

# Int'l Indian Ocean expedition set to explore metal deposits

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Chennai:** India will launch the second International Indian Ocean Expedition, about 50 years after the first one, in December 2015, said secretary of ministry of earth sciences, Shailesh Nayak on Monday.

"The expedition aims at providing new information on issues like resources and rise in sea level besides exploring the polymetallic nodules and metal deposits like copper, iron, cobalt, nickel, gold and silver," Nayak said at the International Symposium on Underwater Technology organised by ESSO—National Institute of Ocean Technology along with IEEE Oceanic Engineering Society and IEEE-OES Japan Chapter.

"The first cruise will begin in December from Goa to Mauritius. We will have more such expeditions and observation that will take place subsequently. It will be on for three to four years," he said.

The expedition, which will be in association with scientific committee of oceanographic research

The expedition will begin in December from Goa to Mauritius. The expedition will be on for the next 3 to 4 years, said secretary of ministry of earth sciences, Shailesh Nayak

and intergovernmental oceanographic commission, will also see participation of other countries..

An international conference will be held before its commencement.

Elaborating on the expansion of scientific activities, Nayak said the government is in the process of procuring a polar research vehicle at a cost of about ₹1,000 crores and have identified a shipyard in Spain.

The secretary emphasized on the need to develop newer technologies to map seabed, generate energy from ocean currents and sensors for effective communication up to a depth of 6,000 metres.

While the three low thermal temperature de-

salination plants, which were developed at NIOT, in Lakshwadeep can generate about 100,000 litres of water a day from the ocean, Nayak said the requirement was, however, 10 million litres a day.

"Many current technologies can provide water from ocean, but has environmental issues. The low thermal temperature technology is environmental-friendly, but they are smaller plants. To meet the need, we have to address the technological issues because we know it is possible to do," he said.

NIOT director M A Atmanand said the team on expedition in Antarctica had completed preliminary trials with a polar remotely operable vehicle made by the institute in a lake.

"We are now in the process of developing a human submersible," Susan K Avery, president and director, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and Hitoshi Hotta, executive director, Japan Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology were also present at the three-day symposium.

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