

Indian Antarctic program

November 16, 2021

In news– India has successfully launched the 41st Scientific Expedition to Antarctica with the arrival of the first batch of its contingent at the continent.

Key updates–

- The first batch of 23 scientists and support staff reached the Indian Antarctic station Maitri last week.
- Four more batches shall be **landing in Antarctica by air using DROMLAN facility and onboard chartered ice-class vessel MV VasilijGolovnin by mid-January 2022.**
- The 41st expedition has two major programs.
- **The first program encompasses geological exploration of the Amery ice shelf** at Bharati station, which will help explore the link between India and Antarctica in the past.
- **The second program involves reconnaissance surveys** and preparatory work for drilling of 500 meters of ice core near Maitri. It will help in improving the understanding of Antarctic climate, westerly winds, sea-ice and greenhouse gases from a single climate archive for the past 10,000 years.
- **The ice core drilling will be done in collaboration with the British Antarctic Survey and the Norwegian Polar Institute.**
- In addition to accomplishing scientific programs, it will replenish the annual supplies of food, fuel, provisions, and spares for operations and maintenance of life support systems at Maitri and Bharati.
- **The 41st expedition is being led by Dr. Shailendra Saini, Scientist National Centre for Polar & Ocean Research** (Voyage Leader), Shri. HuidromNageshwar Singh,

Metrologist, India Meteorological Department (Leader, Maitri Station) and Shri. AnoopKalayilSoman, scientist Indian Institute of Geomagnetism (Leader, Bharati Station).

About Indian Antarctic program–

- **It began in 1981** and has completed 40 scientific expeditions.
 - It **built three permanent research base stations in Antarctica**, named **Dakshin Gangotri (1983)**, **Maitri (1988)** and **Bharati (2012)**.
 - Under the program, atmospheric, biological, earth, chemical, and medical sciences are studied by India.
 - As of today, **Maitri and Bharati are fully operational.**
 - **The National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR)**, Goa—an autonomous institute under the Ministry of Earth Sciences, **manages the entire Indian Antarctic program.**
 - The origin of the Indian missions to the Antarctic are traced to the joint ISRO – Hydrometeorological Centre of Russia agreements, which led to Indians, such as Dr. Paramjit Singh Sehra, joining the 17th Soviet Antarctic expedition of 1971–1973.
- **India officially acceded to the Antarctic Treaty System on 1 August 1983.**

The primary purpose of the Antarctic Treaty is to ensure in the interests of all mankind that Antarctica shall continue forever to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and shall not become the scene or object of international discord.

Extra _____ reading:
<https://journalsofindia.com/national-centre-for-polar-and-ocean-research-nc>