

Subsequently, Indian Coast Guard and Indian Navy ships interdicted a fishing trawler, 'Prantalay', hijacked by Somali pirates and being used as a mother vessel for piracy attacks in waters west of Lakshadweep and Minicoy islands. They rescued 20 Thai crew members and apprehended 15 Somali pirates. The pirates have been handed over to Mumbai police.

(e) The Indian Navy and Coast Guard have stepped up their vigil against pirates. The Indian Navy has made additional deployments off the eastern and north eastern Arabian Sea. The Indian Coast Guard is carrying out regular surveillance by deploying Indian Coast Guard ships and aircraft to create deterrence as well as build confidence in the minds of merchant men. The Indian Navy and Coast Guard have jointly launched 'Ops Island Watch' from 13 December 2010, initially for a period of one month, and subsequently extended to 31 Mar 2011. Stepped up vigil also resulted in successful neutralisation of two of the pirate 'mother ships' by the Indian Navy.

Contribution of ancient astronomers

*208. SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government recognizes the contribution made by India's ancient astronomers in unearthing the secrets of the space;

(b) whether any effort has been made by Government to put to use the ancient Indian Science of astronomy into making its forays in the space;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY):

(a) Yes Sir.

(b) and (c) India's ancient Astronomers Aryabhatta (476-550 A.D), Varahamihira (505-587 A.D), Brahmagupta (598-668 A.D), Bhaskara-1 (600-680.A.D), and Bhaskara-2 (1114-1185 A.D)

have been credited with postulating certain fundamental principles of Astronomy including the helio-centric concept of rotation of Earth around the Sun, prediction of lunar and solar eclipse, concept of gravitational force and mathematics of planetary motion.

These principles are fundamental in nature and form an important step in the advancement of Astronomy and contribute to our understanding of the Modern Astronomy and the methods of Celestial Mechanics that are used in the Space Programme.

Government of India is conscious of the significant contributions of the Indian Astronomers. It is for this reason that the first Indian Scientific Satellite, launched in 1975, was named after Aryabhata. The second Indian built satellite for Earth observation, launched in 1979 was named as Bhaskara-1 and the next Indian Earth observation satellite was named as Bhaskara-2. The observatory at Nainital was named by the Government in 2004 as Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences, an autonomous institution under the Department of Science and Technology. It is also noteworthy that the International Astronomical Union has named a crater on the Moon as Aryabhata.

(d) Not applicable.

Adoption of children

†209. SHRI T.M. SELVAGANAPATHI: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is considering to make online access for smart adoption of children;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government is considering to make central data-base for child adoption; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KRISHNA TIRATH): (a) to (d) Government of India, in the Ministry of Women and Child Development, has recently launched a web based management system for adoption of children, namely, Central Adoption Resource Information and Guidance System (CARINGS), which can be