

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SHIPPING
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1093
ANSWERED ON:12.08.2013
ARMED GUARDS FOR MERCHANT SHIPS
Vijayan Shri A.K.S.

Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is unable to provide armed guards for merchantships;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to protect the Indian merchant ships from thesea pirates?

Answer

MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI G.K.VASAN)

(a) & (b): There is no obligation on the part of the Government to provide armed security guards to merchant ships. However, suitable guidelines have been issued by the Government on deployment of armed security guards on board merchant ships to enable deployment of private armed security guards on Indian flag merchant ships particularly when transiting through the high risk area (HRA) in the Gulf of Aden region in Africa.

(c) Government has taken various preventive/mitigating security measures, which inter- alia, include the following:-

- (i) M.S. Notice No.1 of 2011 issued providing for elaborate anti-piracy measures (Best Management Practices), including safe house/citadel.
- (ii) Banning of sailing vessels to ply in waters south or west of the line joining Salalah and Male vide DGS M.S. Notice No. 3/2010.
- (iii) Naval escort provided by Indian naval ships in the Gulf of Aden since 2008.
- (iv) Enhanced vigil by the Indian Navy in the Indian EEZ and westward upto 65 degree east longitude.
- (v) 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.
- (vi) Submission of Document No.27/9/1 at the IMO Assembly meeting held at London on 21-30.11.2011 for flag states to provide information on the welfare of captive crew, efforts for their release and also on continued payment of their wages.