

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF SHIPPING  
LOK SABHA  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2780**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 5<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 2019

**RECRUITMENT OF SEAFARERS**

2780. SHRI RATANSINH MAGANSINH RATHOD:  
SHRI VINAYAK RAUT:  
SHRI A.K.P. CHINRAJ:  
SHRI SHRIRANG APPA BARNE:  
SHRI HEMANT SRIRAM PATIL:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

पोत परिवहन मंत्री

- (a) whether the practice of improper registries has resulted in difficulties in the recruitment of seafarers in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the remedial steps taken/being taken in this regard and to eradicate unscrupulous recruiters for seafarers;
- (c) whether the Government is aware that 3,762 seafarers have allegedly secured qualification certificates without attending classes;
- (d) if so, whether the Directorate General of Shipping (DGS) has initiated action against these alleged 3,762 seafarers and the institutes that have awarded the certificates and if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the other steps taken by the Government to maintain its reputation as a supplier of quality seafarers to the global shipping industry?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR SHIPPING  
(SHRI MANSUKH MANDAVIYA)

(a) & (b) Yes Sir. As per Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 and Merchant Shipping (Recruitment & Placement Service) Rules, 2016, the Recruitment and Placement services are registered and licensed to recruit and place Indian seafarers on board ships. However, a number of cases have been received in the Directorate General of Shipping (DGS) about the difficulties being faced by Indian seafarers who are recruited and placed on board Foreign Flag ships by unknown/unlicensed recruitment agents.

To prevent such cases, an e-migrate system was launched on 11.08.2017, wherein only registered Recruitment and Placement Services (RPS) have been authorized to submit seafarers data. This data is accessible to the immigration authorities to verify whether the seafarers travelling abroad are recruited through authorized Recruitment and Placement Service (RPS) agents. Only on such verification, seafarers are allowed by immigration authorities to pass through immigration channel. In addition to the above, the following remedial steps have taken in this regards:

- An advisory was issued by DGS in the newspaper, highlighting the importance of recruitment only through DGS licensed/registered RPS entities Or through Indian Shipowners. Updated list of RPS entities is available on the DGS website.
- Promulgation of new simplified continuous discharge certificate (CDC) rules in 2017 and making the entire process and issuance of CDCs paperless & online.
- Introducing e-Submission of engagement and discharge details by Indian ship-owners and registered RPS in the DGS e-Governance System.
- Revised Merchant Shipping (Recruitment and Placement) Rules 2016 have been promulgated, wherein the RPS Rules have been aligned with the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC), 2006 Regulations.
- The DGS has also sent one to one e-mails to all Indian seafarers registered in its e-Governance System advising them not to accept maritime recruitment and placement through non-DGS registered entities.
- The DGS approved Maritime Training Institutes have been requested to display the said e-mails of the DGS on their notice board/website for the benefit of their students.

(c) & (d) Yes Sir, it came to the notice that some of the Maritime Training Institutes (MTI) have issued course certificate(s) to candidates without their actual attendance and without imparting the required training. In certain cases, signatures of the Course In-charge and Principal / Head of the Institute have been scanned on the certificates and not physically signed.

DGS has issued Show Cause Notice (SCN) to four MTI's which were involved in issuance of the fake certificates. Out of the four maritime training institutes, one MTI has requested for voluntary closure of the Institute after surprise Inspection. Remaining three MTIs to which SCN was issued were denied access to conduct any DGS approved maritime modular courses.

Further, the courses in which such irregularities were noticed were identified and the candidates enrolled in such courses have been prevented to travel using e-migrate system, pending verification of authenticity of certificates.

Show Cause Notices (SCNs) were issued to all candidates by the Directorate on 28.09.2019. The SCNs were sent to their given addresses by speed post, by email and published on seafarer profile. Each of these candidates/Seafarers was asked to reply to the SCN within fifteen days (with data) of the issuance and to submit objective evidence to show if he had attended the said course in the Institute.

DGS has received around 1300 replies, out of which final order has been passed for 263 candidates who gave clear reply of having obtained certificate without attending classes fully.

(e) The growth in the number of Indian seafarers has been possible due to a series of measures taken by the Government to improve the standards of maritime training, increase on-board training opportunities, improve the examination and certification system and facilitate ease of doing business.

The training curriculum for the officers and the ratings was revised in 2016 not only to meet the global standards but also to meet the expectations of the foreign employers. In order to regulate the training institutes working in the private sector, a system of 'Comprehensive Inspection Programme' (CIP) has been designed to assess the quality of the institute on

various parameters such as infrastructure, quality of students intake, quality of faculty, pedagogy, performance in examination, on-board training. To standardize the course material of these institutes, an e-learning module has been prepared by the Directorate General of Shipping (DGS) and provided free of cost to all Indian seafarers to allow them to upgrade their knowledge and skills before appearing for examinations.

Maritime training requires compulsory training in the class room and on-board a ship without which a cadet (trainee) cannot be certified by the Maritime Administration for obtaining a job in Merchant Navy. While India has created a large capacity in imparting class room training for Merchant Navy, there has been a major constraint in providing on-board ship training for the students enrolled for class room training. A policy shift was made by the regulator by holding the training institutes responsible for on-board ship training of the students also and not only for the class room training. Further, to release more on-board ship training slots, a decision was taken to allow on-board training of officers and ratings on tugs and offshore vessels also. These two initiatives have opened additional berth for nearly 4000 trainees.

The Government has also brought major regulatory relaxation for obtaining Indian Continuous Discharge Certificate (CDC) which is a pre-requisite for boarding a vessel for the purposes of employment. A new liberalized CDC regime was introduced in 2017 which allowed 10<sup>th</sup> pass Indian citizens who had completed a 14 day basic maritime course to obtain Indian CDC. Earlier, they were required to complete at least 6 months training for obtaining CDC. Many seafarers having past experience in sailing have managed to procure Indian CDC. The DGS has so far issued more than 70,000 CDCs under new CDC Rules, in the year 2018-19, itself.

The Government has also given a lot of emphasis on introducing e-Governance initiatives in the field of Maritime Administration and today the entire process of obtaining CDC, training, issue of Certificate of Competency, application for examination and interviews, obtaining of medical certificates, process of Recruitment & Placement Service and Immigration for boarding a foreign flag vessel etc. have been made on-line.

The constant increase in the number of Indian seafarers has been the result of cumulative impact of the decisions of the Government to improve the quality of maritime training, increase in the training capacity, increase in the number of training berth, standardization of course curriculum and course material, improvement in the examination system and above all, by ease of doing business brought through simplified processes and e-governance modules.

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