

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
SHIPPING  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2870  
ANSWERED ON:10.02.2014  
WELFARE SCHEMES FOR SEAFARERS  
Patel Shri Devji; Roy Shri Nripendra Nath

**Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government proposes to strengthen the welfare schemes for seafarers in the country including providing safe working environment on ships;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has held consultations with various stakeholders before finalisation of such welfare schemes;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the time by which the Government proposes to finalise such welfare schemes for seafarers in the country?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI G.K.VASAN)

(a) to (e): Yes, Madam. The Monthly Ex-gratia Monetary Assistance (MEMA) Scheme is in operation since 01.04.1978. Indian seamen registered in the foreign going sector (Indian on foreign flag) are eligible for this scheme after retirement on superannuation/on attaining the age of 50 years and above or on being permanently disabled and being rendered, consequently unable to pursue the seafaring profession. The widows of Indian seafarers are also eligible to receive financial assistance under the said scheme from the date of the death of the eligible seaman. The amount payable under the said scheme, currently is Rs.200/- per month per such seafarer and Rs. 400/- per month per such widow. Remittances thereto are being made on a half yearly basis, directly to the bank account(s) of the eligible recipient(s). The scheme is presently extended to only registered Indian seamen. For this purpose, the following measures have already been initiated to augment the fund flow requirements and to strengthen the scheme at the earliest:-

- (i) Mobilizing collection of all arrears due for payment from the shipping companies.
- (ii) Stepping up of the current collection of prescribed dues.
- (iii) The statutory levy fee fixed in 2004 already stands revised from August, 2011 from Rs.250/- to Rs.500/- per Indian seaman per year.
- (iv) Widening the base of the levy fee structure to include Indian seafarers on (Indian flag) foreign going ships beyond those who are registered.
- (v) Exploring the possibility of increasing the standing corpus of the said scheme, including through the route of the Registered Placement Service License (RPSL) holders.

The subject has been discussed with the concerned stakeholders in the meeting of the National Welfare Board for Seafarers (NWBS) held in 2010 and of the Committee of Management of the Seafarers' Welfare Fund Society (SWFS) held in 8th November, 2012.