

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3873

ANSWERED ON:17.05.2006

MISSING OF MARINE ENGINEERS

Annayagari Shri Sai Prathap;Khanna Shri Avinash Rai;Meghwal Shri Kailash

Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a number of Marine Engineers are allegedly missing from high seas as reported in Nav Bharat Times dated May 20, 2005;
- (b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein alongwith reaction of the Government thereto;
- (c) the number of Marine Engineers gone missing during the last three years and the current year;
- (d) whether the Government has conducted any investigation in the matter;
- (e) if so, the outcome thereof;
- (f) if not, the reasons therefor;
- (g) whether the Government has given any assistance to the families of these missing Marine Engineers;
- (h) if so, the details thereof ; and
- (i) the action taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to prevent such incidents?

Answer

MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU)

(a) The Nav Bahrat Times dated 20th October 2005 (and not 20th May, 2005 as stated in the Question) have reported about missing/disappearance of the following marine engineers:

- 1 Shri Ashu Mallick
- 2. Shri R. Ali Zahdi
- 3. Shri Inderjeet Singh
- 4. Shri Hasan Zaheer
- 5. Shri Gautam Mallick

(b) Shri Ashu Malik and Shri Gautam Mallick were not Marine Engineers but Shri Hasan Zaheer and Shri Inderjeet Singh were employed as Marine Engineers. Sufficient information about Shri R. Ali Zahdi is not available to conclude whether he has gone missing. Details are available at the Annexure -I.

(c) The number of engineers missing since 2003 is as under:

Year	No. of Engineers Missing	
2003	1	
2004		Nil
2005	4	
2006		Nil

(d) to (f) The details are contained at Annexure-II.

(g) & (h) In case of disappearance of Engine Room Petty Officer, Shri A. Arun Kumar in 2003 from ship MT Havildar Abdul Hameed

the Shipping Corporation of India has the responsibility to settle compensation in accordance with agreement as per law. Since he went missing in 2003, the payments could be made to his family only after 7 years of the incident. As regards four engineers missing in the year 2005 from Jupiter-6 and MSC Carman ships, the action about payments to the families of the victims is to be taken by the respective Shipping Companies. Both the Shipping Companies are not registered in India. In such cases, it is the duty of flag state to conduct inquiry into the incidents. All possible efforts have been made by the Government to have enquiries conducted in both these cases.

(i) The following steps have been taken to provide protection to seafarers at sea:

(1) In all Indian flag vessels casualties are investigated immediately to isolate the causes behind such incidents in order to introduce systemic improvement and preventive measures

(2) A psychometric test has been introduced at the entry level of officers in maritime training courses, which help in determining his/her attitude and aptitude for the sea. It assists in taking corrective measures to mentally prepare seamen for rigours of a life at sea.

(3) The Merchant Shipping (Recruitment and Placement of Seafarers) Rules, 2005 have been framed. The registration and licensing of manning agents has been made mandatory under these rules so as to be able to introduce a sense of responsibility among manning agents and obtain details of seamen's placement.

(4) The issue of crime on board foreign flag vessels and need for international cooperation in tackling it has been raised and agitated at international fora.

(5) The International Maritime Organisation, London has recently issued guidelines for adherence by all State parties for fair treatment of seafarer and for taking care of abandoned seafarers.

ANNEXURE-I

DETAILS OF INVESTIGATIONS CONDUCTED INTO THE INCIDENTS REPORTED IN THE NAV BHARAT TIMES DATED 20TH OCTOBER, 2005

(i) Shri Ashu Mallick

He was a student and trainee (Oiler). He was recruited through Arti Ship Management, Mumbai on board MV Prince- G, a ship belonging to M/s Sea Rock Shipping Ltd, Dubai. He has not signed the Indian Articles of Agreement. Shipping Master, Mumbai have informed that there was a cyclone in the rough sea and the vessel sank on 23.12.2002. The Search and Rescue operations were carried out by a Japanese vessel MT NICHIIKO. 6 persons out of a crew of 8 were rescued. Remaining 2 including Ashu Mallick could not be traced.

(ii) Shri Inderjeet Singh

He was a 4th Engineer on board MV Bonita Light, a Hong Kong flag vessel owned by Golden Gate Company of Panama. He had not signed the Indian Article of Agreement with the employers. He died on 16th January, 2000 near the port of Dakar (Senegal). His father had filed a criminal Writ Petition No. 2685 of 2000 before the High Court of Delhi. It was disposed of by the High Court vide its order dated 2nd April, 2003 stating that in view of fact that the Government of Hong Kong has already conducted an enquiry into the matter nothing survives in the Writ Petition. The Court did not grant permission for institution of criminal proceedings against the respondents.

(iii) Shri Hasan Zaheer,

He was a Marine Engineer had reportedly jumped over board when the vessel MSC Carmen, under Panama Flag, was en route to Mombassa on 12 October 2005. The Flag State Authority was requested by the Indian Maritime Administration to conduct investigation into the casualty. In the enquiry report submitted by the Flag State it has been indicated that there was an eye witness on board who saw Shri Hasan Zaheer jumping over board from port side poop deck (aft left hand side of the vessel). Indian manning agent is MSC Ship Management (India) Pvt. Ltd., Mumbai. The reasons for jumping over board could not be ascertained by the flag state authorities.

(iv) Shri Gautam Mallick

He was not a marine Engineer. He had reportedly fallen overboard from vessel's poop while checking after draft (depth marks) on 09.10.2005 when the vessel was in the port water of Klaipeda, Lithuania. His body was subsequently found. The Indian manning agent in this case is Ebony Ship Management Pvt Ltd. The report of the investigations by the Flag State does not provide any information on foul play or malafide intention.

(v) Shri R. Ali Zahdi

The information in the news paper report regarding Shri Zahdi is insufficient to confirm if he has gone missing or died.

ANNEXURE-II

DETAILS OF THE INVESTIGATIONS CONDUCTED INTO THE INCIDENTS THAT HAPPENED DURING THE LAST THREE YEARS AND FINDINGS THEREOF

