

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 229
TO BE ANSWERED ON 02nd February, 2024
HIJACKING OF VESSELS BY PIRATES

229. SHRI A. GANESHAMURTHI:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of hijacking of vessels on high seas by pirates reported during the last three years;
- (b) whether recently some vessels were hijacked in North Arabian sea with crew members including Indians, if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the steps taken by Indian Naval forces to thwart such attempts and to rescue merchant ships/other vessels;
- (d) whether deployment of Maritime Patrol vehicles have been increased in the vulnerable areas to protect merchant ships and also Indian fishermen who are frequently attacked by pirates on the Palk Strait; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

A N S W E R

MINISTER OF STATE
IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

(SHRI AJAY BHATT)

- (a): 07 incidents of hijacking of vessels on high seas by pirates have been reported during the last three years.
- (b): Yes, Sir. One hijacking incident of Merchant Vessel – Lila Norfolk. 21 crew were present including 15 Indian nationals onboard on 04-05 January, 2024. Further, 02 hijacking incidents occurred involving Fishing Vessel – IMAN (28.01.2024) & Fishing Vessel- AI Naemi (29.01.2024) which did not have any Indian crew onboard.
- (c): Indian Navy has been proactively engaging with the regional and extra-regional navies / maritime forces, to promote maritime security. Since 2008, Indian Navy has deployed units in Gulf of Aden and East Coast of Africa towards antipiracy patrols. A total of 3440 ships and over 25000 seafarers have been safely escorted. For restoring maritime security in the region, enhanced presence of ships, aerial surveillance by maritime patrol aircraft / remotely piloted aircraft in the Central Arabian Sea and Off East of Coast of Somalia is being undertaken by Indian Navy. Information is also exchanged with national and international maritime security agencies for early response in a coordinated manner, effective liaison & coordination with DG (Shipping) for inputs on Indian crew onboard Merchant vessels plying in Arabian Sea and Gulf of Aden / adjoining region. In addition, interrogation of fishing vessels / dhows operating in the region is also being undertaken by Indian Navy for maintaining maritime security in the region.
- (d) & (e): Indian Navy has enhanced presence of ships, aerial surveillance by maritime patrol aircraft / remotely piloted aircraft in the central Arabian Sea and Off East of Coast of Somalia towards restoring maritime security in the region. Nil piracy incidents have been reported in Palk Strait.
