

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:106

ANSWERED ON:17.08.2012

FIRING ON INDIAN FISHERMEN OFF DUBAI COAST

Karunakaran Shri P.;Lingam Shri P.

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has taken note of the incident of firing on Indian fishermen in Saudi Arabia by the United States Navy;
- (b) if so, the number of Indian fishermen killed and wounded along with the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government has taken up this matter with US Government and if so, the details and the outcome thereof;
- (d) whether suitable compensation has been paid by the Union Government or the US Government to the family of the deceased/wounded fishermen;
- (e) if so, the details thereof and if not the reasons therefor; and
- (f) the steps taken for avoiding such incidents in future?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S.M. KRISHNA)

(a) to (f) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (f) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 106 REGARDING 'FIRING ON INDIAN FISHERMEN OFF DUBAI COAST' FOR ANSWER ON 17.08.2012

(a) to (f) A U.S. Navy Ship, USNS Rappahannock, fired upon a UAE fishing vessel near the Jebel Ali Port in Dubai in the Gulf at approximately 3.00 pm on 16 July 2012, which resulted in the death of one Indian fisherman and injury to three other Indian fishermen. The U.S. Navy claimed that the fishing vessel was shot at because it disregarded warnings and rapidly approached the U.S. ship. The claim has been contested by the injured Indian fishermen.

The Government has protested the shooting with the U.S. Government and has asked for a full, transparent and expeditious investigation into the incident. The Government took charge of the medical treatment of the injured fishermen and the transportation of the remains of the dead fisherman.

The U.S. Government has expressed regret for the loss of life and injuries caused by the shooting. It has further conveyed that the U.S. Department of Defence is conducting two separate investigations into the incident. The UAE Government has registered a case on the shooting incident and is conducting its own investigations. The two Governments have assured us that they will share the results of their investigations. The Government will decide on appropriate further steps thereafter.

The U.S. Government has made humanitarian relief payment of ` 5,00,000 to the family of the deceased fisherman and ` 50,000 each to the families of fishermen injured in the incident through the Government of Tamil Nadu. It has stated that this payment was without prejudice to its ongoing investigations into the incident.

Government has underscored the need for all naval vessels plying in the Gulf region to enhance their situational awareness regarding civilian and fishing vessels in the crowded Gulf region and exercise maximum caution and restraint in their operations so that innocent civilian ships and their occupants are not adversely affected.