

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SHIPPING
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:660

ANSWERED ON:26.11.2012

SEA PIRACY

Sugavanam Shri E.G.;Swamygowda Shri N Cheluvarama Swamy

Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether piracy attempts at Indian Merchant Vessels have increased during the past three years;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has also laid down specific guidelines, mechanisms and procedures in order to prevent piracy attempts at sea;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (f) the steps taken by the Government for the early release of sailors from pirates and to safeguard their safety and security particularly with reference to the 23 Indian sailors who were reported hijacked by pirates off the shores of Nigeria recently?

Answer

MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI G.K. VASAN)

(a): No, Madam. No Indian flag vessel has been hijacked till date.

(b): Does not arise.

(c) & (d): Yes, Madam. The following steps have been taken to prevent piracy attempts:-

Issuance of the DGS M.S. Notice No.1 of 2011 (F.No.44-NT(6)/2010) dated 14.1.2011 providing for elaborate anti-piracy measures (Best Management Practices), including safe house/citadel.

Banning of sailing vessels to ply in waters south or west of the line joining Salalah and Male vide the DGS M.S.Notice 3/2010 (F.No.35-NT(2)/2010) dated 31.3.2010.

Naval escort provided by Indian naval ships in the Gulf of Aden, since 2008.

Enhanced vigil by the Indian Navy in the Indian EEZ and westward upto 65 degree east longitude

Active participation of India in the security meetings of the International Maritime Organization, Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) and other international fora.

Submission of Document No. 27/9/1 at the IMO Assembly meeting held at London in November, 2011 for flag states to provide information on the welfare of captive crew, efforts for their release and also on continued payment of their wages.

Besides, the Government of India has constituted an InterMinisterial Group of Officers to deal with any hostage situation arising out of the hijacking, at sea, of merchant vessels with Indian crew on board.

Issuance of guidelines for allowing deployment of Armed Security Guards in Indian flag Merchant Ships.

(e): Does not arise.

(f): A Singapore flag vessel M.T. Abu Dhabi Star with 23 sailors, including 22 Indians was reportedly hijacked off the coast of Nigeria on 04.09.2012. Later, it was reported that the vessel was released on 05.09.2012 itself and all the crew members were safe.