

Indian Navy deploys Oxygen Express to Island Territories

Posted On: 25 APR 2021 6:49PM by PIB Delhi

As part of the nation's fight against COVID 19, Indian Navy ships under Headquarters, Southern Naval Command at Kochi are progressing with the mission of OXYGEN EXPRESS in order to render support to the local administration of the Union Territory of Lakshadweep (UTL). In the early hours today, 25 Apr 21, INS Sharda, based at Kochi, undertook transfer of essential medical supplies to the capital of UTL, Kavaratti. The stores consisted of **35 Oxygen cylinders**, Rapid Antigen Detection Test (RADT) kits, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), masks and other items to fight the COVID 19 pandemic. The disembarkation of stores was coordinated by personnel from INS Dweeprakshak at Kavaratti. The ship then continued with her mission to the island of Minicoy for disembarkation of Oxygen cylinders and medical supplies.

Additionally, 41 empty Oxygen cylinders from the islands have been embarked onboard Indian Navy hired vessel, Meghna. The vessel is now headed to Kochi for refilling of the empty cylinders and will head back to UTL with filled cylinders soon **to ensure that the Oxygen Express continues unabated**. The operations are being **progressed under the supervision of the Naval Officer-in-Charge at Lakshadweep in coordination with the UTL Administration**.

To assist the civil administration in fighting COVID 19 at the island of Kadmat, **a Naval contingent comprising one doctor, two Medical Assistants and one additional sailor reached Kadmat AM today (25 Apr 21)**. The personnel have been deputed from SNC, Kochi as well as from INS Dweeprakshak, Kavaratti.

HQSNC has also **reserved ten beds including ICU facilities for patients from Lakshadweep at INHS Sanjivani, Kochi** to cater for shortages in beds at the islands. Also, Naval Air Station INS Garuda has also been placed on alert to extend Naval airfield facilities for UTL helicopters ferrying patients.

Air Evacuation Pods developed indigenously by the Naval Aircraft Yard, Kochi to airlift COVID-19 patients from the Islands as well as from elsewhere are also being made ready for emergency requirements.