

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEFENCE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5251

ANSWERED ON:05.09.2011

COASTAL SECURITY SYSTEM

Abdulrahman Shri ;De Dr. Ratna;Gavit Shri Manikrao Hodlya;Gowda Shri D.B. Chandre;Natrajan Meenakshi;Rajendran Shri C.;Sayeed Muhammed Hamdulla A. B. ;Shantha J.;Singh Alias Pappu Singh Shri Uday;Singh Shri Vijay Bahadur;Tagore Shri Manicka

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has taken cognizance of some ships including Panama flagged MT Pavit and an Iranian ship drifting in Indian waters undetected;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and reasons for failure in detection of the ships/vessels;
- (c) the inquiry conducted in regard to each of such cases and outcome thereof;
- (d) the reasons for failure in setting up of the Maritime Security Advisory Board so far;
- (e) whether most of the coastline remains unpatrolled and if so, the details thereof including the proposal, if any, to commission vessels for patrolling purposes in the various maritime regions and the important trade routes; and
- (f) the detailed action plan being chalked out to strengthen the coastal security of the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY)

(a) to (c): On 31st July 2011 merchant vessel MT Pavit was found grounded 1-2 meter depth in position 14 NM north of Colaba Point, Mumbai. MT Pavit was abandoned on 30th June 2011 off the Oman coast and all the thirteen Indian crews were evacuated by Royal Navy ship and transferred to MT Jag Pushpa for disembarkation at Sikka Gujarat. The Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) Mumbai remained in touch with the vessel throughout the ordeal till abandoning and requested the owner to monitor the vessel. However the owner informed MRCC that the vessel has already sunk.

An analysis carried out by Indian Navy has revealed that the reasons for non detection of MT Pavit could possibly be attributed to report of the vessel having been sunk, drift path of the ship through areas not covered by radar, prevailing monsoon weather (low and thick cloud base, poor visibility, heavy rain, rough seas) in the area precluding satisfactory detection by radar or visual identification and MT Pavit was also not having operational automatic Identification System (AIS) due to no power supply or batteries on the ship.

A drifting Iranian ship Nafis-I was detected by Indian Navy unit approx 250 NM off Mumbai on 11th August 2011. The vessel was thereafter monitored and it was towed to Porbandar and handed over to the local authorities for further investigation.

(d) An apex body viz., National Committee on Strengthening Maritime and Coastal Security (NCSMCS), under the Chairmanship of Cabinet Secretary has been formed which is working satisfactorily.

(e) & (f): No, Madam. Government has initiated several measures to strengthen Coastal Security, which includes improving surveillance mechanism and enhanced patrolling by following an integrated approach. Joint operational exercises are conducted on regular basis among Navy, Coast Guard, Coastal Police, Customs and others for security of coastal areas including island territories. Further, continuous review and monitoring of various mechanisms have been established by the Government at different levels, involving various agencies, including the State/Union Territory authorities. The intelligence mechanism has also been streamlined through the creation of Joint Operation Centers and multi-agency coordination mechanism. Installation of radars covering the country's entire coastline and islands is also an essential part of this process.