

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2714
ANSWERED ON 11.08.2026

PROTECTION OF INDIAN SEAFARERS IN HIGH-RISK WATERS

2714. SHRI MILIND MURLI DEORA:

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

- (a) whether Government has taken cognisance of the recent missile attack on the Guinea-Bissau-flagged vessel Golden Leo near Odesa, in which Indian seafarers lost their lives and the details thereof;
- (b) whether the vessel was owned by a Mumbai-based shipping company and whether compliance with applicable safety, insurance, employment and high-risk-area deployment norms is under examination;
- (c) the compensation, insurance benefits, repatriation assistance and other support provided or proposed for the families of the deceased and injured seafarers; and
- (d) whether Government proposes a mandatory real-time registry, enforceable risk-assessment protocol and right of refusal without loss of employment for Indian seafarers sailing through conflict-affected waters?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d) The vessel Golden LEO is owned by Ocean Grace Shipping Limited, Liberia and sailing under the Guinea-Bissau flag. The vessel was reportedly attacked on 19.07.2026, while departing the port of Odesa. At the time of the incident, there were 17 crew members on board, including 5 Indian nationals. The incident resulted in the loss of ten (10) lives, including four (04) Indian seafarers. The Government of India has strongly condemned the attack on the civilian merchant vessel. Financial assistance of ₹10 lakh from the Seafarers Welfare Fund Society (SWFS) has been disbursed to the Next of Kin of each deceased Indian seafarer. All requisite support was extended in coordination with the concerned authorities.

Further, the Directorate General of Maritime Administration, a subordinate body under MoPSW has issued a series of advisories to sensitise Indian seafarers, shipowners, Recruitment and Placement Service Licence (RPSL) agencies and other stakeholders regarding the heightened security risks in conflict-affected areas. The advisories issued are placed at **Annexure.**

Advisories Issued by DGMA

Following advisories have been issued:

- i. **DGS Advisory (14.01.2026)** – *Advisory to Indian Seafarers and Shipping Stakeholders in view of MEA Advisory on Iran*, advising shipping companies not to deploy Indian seafarers to Iran until further orders, requiring close monitoring of Indian crews in the region, and directing seafarers to follow advisories issued by the Embassy of India and the Ministry of External Affairs.
- ii. **DGS Circular 09 of 2026 (28.02.2026)** – *Urgent Advisory to Indian Seafarers and Shipping Stakeholders in view of Escalating Situation in Iran*, requiring Indian seafarers in Iran to remain vigilant, register with the Embassy of India, coordinate for safe departure where feasible, and directing stakeholders to immediately provide details of Indian seafarers in affected areas.
- iii. **DGS Circular 10 of 2026 (06.03.2026)** – *Safety Advisory for Indian Seafarers and Shipping Stakeholders Operating in the Persian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz and Adjacent Waters*, advising continuous vigilance, compliance with ISPS Code security measures, establishment of 24x7 emergency contact mechanisms, liaison with Indian Missions, emergency preparedness, and psychological counselling support for seafarers and their families where necessary.
- iv. **DGS Circular 11 of 2026 (07.03.2026)** – *Social Media Advisory to Maritime Stakeholders and Seafarer Community*, directing maritime stakeholders to refrain from circulating unverified information, rumours, fake videos or speculative reports and to rely only on authenticated information from official sources.
- v. **DGS Circular 21 of 2026 (07.04.2026)** – *Safety Advisory for Indian Seafarers Ashore in Iranian Ports and Onboard Vessels Operating in or Around Iranian Waters*, advising seafarers in Iran to remain at designated locations, avoid unnecessary travel, maintain heightened vigilance, follow Embassy advisories and remain in contact with company representatives, while also providing 24x7 emergency assistance contact details.
- vi. **DGS Circular 31 of 2026 (13.06.2026)** – *Precautionary Measures for Indian Seafarers in view of the Heightened Security Situation in the Gulf Region*, reiterating heightened security vigilance, directing shipping companies and RPSL companies to restrict deployment of Indian seafarers to conflict areas until further orders (except emergency crew changes with consent), monitoring and reporting requirements, and dissemination of verified security information.
- vii. **DGMA Circular No.41 of 2026 (23.07.2026)** – Advisory issued for Indian and foreign flagged vessels carrying Indian seafarers operating in the Black Sea, requiring enhanced caution, voyage specific security assessments, strict adherence to security advisories and immediate reporting of incidents.
- viii. **DGS Circular No.42 of 2026 (23.07.2026)** - Advisory issued for vessels operating in the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait, Southern Red and adjoining Yemen waters, directing shipowners and masters to exercise utmost caution, continuous monitor security, developments and implement additional risk mitigation measures.
- ix. **DGS Circular No. 47 of 2026 (05.08.2026)** : In view of renewed attacks on merchant vessels, DGS Circular No. 47 of 2026 mandates strict safety and security protocols for Indian Seafarers operating in the Gulf region and Strait of Hormuz.
