

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SHIPPING
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2816
TO BE ANSWERED ON 5TH DECEMBER, 2019
GUIDELINES FOR INLAND WATER BODIES

2816. SHRI KANUMURU RAGHU RAMA KRISHANA RAJU:
SHRI Y. S. AVINASH REDDY:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

पोत परिवहन मंत्री

- (a) whether the Government is aware of the deaths of nearly 40 tourists caused due to boat capsized in the Godavari river waters on 15th September, 2019 and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether it is a fact that the court has directed the Government to issue guidelines for running a boat in the inland water bodies to avoid any litigations in future and if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps being taken by the Government in this regard?

ANSWER

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

(a) Yes, Sir. On 15.9.2019 a private tourist boat, namely VasistaPunnami Royal carrying passengers and crew capsized in Godavari river at Katchuluru near Mantur Village in Devipatnam Mandal of Rampachodavaram in Andhra Pradesh. The Government of Andhra Pradesh, constituted an enquiry committee on 19.09.2019 to probe the incident, examine the causes of the boat accident and propose guidelines to avoid any unexpected events in future. The Committee held several meetings with various stakeholders of concerned Departments of Government of Andhra Pradesh in which officers of Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) also participated. The Committee has submitted its report on 06.11.2019 to the Govt. of Andhra Pradesh covering guidelines on survey, registration of Inland vessels, licensing of crew as per Andhra Pradesh Inland Vessels Rules, 2017, route permissions and responsibilities of all concerned Departments and stakeholders.

(b) Yes, Sir. In this regard, a Public Interest Litigation, Writ Petition (Civil) no. 1271 of 2019 has been filed by Shri G. V. Harsha Kumar against Union of India and Ors. before Hon'ble Supreme Court of India and the matter is under adjudication.

(c) As per the Inland Vessels Act, 1917, the responsibility for survey, registration, license/certificate to crews for mechanically propelled vessels, investigations into casualties, protection of and carriage of passengers rest with concerned State Government. Further, operation of ferry/boat services on inland waterways is also in the domain of State Government.

The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has prepared detailed guidelines on Boat Safety in September, 2017 for both mechanized & non-mechanized boats in consultation with States and other stakeholders and same was circulated to all States/UTs. These guidelines address all facets of boat safety and provide framework on Boat Navigation including causes of accidents, early warning system, weather forecasting, safety standards, regulatory and legal issues, search and rescue and capacity development.
