

Revised contingency plan out for oil spill crises in Indian

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An online system for predicting the movement of oil spills was launched today along with a revised national plan for dealing with such contingencies in Indian waters even as the Coast Guard asked all ports and oil installations to assess their preparedness in this regard.

The request by the Coast Guard came during the the 20th National Oil Spill Disaster Contingency Plan (NOSDCP) and Preparedness meeting in Goa.

Vice Admiral HCS Bisht, the Director General of Indian Coast Guard and Chairman of NOSDCP, led the meeting which was attended by a total of 80 delegates, including representatives of various ministries, central and state government departments and agencies, ports and oil companies.

"The comprehensively revised, 2015 edition of the NOSDCP reflects current international norms and best practices, key relevant national regulation, experience gained since publication of the first edition in July, 1996, and valuable inputs received from stakeholders to the national plan.

"While the earlier editions of NOSDCP covered only oil spills, the revised edition initiates national preparedness and response to Hazardous and Noxious Substance (HNS) incidents also," an official statement said.

A highlight of the meeting was the launch of the Online Oil Spill Advisory (OOSA) system.

The OOSA system, developed by INCOIS, places India among a select group of countries to have indigenously developed an online platform for predicting the movement of oil spills. It will significantly enhance the efficacy of the national response to marine oil spills.

Bisht recollected minor incidents of pollution damages over the past year and the oil spill in Bangladesh, which caused damage to the fragile ecosystem of the Sunderbans Delta.

He also urged the persons in charge of all ports and oil installations to "review their plans and resources for oil spill contingencies in Indian waters".