

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 672
TO BE ANSWERED ON 09.12.2022**

RELEASE OF INDIAN SAILORS

672. SHRI HIBI EDEN:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is in touch with various authorities for the release of 16 Indian sailors including three from Kerala, detained in Equatorial Guinea and if so, the details thereof including the copies of requests, communications and replies;
- (b) whether the Government has noticed that even though the vessel did not engage in any unlawful activities, the shipping company was ready to pay the fine to facilitate the early release of the seafarers and if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) whether the Government is closely monitoring developments and actively engaged for an early resolution of the issue, if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN)

(a) & (c) 16 Indian sailors including 3 persons from Kerala were detained by Equatorial Guinea Navy on 12th August 2022. Later, on 12th November 2022, Equatorial Guinea handed over the ship and crew to Nigeria. On hearing of the detention of the ship MT Heroic Idun, both our Missions in Equatorial Guinea and Nigeria contacted the local authorities and the shipping company OSM and extended all consular services to ensure the safety and welfare of the Indian crew members aboard the vessel.

Our Mission in Nigeria has sought assistance of the Nigerian authorities and through legal means for expeditious release of the Indian crew members. It is the endeavour of the Government to secure early release of 16 Indian crew members.

(b) The government of Equatorial Guinea, on the charges of illegal entry into its waters has imposed a penalty of approximately Euro 2 million, which has been paid by the Shipping Company.
