

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEFENCE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1949

ANSWERED ON:26.03.2012

PIRACY IN INDIAN OCEAN

Reddy Shri Modugula Venugopala ;Singh Alias Pappu Singh Shri Uday;Singh Shri Rakesh;Tanwar Shri Ashok

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number and details of ships/vessels including people hijacked /captured by the sea pirates in the Indian ocean including Bay of Bengal and Arabian sea, the details of the loss of lives and property therein during the last three years and efforts made by the Government to rescue them;

(b) whether there has been an attempt by sea pirates to hijack a merchant vessel near Lakshadweep Islands as reported recently;

(c) if so, the details thereof and action taken by the Navy Coast Guard in this regard;

(d) whether there has been increased activities of pirates in the Indian Ocean/coastal waters and if so, the details thereof and the measures being taken to check the same;

(e) whether the States with maritime boundaries have been accorded the same status as that of States with international borders and if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether the Government proposes to deploy Unmanned Aerial Vehicles for surveillance and anti-piracy operations in the Indian Ocean and if so, the details thereof; and

(g) whether the Government has any joint patrolling programme or concluded any treaty for maritime security in the Indian Ocean Rim and if so, details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY)

(a) From reports available in open sources, the details of piracy attacks during the last three years are as under:

2009 2010 2011

No. of reported attacks 217 219 237

No. of ships hijacked 47 49 28

No. of seafarers taken hostage 867 1016 470

No. of seafarers killed 04 08 08

No. of seafarers injured 10 13 03

No. of seafarers missing 01 - -

(b) No.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Though the number of vessels hijacked has come down in 2011, piracy attempts have continued unabated in the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia. Government has deployed one Indian Naval Warship in the Gulf of Aden for anti piracy patrols since October,

2008 and more than 1956 ships have been escorted and 40 piracy attempts have been prevented.

(e) While the international border clearly defines the territorial limits and sovereignty of a country over its territory, the maritime boundary delineates the limits of the maritime zones between the adjacent nations subject to internationally recognized rights of innocent passage and freedom upon the high seas, in accordance with United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

(f) & (g): Assets, as required, are regularly deployed for surveillance close to the coast. Due to reports of rising incidents of piracy, surveillance has been increased in the Indian Ocean Region. Although there are arrangements for EEZ surveillance with Maldives, Mauritius and the Seychelles, India has not concluded any treaty with any country for joint patrolling.