

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2981

ANSWERED ON:11.12.2012

THREATS TO COASTAL AREAS AND PORTS

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Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the coastal areas and ports are vulnerable to infiltration and terrorist attacks;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the measures taken by the Government to upgrade/strengthen the security of coastal areas and ports of the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN)

(a) to (b): India's long coast line presents a variety of security concerns that include infiltration/exfiltration of anti-national elements, use of the sea and off shore islands for criminal activities, smuggling of consumer and intermediate goods through sea routes etc. Absence of physical barriers on the coast and presence of vital industrial and defence installations near the coast also enhance the vulnerability of the coasts to illegal cross border activities.

There is a multi-tier arrangement for protection and maritime security of the country involving the Indian Navy, Coast Guard and marine police of the coastal States and Union Territories. The surveillance on the high seas is carried out along the limits of exclusive economic zone (EEZ) by Navy and Coast Guard. In the territorial waters, the Coast Guards protect the Indian interests with Coast Guard vessels and aerial surveillance by Coast Guard aircrafts. Close coastal patrolling is done by State Marine Police. The State's jurisdiction extends upto 12 nautical miles in the shallow territorial waters.

(c): The measures taken by the Government to upgrade/ strengthen the security of coastal areas and ports of the country include:-

(i) The Indian Navy has been designated as the authority responsible for overall maritime security which includes coastal security and offshore security. The Indian Coast Guard has been additionally designated as the authority responsible for coastal security in territorial waters including areas to be patrolled by Coastal Police. The Director General Coast Guard has been designated as Commander Coastal Command responsible for overall coordination between Central and State agencies in all matters relating to coastal Security.

(ii) Ministry of Shipping has been mandated to streamline the process of compulsory registration of all types of vessels, i.e. fishing as well as non-fishing vessels, and also to ensure fitting/provision of Automatic Identification System (AIS) on these boats.

(iii) Department of Fisheries has taken steps to issue biometric ID cards to all the fishermen.

(iv) The Registrar General of India (RGI) has been mandated to issue Multi-purpose National Identity Cards (MNICs) to the population in the coastal villages, including fishermen.

(v) Standard operating procedures for all coastal States / UTs have been finalized.

(vi) Navy has set up 4 joint operation centre at Mumbai, Visakhapatnam, Kochi and Portblair under the charge of existing naval C-in-Cs as the C-in-Cs Coastal Defence. A Sagar Prahari Bal with a special force comprising in 1000 personnel and 80 Fast Interceptor Crafts for force security protecting of naval basis and co-located vulnerable areas and vulnerable points has also been raised / equipped.

(vii) Joint coastal security exercises like 'Sagar Kavach', conducted biannually, have been very useful and have ushered in an era of synergy in joint operations. Modalities have been worked out to disseminate the lessons learnt in each exercise for the benefit of all other coastal States/UTs. The lessons learnt are communicated to all stakeholders, to fill the gaps.

(viii) The security of 12 major ports is looked after by the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) while that of non-major ports is taken care of by the State Governments/State Maritime Boards. The Intelligence Bureau (IB) has developed security norms for the minor ports which are International Ship and Port Security (ISPS) compliant.