

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO: 2964

ANSWERED ON:14.03.2011

PIRACY INCIDENTS IN INDIAN OCEAN

P.C. GADDIGOUDAR

(a)the number and details of ships/vessels including people hijacked/captured by the sea pirates in the Indian ocean including Bay of Bengal and Arabian sea, the details of the loss of lives and property therein during the last three years and efforts made by the Government to rescue them;

(b)whether there has been an attempt by sea pirates to hijack a merchant vessel near Lakshadweep Islands as reported recently;

(c)if so, the details thereof and action taken by the Navy and Coast Guard in this regard;

(d)whether there has been increased activities of Somalian pirates and illegal entry of ships/vessels of the neighbouring countries in the Indian Ocean/coastal waters and if so, the details thereof and the measures being taken to check the same;

(e)whether there has been reported a link of the sea pirates with terrorist outfits and if so, the details thereof;

(f)whether the Government proposes to deploy Unmanned Aerial Vehicles for surveillance and anti-piracy operations in the Indian ocean and if so, the details thereof; and

(g)whether the Government has any joint patrolling programme or concluded any treaty for maritime security in the Indian Ocean Rim and if so, the details thereof?

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:-

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY)

(a) to (g): As per International Maritime Bureau the number of ships hijacked from 14th January 2008 till 11th March 2011 is 174. Piracy on the Somalian Coast is a global menace and has in recent times moved eastward as well as southward. Sporadic incidents have been reported off Lakshadweep. Further in a recent joint operation of Indian Navy and Coast Guard, Indian forces intercepted two vessels in January-February 2011. These were hijacked Thai vessels. 43 pirates and 44 fishermen of Thai/Myanmarese origin were captured and handed over to Mumbai police. In another case, Iranian Dhow `AL Javaidi` with four Iranian and fifteen Pakistanis was apprehended off Lakshadweep and handed over to local police at Kavarratti. No Indian soldier has been lost during the Anti-Piracy escorts/operations in Gulf of Aden.

Government has deployed one Indian Naval Warship in the Gulf of Aden for anti piracy patrols since October, 2008 and more than 1500 ships have been escorted. The presence of Indian Navy in the area is to protect our sea borne trade and instill confidence in our sea faring community.

The Unmanned Aerial Vehicles are regularly deployed for surveillance close to the coast. Due to reports of rising incidents of piracy, surveillance has been increased in Indian Ocean Region. Although there are arrangements for EEZ surveillance, India has not concluded any treaty with any country for joint patrolling.