

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

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Indian Coast Guard participates in 19th Heads of Asian Coast Guard Agencies Meeting (HACGAM) in Istanbul, Türkiye

Indian Coast Guard participated in the 19th Heads of Asian Coast Guard Agencies Meeting (HACGAM) from 05-08 Sep 2023 at Istanbul, Türkiye. A four-member ICG delegation led by DG Rakesh Pal, Director General Indian Coast Guard took part in the annual event of the independent forum with 23 members of Coast Guard Agencies and 02 associate members in the form of ReCAAP and UNODC.

During the three-day High-Level Meeting, in which heads of Coast Guards of all member nations participated, a series of vital issues including maritime law enforcement, safety and security of life at sea, marine environment protection, illicit trafficking of drugs, weapons, and humans at sea etc were discussed, and avenues for further cooperation were explored through the framing of agenda. The forum resolved to further bolster the maritime cooperation among the Asian Coast Guards.

This multilateral forum is an offshoot of the Japanese initiative to promote cooperation amongst regional Coast Guards, after the capture of the pirated vessel MV Alondra Rainbow by the Indian Coast Guard in Nov 1999. The HACGAM primarily focuses on fostering cooperation between the Coast Guards of the member Asian states to ensure and promote safe, secure, and clean seas in the region. The forum comprises four Working Groups to enable a focused and goal-oriented approach towards coordinated response and synergy towards common maritime issues. Indian Coast Guard is the chair of the Search and Rescue (SAR) Working Group and a proactive member of the other Working Groups which include environmental Protection, Controlling Unlawful Acts at Sea, and Information sharing. The last edition of the HACGAM was held in New Delhi in 2022.



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