

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
DEFENCE  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1391  
ANSWERED ON:30.11.2006  
FOREIGN NAVAL SHIPS IN INDIAN OCEAN  
McLeod Smt. Ingrid

**Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:**

- (a) Whether there has been an increasing presence of foreign naval ships in the Indian Ocean recently ;
- (b) If so, the facts thereof; and
- (c) The steps proposed to be taken by the Government to safeguard India's legitimate interest in the region and to ensure that the international water of the Indian Ocean remains essentially a region of peace?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY)

(a)&(b) : There has been an increasing presence of foreign Naval ships in the region post Operation Enduring Freedom, which commenced in October 2001. The Naval ships are part of the US-led Multinational Naval Forces operating in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), mainly the North Arabian Sea, the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea and the Horn of Africa region.

(c)The presence of foreign war ships in the Indian Ocean does not pose any credible threat to the safety of either the International Shipping Lanes (ISLs) or Indian and foreign merchant marine using these ISLs for legitimate trade. The deployment of foreign warships is not close to Indian Coast and is concentrated more in the North Arabian Sea, the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea and the Horn of Africa region. The Indian Navy, in addition to regular fleet deployments in India's area of operations, undertakes frequent Presence-cum-Surveillance Missions (PSMs) aimed at monitoring the IOR and safeguarding the interests of the country in its region of interest. The Indian Coast Guard too conducts regular surface/aerial surveillance within the Exclusive Economic Zone.