

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEFENCE
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:223
ANSWERED ON:10.12.2012
SAFETY OF INDIAN FISHERMEN
Sampath Shri Anirudhan

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware that our fishermen in the Indian Seas, including the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) have become vulnerable targets of the foreign vessels;
- (b) if so, the facts and details thereof including the incidents of firing, collisions, etc. occurred during the last three years and the current year;
- (c) the number of casualties and the monetary loss suffered by the fishermen as a result thereof; and
- (d) the measures taken by the Government for ensuring the safety of Indian fishermen?

Answer

MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY)

(a) to (d): One incident of firing by merchant vessel MT Enrica Lexie on fishing boat "St. Anthony" on 15th February 2012 was reported. Further, fishing boat Don-I sank off Kochi on 1st March 2012 after collision with MV Prabhu Daya. Two fishermen were killed in the firing incident by MT Enrica Lexie while 05 fishermen died in the collision of fishing boat with MV Prabhu Daya. The monetary loss suffered by the fishermen is being looked into by the State Government. Protecting our fishermen is an important task included in the Charter of duties of the Indian Coast Guard. Some foreign vessels are transiting very close to Indian West Coast to avoid piracy attack by Somalian pirates, leading to their transgression into the fishing zone utilized by Indian fishermen. Regular patrolling and air surveillance by Indian Coast Guard are conducted to ensure coastal security. Various Information Sharing Centres dealing with the piracy issues in the region have been apprised about the fishing activities off the Indian coast and requested to issue advisory for merchant vessels transiting the area to be careful about small fishing boats. The International Maritime Bureau (IMB) Piracy Reporting Centre based at Kuala Lumpur and UK Maritime Trade Organisation (UKMTO) have already issued such advisory for merchant vessels transiting the area to be careful about small fishing boats. In addition, the Information Sharing Centre (ISC) established at Singapore under the Regional Cooperation Agreement for Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) has published a special report about fishing activities on the West Coast of India. A Navigational Warning 'NAVAREA' has also been issued by the Chief Hydrographer of India sensitizing the transiting merchant traffic about fishing activities in area. The Director General Shipping has also issued a Notice to apprise the shipping community about the fishing activities on the South West Coast of India. Besides, ICG conducts regular community interaction programmes with the fishing community to apprise them about safety measures to be observed to ensure safety at sea.