

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:799

ANSWERED ON:10.12.2013

DEEP SEA FISHING

Gowda Shri D.B. Chandre;Jeyadural Shri S. R.

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether diverse problems being faced by fisheries associations including availability of crew and visas are affecting deep sea fisheries in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to address these problems;
- (d) whether the foreign crew which was required to be phased out at the rate of 15% annually, has been phased out;
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (f) the other measures taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to help deep sea fishery industry?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE AND FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (DR.CHARAN DAS MAHANT)

(a) &(b): Fisheries associations have expressed their inability in carrying out fishing operations in the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) due to conditions of Ministry of Home Affairs for providing security clearance of foreign crew , such a s (i) requirement of minimum salary of US \$ 25000 per annum as a condition for grant of security clearance to foreign crew (ii) foreign crew to be restricted to 10-15% of the total crew (iii) relaxation of the minimum salary condition of US\$ 25000 per annum to foreign crew upto 31-12-2013, and (iv) replacement of the foreign crew by Indian crew by 31-12-2013.

(c): Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries has requested Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) for removal of the restrictions on engagement of foreign crew on deep- sea fishing vessels (DSFVs) due to shortage of trained Indian crew in deep sea fishing. Department has also requested MHA for maintenance of status quo on existing deep-sea fishing guidelines issued by the department, which allow upto 75 percent of foreign crew onboard deep-sea fishing vessels.

(d) & (e): As per the existing order dated 11.4.2012 issued by Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries, foreign crew is required to be phased out at the rate of 25% annually. The phasing out of foreign crew has not been carried out because of non operation of deep-sea fishing vessels due to restrictions on foreign crew imposed by MHA. The country also lacks requisite skill for deep-sea fishing as traditionally the Indian fishermen are trained to fish in near-shore waters and therefore, lack endurance required for undertaking longer voyages in deep-sea fishing vessels. Also, there is inadequate institutional infrastructure required for imparting training in deep sea fisheries and there is a tendency for the trained Indian sea farers to take employment opportunities in Merchant Shipping vessels, which offer better salaries and other perks as compared to fishing vessels.

(f): An Expert Committee has been constituted on 01.8.2013 to have a comprehensive review of the Marine fishing policy and to suggest measures for development of deep sea fishing in India.