO.

It is maintained and operated by the **Indian Navy**.

It was launched in July 1994.

The vessel has been engaging in extensive oceanic observing missions and research for the last 25 years.

It is a **marine acoustic research ship** designed and developed by 'Naval Physical and Oceanographic Laboratory' (NPOL), Kochi and constructed indigenously by GRSE Ltd.

NPOL is a premier systems laboratory of DRDO. The NPOL is involved in studying the ocean environment and other related fields.

The ship is fitted with state-of-the-art equipments like the latest wave height measuring radars, marine radio etc.

It is exclusively used for the **scientific and research programmes** of NPOL.