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Title : Need to strengthen anti-piracy measures in high seas in co-ordination and support with the nations sharing seas in Indian Ocean.

SHRI JOSE K. MANI (KOTTAYAM): Indian seafarers are working in large number across the globe with foreign flag vessels. Mercantile Marine Division of the Government of India trains and equips them to find jobs in foreign shipping companies. Being a members of International Maritime Organization (IMO) India has been protecting its seafaring community. Increasing incidence of piracy on high seas has emerged as the new threat to the seafaring community. Most of such piracy attempts are reported in the Indian Ocean, involving pirates of Somalian origin. Most of the seafarers, abducted and kept hostage by the pirates, belong to Indian and their whereabouts or fate remain unknown to relatives in India for long periods. I urge the Government of India to prevail upon the IMO to strengthen anti-piracy measures across high seas, in close support with the navies of nations of the Indian Ocean Coast.

The future of Indian seafaring cadets is already under threat due to stiff competition from Philippines and Chinese who work for low wages. The sudden surge in incidents of piracy on high seas is making it difficult for Indians. The Government should, therefore, work out crash plan to sustain them during exigencies arising from lay off and trauma during captivity by high sea pirates.

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