

**PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU (DEFENCE WING)  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

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**Thursday, October 12, 2023**

**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 Mairi (SM) Mission-4 from South Jetty, Southern Naval Command (SNC), Kochi on October 12, 2023. Secretary, Department of Defence R&D and Chairman DRDO Dr Samir V Kamat flagged-off the ship in the presence of Officiating Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief (South) Rear Admiral Upal Kundu and other senior officials of DRDO & Indian Navy.

Sagar Maitri is a novel initiative of DRDO that supports the broad objective of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi’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)’, which focuses on establishing long-term collaboration with IOR countries in the field of ‘Ocean Research and Development’.

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.

INS Sagardhwani is a marine acoustic research ship designed and developed by NPOL, Kochi and constructed indigenously by GRSE Ltd. It was launched in July 1994. The NPOL is involved in studying the ocean environment and other related fields. The vessel has been engaging in extensive oceanic observing missions and research for the last 25 years.

**ABB/Savvy**