

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEFENCE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:990
ANSWERED ON:28.11.2011
FAILURE IN DETECTION OF SHIP
Mirdha Dr. Jyoti

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a foreign ship carrying the flag of a foreign country ran around undetected on sea shore in Maharashtra inspite of the three-tier security ring deployed for coastal security;
- (b) if so, whether the Government had, in view of such grave security lapse, ordered an inquiry into the incident;
- (c) if so, the outcome of the said inquiry; and
- (d) the corrective measures put in place in the coasted security apparatus to avoid recurrence of such lapses in future?

Answer

MINISTER OF DEFENCE(SHRI A.K. ANTONY)

(a) to (c): On 31st July 2011 merchant vessel Panama Flaged MV Pavit was found grounded 1-2 meter depth in position 14 NM north of Colaba Point, Mumbai. MV 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 MV 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 MV Pavit was also not having operational automatic Identification System (AIS) due to no power supply or batteries on the ship.

(d) 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. An apex body viz. National Committee on strengthening Maritime and Coastal Security (NCS MCS) has also been formed under the chairmanship of Cabinet Secretary.