

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS  
**RAJYA SABHA**  
**STARRED QUESTION NO- \*142**  
ANSWERED ON 20.12.2022

**BENEFITS FOR SEAFARERS**

\*142. SHRI LUIZINHO JOAQUIM FALEIRO:

Will the Minister of PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the progress made to alleviate the hardships and difficulties of Seafarers and their families;
- (b) whether Government or Directorate of Shipping prepared any scheme for the Seafarers so that they can live a life with honour and dignity after having contributed immensely for the country's economy; and
- (c) whether Government or Directorate of Shipping has received any demands from the Seafarers or their association, if so, the details thereof and action proposed thereon?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS  
(SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL)

- (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (c) OF RAJYA SABHA  
STARRED QUESTION NO. 142 TO BE ANSWERED ON 20<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER, 2022  
RAISED BY SHRI LUIZINHO JOAQUIM FALEIRO REGARDING "BENEFITS  
FOR SEAFARERS".**

(a) to (c) Sir, the Government of India is very conscious of the need for continuous upskilling and welfare of the seafarers to alleviate the hardships and difficulties of seafarers and their families. The Government has taken various measures from time to time for the welfare of seafarers.

The Government has received representations from some of the unions/associations viz. Goan Seamen Association of India (GSAI), National Union for Seafarers of India (NUSI), Sailors Union of India (SUI) Retired Merchant Navy Sailors Association of India (RMNSAI) and Mr. Luizinho Faleiro, Hon'ble Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) suggesting welfare measures.

The measures taken by the Government to alleviate the hardships and difficulties of seafarers and their families are as below;

- Ratification of Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC):

India has implemented the International Maritime Labour Convention of International Labour Organisation (ILO) which is tripartite Convention of Government, Seafarers and employers by framing the Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour) Rules, 2016 (ML Rules) and Merchant Shipping (Recruitment and Placement of Seafarers) Rules, 2016, (RPS Rules), providing for regulatory framework for manning and labour matters including Seafarers' employment agreements, wages, hours of work and rest, leave, repatriation, manning levels, career and skill development opportunities for seafarers, accommodation and recreational facilities, food and catering, Health protection, Medical care, Welfare and Social protection, flag state and port state obligations and complaint procedures etc.

- Schemes for welfare of seafarers:

The Central Government through its organizations such as Seamen Provident Fund Organisation (SPFO) and Seafarers Welfare Fund Society (SWFS) has implemented various schemes for the welfare of seafarers and to ease the hardships faced by the seafarers and their families. These two organisations work for the welfare of seafarers and their families.

The various schemes being implemented by these organizations include Provident Fund Scheme, Survival Benefit Scheme, Invalidity Benefit Scheme, Maternity Benefit Scheme for female seafarer, The Old age benefit Welfare Scheme,

Family Benefit Welfare Scheme, SWFS-Novel Corona-virus (Covid-19) Assistance Scheme, & Ex-Gratia Assistance on Death.

In addition, various Seafarer's hostel/club / Welfare centres have been established and functioning at the various port cities across the country like Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Cochin, Port Blair, Haldia, Kandla, Kakinada, Gangavaram and Paradip which function under the supervision of the Mercantile Marine Departments (MMDs)/Ports.

For enhancement of skill of the seafarers and to make them more competent, there are various schemes that have been implemented through the Maritime Training Trust (MTT) under the Directorate General of Shipping including, the Skill enhancement program of GP Rating and cadets, E-Learning for Certificate of Competencies Courses, E-Learning for Modular Courses, Conduct of online Course on English Communication & Soft Skill for faculty, and Providing of enhanced financial support of Rs 1 lakh per annum for women seafaring candidates. So far, Rs. 28.94 Crore has been spent by the MTT has resulting in the issuance of 14.88 lakh training certificates to seafarers and scholarship for 1170 women cadets.

- Other measures:

The Directorate vide DGS Circular No.23 of 2021 dated 11.08.2021 has launched three 24 x7 helplines for psychological assistance to seafarers in need.

Directorate has set up 24x7 DG Communication Centre (DG Commcentre) to act as a Maritime Assistance Service (MAS) and to receive the messages from the distressed seafarers.

Several measures have been taken to ease the hardship faced by the seafarers due to COVID 19 pandemic including steps for combat corona virus on board ships, pre-board screening, vaccination of seafarers, e-pass facility, controlled crew change, crew change through chartered flights, extension of validity of certificates and continuation of training and examination system through e-mode etc.

Due to the continuous reformative and progressive steps taken by the Government, the number of Indian seafarers employed in the calendar year 2022 has reached the level of 2,44,063 on national and international fleet as compared to 1,17,090 in the calendar year 2014. The tonnage under Indian flag has also reached over 13.6 Million Tons with 1516 ships under Indian flag as compared to tonnage of 10.4 Million Tons with 1213 ships in the year 2014 which led to increase in number of employment opportunities for seafarers.

\*\*\*\*\*