

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEFENCE
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:47

ANSWERED ON:09.12.2013

INS SINDHURAKSHAK

Singh Shri Yashvir;Thamaraiselvan Shri R.

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Naval submarine INS Sindhurakshak sank following an explosion at the Naval dockyard in Mumbai recently;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has conducted any investigation into the accident and if so, the details and the outcome thereof including the measures taken / being taken by the Government to prevent recurrence of such accidents;
- (d) whether the Government has floated global tenders to salvage the remains of the submarine and if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the steps taken by the Government to meet the operational availability of submarines after loss of this submarine?

Answer

MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY)

(a) to (e): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 47 FOR ANSWER ON 9.12.2013

There was an unfortunate incident of explosions and fire onboard Indian Navy Submarine INS Sindhurakshak in the intervening night of 13/14 August 2013. At the time of incident, the submarine was berthed at the Naval Dockyard, Mumbai.

Initial assessments indicated that an internal explosion occurred in the forward compartment of the submarine; where ordnance was stowed, resulting in further near- simultaneous explosions and major fire onboard INS Sindhurakshak. Fire tenders were pressed into action and the fire was brought under control. However, INS Sindhurakshak submerged due to damage sustained during the fire and explosions onboard. 18 naval duty personnel, comprising 03 officers and 15 sailors, were inside the submarine at the time of the incident. As the explosion and resultant damage were instantaneous, these personnel could not evacuate. The submarine is presently resting on the bottom next to the jetty where the incident took place.

Consequent to the incident, a Board of Inquiry (BOI) was constituted by Headquarters Western Naval Command (HQWNC) at Mumbai to investigate into the circumstances leading to the same. The submarine which is submerged in the water is not accessible due to severe deformation of the interiors after the explosion and fire, as also due to poor visibility under water and siltation. The exact cause of explosion remains inconclusive and the same can only be established post salvage of the submarine. The efforts to salvage the submarine are being undertaken. Consolidated BOI report would be forwarded by HQWNC after investigation post salvage of the submarine. In the interim, the Indian Navy has undertaken a safety audit of all the existing procedure for storage and handling of weapon and damage control measures onboard all submarines. The same have been found to be satisfactory.

Globally renowned professional salvage agencies were approached after the incident. An Empowered Committee was constituted for processing the case for the salvage operation. The selection of agency for salvage operations is being presently processed.

The Government of India had approved a submarine building plan, which is being progressed. Further, a proposal for extending service life of six submarines is also being examined.