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Admiral Sunil Lanba, PVSM, AVSM, ADC, Chief of the Naval Staff, Indian Navy is visiting Bangladesh on an invitation of Bangladesh for participation in International Multilateral Maritime Search and Rescue Exercise (IMMSAREX) being held at Bangladesh from 26 to 28 November 2017 under the aegis of Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS).

IONS, an initiative which was started by Indian Navy in 2008, has grown into a formidable organisation with 23 'Member' nations and 'Nine' observer countries. Continuing with the active engagement within IONS, Bangladesh, the current 'Chair' of IONS is conducting the first ever operational exercise called 'IMMSAREX', under the IONS Charter. The exercise will be inaugurated by Hon'ble Prime Minister of Bangladesh on 27 November 2017 in Cox Bazar, Bangladesh. Indian Naval Ships Ranvir, Sahyadri, Gharial and Sukanya along with one Maritime Patrol Aircraft P-8I will be participating in the exercise. In-addition to the conduct of the exercise, an 'Extraordinary Conclave of Chiefs (ECoC)' meeting of IONS is also scheduled on 28 November 2017, at Cox Bazar, which would also be attended by the Chiefs of the Navy. The ECoC would deliberate upon activities being undertaken by IONS in-addition to reviewing the progress made by three IONS Working Group (IWG) namely 'HADR', 'Maritime Security' & 'Information Exchange and Interoperability'.

The visit is also aimed at consolidating bilateral naval relations between India and Bangladesh and to explore new avenues for naval cooperation. Admiral Sunil Lanba will also hold bilateral discussions with Chief of the Naval Staff, Bangladesh Navy on 27 November 2017, and other participating 'Chiefs of Navy/ Head of Maritime Agencies'.

Indian Navy regularly interacts with Bangladesh Navy through the medium of 'Staff Talks' and other interactions, which include operational interactions including Port Visits, Passage Exercises, Training, Shipbuilding Cooperation besides regular participation by Indian Navy serving and retired officers in Victory Day Celebrations, held in Bangladesh to commemorate 'Liberation War' of 1971.

The CNS during his visit to Bangladesh would also be gifting 'War Memorabilia' for 'Liberation War Museum' of Bangladesh.

DKS/AC

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