

Indian Ocean research expedition on board Sagar Nidhi ends, collects mine of data

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A view of the ORV Sagar Nidhi, an ice strengthened multidisciplinary vessel. R_SHIVAJ RAO

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The first expedition on board research vessel Sagar Nidhi conducted as a part of the International Indian Ocean Expedition-2 explored the western Arabian Sea concluded its mission gathering useful data for oceanographic studies.

The 18-day expedition, led by PN Vinyachandran of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore and Satya Prakash of Esso-Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services, Hyderabad, was flagged off in Goa on December 4, and concluded at Mauritius on December 22.

The data collected will help elucidate the currents and water masses in the western Indian Ocean in detail and facilitate in understanding of the oceanography.

This IIOE-2 is being held during 2015-2020, about 50 years after IIOE, which was the first major exploration programme in the Indian Ocean. This is being coordinated internationally by the Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research, Inter-governmental Oceanographic Commission and Indian Ocean Global Ocean Observing System.

In this international expedition, apart from Indian scientists, there were participants from Mauritius, Israel, Singapore, Australia and the UK.

Twelve Indian scientists representing IISc, INCOIS, NIOT (Chennai), NCAOR (Goa), NRSC (Hyderabad) and Goa University were on board.

Study of water masses

The objective of this multidisciplinary expedition was to understand the structure of water masses in the western Indian Ocean and assess the difference in their characteristics with respect to observations made in the past, according to a statement from the Indian National Institute for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS).

The water masses from Red Sea, Persian Gulf and Northern Arabian Sea are found in this part of the Indian Ocean at its different depth layers.

Underwater profiles

The other objective of the cruise was to understand the physical-chemical-biological characteristics in the equatorial Indian Ocean and their inter-relationship.

Underwater profiles of currents, temperature, salinity, oxygen, light and chlorophyll were measured during the cruise.

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