

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2369
ANSWERED ON:24.11.2010
DAMAGE TO CORAL REEFS
Yadav Shri Ranjan Prasad

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether grounding of cargo ships in Kavaratti Island of Lakshadweep is dangerous for coral reefs;
- (b) if so, the number of ships grounded during the last one year;
- (c) The actual damage to coral reefs in this Island; and
- (d) The remedial measures taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (Independent Charge) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS(SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

According to information supplied by Secretary, Department of Environment and Forests, Union Territory of Lakshadweep, Kavaratti:

- (a) In general, grounding of ships in any of the coral reefs may cause damage. However, the Cargo Ship 'Nand Aparjitha' was grounded in Kavaratti Island on 14th August 2010 and the grounded area was South Eastern side of the Island which contains rocky portion of the reef and has no Coral growth.
- (b) Only one Cargo vessel as mentioned above during the period.
- (c) Dr. M. Wafar, retired scientist from National Institute of Oceanography, Goa (presently consultant for Lakshadweep Administration) in association with Wildlife Wardens from the department of Environment and Forests and Technical Assistants from Science and Technology Department of Lakshadweep had jointly conducted underwater survey around the accident area on two occasions. No coral growth was seen as the area is found to be rocky.
- (d) The of Lakshadweep Administration had taken up removal of oil and other lubricants from the vessel with the involvement of all the concerned departments, Navy and Coast Guards. The oil being the major pollutant had been removed successfully without any spill from the barrage, within 48 hrs of the accident. The Administration had convened emergency meetings with all concerned including the members of the company, for removal of cargo and vessel from the reef for which all assistance had been extended to the company. The company owners were issued notices under relevant provisions of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 to comply with the directions of the Lakshadweep Administration for speedy and safe removal of the cargo and the vessel from the territorial waters of Lakshadweep.