

COAST GUARD AIR SQUADRON COMMISSIONED

New Delhi, Jyaistha 1, 1904
May 22, 1982

The Deputy Minister, Shri K.P.Singh Deo, commissioned the first Air Squadron of the Indian Coast Guard in Panaji today.

By commissioning of Chetak helicopters, manufactured by the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, the No. 800 Coast Guard Air Squadron, based at Goa will vastly enhance the capability of the coast guard in carrying out the task of protecting the nation's maritime interests.

The Deputy Minister for Defence said that this was first step in a Rs. 100 crores plan for the development of the coast guard. The coast guard plans to acquire light surveillance aircraft, medium range surveillance aircraft and more helicopters. The coast guard will also acquire more patrol vessels.

Shri Singh Deo said that with the fast depletion of the resources on land the nation would have to exploit the resources in its exclusive maritime economic zone, which measured 2 million sq.km. India was one of the few countries which has the capability to master the technology of ocean development. This would proportionately increase the responsibilities of the coast guard organisation, he said.

The commissioning ceremony of the coast guard air squadron was held at the Naval Air Station INS Hansa, Dabolim - Goa. The Director General of Coast Guard, Vice-Admiral,

M.R. Schunker, handed over...2

Coast Guard Air....(Contd.)

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M.R. Schunker, handed over the commissioning warrant to Lt. Commander P.B. Chowdhuri, its first Commanding Officer. Mrs. M.R. Schunker unveiled a ceremonial lifebuoy and the coast guard insignia was hoisted after the ~~invocation~~ invocation of a couplet from the Atharva Veda.

Speaking on the occasion, Vice-Admiral Schunker, said that the air wing would help in enabling the coast guard to protect against poaching by foreign vessels in the Indian waters. The coast guard organisation, he said, was being expanded at a fast pace and more ships and personnel were being inducted.

The Managing Director of the Hindustan Aeronautic Limited, Mr. Baljeet Kapoor, said that the H.A.L. would be ready to supply the coast guard with helicopters as well as fixed wing aircraft for surveillance.

The commissioning ceremony was attended by a distinguished gathering which included the Chief Minister of Goa, Daman and Diu, Shri Pratap Singh Rane.

Earlier, the Deputy Defence Minister, visited the Naval Hydrographic School, Vasco accompanied by Rear Admiral, Subir Paul, Flag Officer Commanding Goa Naval Area.

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