

Indian Navy launches Operation “Samudra Setu”

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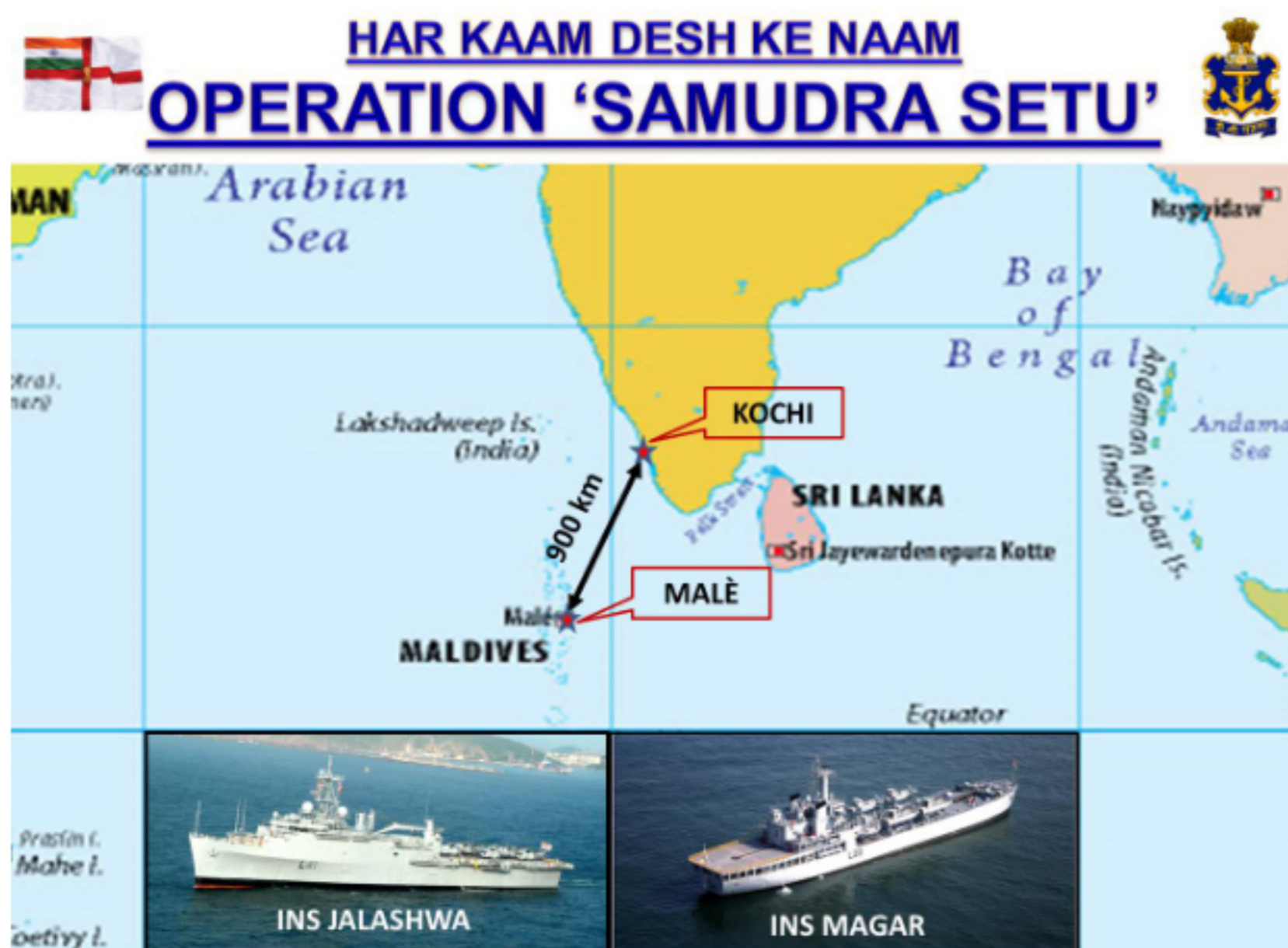
Indian Navy has launched Operation “*Samudra Setu*” - meaning “*Sea Bridge*”, as a part of national effort to repatriate Indian citizens from overseas. Indian Naval Ships *Jalashwa* and *Magar* are presently enroute to the port of Malè, Republic of Maldives to commence evacuation operations from 08 May 2020 as part of Phase-1.

The Government has been closely monitoring the situation with respect to effect of COVID-19 pandemic on our citizens abroad. The Indian Navy has been directed to make suitable preparations for their evacuation by sea.

The Indian Mission in Republic of Maldives is preparing a list of Indian nationals to be evacuated by Naval ships and will facilitate their embarkation after requisite medical screening. A total of 1000 persons are planned to be evacuated during the first trip, catering for COVID- related social distancing norms vis-a-vis the carrying capacity and medical facilities available onboard.

The ships have been suitably provisioned for the evacuation operation. The evacuated personnel would be provided the basic amenities and medical facilities during the sea-passage. In view of the unique challenges associated with COVID-19 stringent protocols have also been stipulated.

The evacuated personnel will be disembarked at Kochi, Kerala and entrusted to the care of State authorities. This operation is being progressed in close coordination with Ministries of Defence, External Affairs, Home Affairs, Health and various other agencies of the Government of India and State governments.



VM/MS

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