

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3254

ANSWERED ON:09.12.2009

DISMANTLING OF SHIP AT ALANG

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Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the US ship Platinum-II, laden with hazardous and toxic wastes and anchoring at Alang in Bhavnagar district of Gujarat Poses threat to the environment of the area;

(b) is so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the ship was allowed to be anchored at Alang for dismantling even when its ownership was doubtful;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to check the threat to the environment and the resultant health hazards to the workers as a result of dismantling of the ship?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS(SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

(a) to (e): The passenger ship "Platinum-II" was anchored at Bhavnagar anchoring point on 06-10-2009 with the permission of the Gujarat Maritime Board (GMB). Subsequently, this Ministry has received complaints pertaining to ownership of the ship and presence of hazardous substances in the ship.

This Ministry had constituted an inter-ministerial technical team to inspect and examine the ship. The team inspected the ship and submitted its report on 26-10-2009. As per this report, there are no hazardous and radio-active wastes on board the ship in loose form or as cargo. However, hazardous materials like asbestos, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and radio-active materials are present in the ship as part of its structure. The team reported that there are 653 smoke detectors and exit points in the ship containing radio-active materials as in-built structure of the ship. The team also estimated that approx. 238 MT of Asbestos Containing Material (ACM) is present in the structure of the ship. A team of officers of Gujarat State Pollution Control Board inspected the ship on 10-10-2009 and estimated that about 20 MT of PCBs are present as in-built structure of the ship and presence of hazardous substances in the ship.

In exercising the 'Precautionary Principle', this Ministry has communicated to GMB that granting permission for beaching and breaking purposes of the ship will not be advisable.