

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SHIPPING

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.2114

TO BE ANSWERED ON 8th MARCH, 2018

INCIDENTS OF PIRACY AT SEA

2114. SHRI B. SENGUTTUVAN:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

पोत परिवहन मंत्री

- whether the incidents of piracy at sea are on the rise affecting the Indian sailors and if so, the details thereof for each of the last three years and the current year;
- whether the incidents of piracy are very rampant off the Somali coast near the Horn of Africa and in the Gulf of Guinea with the demands of high ransom for releasing the hostages and if so, the details of such incidents involving Indian sailors during the said period;
- whether it is a fact that a vessel sailing under Panama flag "Marine Express" with 22 Indian sailors onboard and another vessel "MT Barret" with 22 crew members were hijacked by pirates off the coast of Benin in Africa and were released only on payment of ransom and if so, the details thereof;
- whether the Government has prepared any proposal to curb the incidents of piracy against Indian vessels and Indian sailors and if so, the details thereof; and
- whether the Government proposes to set up any overseas naval base such as set up by China in Djibouti for quick intervention in the event of hijacking/piracy and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING
(SHRI PON. RADHAKRISHNAN)

(a)&(b): The details of the incidents of piracy off the Somali coast near the Horn of Africa and in the Gulf of Guinea, involving Indian sailors during the last three years and the current year are as follow:-

Sr. No.	Name of the vessel	Flag	Date of hijacking	Date of released	No. of Indian Sailors	No. of Indian Sailors released
1.	M.T.Ananta	Comoros	09.12.2015	24.12.2015	4	4
2.	M.V.Tulja Bhavani	Panama	11.12.2015	24.12.2015	1	1
3.	M.T.Maximus	Panama	11.02.2016	19.02.2016/20.03.2016	11	11
4.	M.T.Sampatiki	Liberia	26.03.2016	10.05.2016	1	1
5.	MSVAI Kausar	Indian	31.03.2017	12.04.2017	10	10
6.	M.T.Barrett	Marshal Islands	10.01.2018	16.01.2018	11	11
7.	M.T.Marine Express	Panama	01.02.2018	06.02.2018	22	22

(c): M.T.Barrett(Flag- Marshal Islands) with 11 Indian crew was hijacked off Cotonou Anchorage in Benin on 10.01.2018 and released on 16.01.2018. Government has no information regarding the ransom paid by the owners.

M.T.Marine Express (Flag-Panama) with all 22 Indian crew was hijacked off Cotonou Anchorage in Benin on 01.02.2018 and released on 06.02.2018 without payment of any ransom.

(d): An Inter-Ministerial Group (IMGO) was set up by the Government under the Ministry of Shipping to deal with the hostage situation arising out of the hijacking at sea of merchant vessels with Indian crew. Government had also approved the Contingency Plan for dealing with piracy and hijacking of merchant ships and constituted a Committee of Secretaries on Anti-Piracy and Hijacking at sea (COSAPH) under the Chairmanship of Cabinet Secretary. In addition to this, the following anti –piracy measures have been put in place for Indian flag merchant vessels and Sailing vessels:

- (i) Guidelines for anti-piracy measures to be implemented on Indian Ships through issue of Merchant Shipping Notice No.1 of 2011 dated 14.1.2011. The guidelines provide for elaborate anti-piracy measures (Best Management Practices), including safe house/citadel for vessels.
- (ii) Banning of sailing vessels to ply in waters south or west of the line joining Salalah and Male through Merchant Shipping Notice No. 3/2010 dated 31.3.2010.
- (iii) Advisory issued by Directorate General of Shipping vide Notice No. 35-NT(2)/2017 dated 6th April, 2017 for not transiting through Gulf of Aden.
- (iv) Naval escort provided by Indian naval ships in the Gulf of Aden since 2008.
- (v) Enhanced vigil by the Indian Navy in the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and westward upto 65 degree east longitude.
- (vi) Active participation by India in the security meetings of the International Maritime Organization, Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) and other international fora.

(e): The Indian Navy has maintained a continuous presence in the Gulf of Aden since 2008, towards anti-piracy operations. The ships deployed have been carrying out Operational Turn Around at the ports including the port of Djibouti.
