

Strategic depth of Karwar naval base

2362. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government proposes to have major expansion of the strategic Karwar, India's third major naval base after Mumbai and Visakhapatnam, naval base in Karnataka;

(b) whether the expansion is being made to base some other frontline warships/aircraft carriers/submarines there;

(c) whether the expansion is going to provide India with much needed strategic depth and operational flexibility; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The matter is under consideration of the Government.

Investigation into sinking of cargo vessels

2363. SHRI JAI PRAKASH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has conducted investigation into the incidents of sinking of cargo vessels, M.V. Wisdom and M.V. Pavit at Mumbai's Juhu beach on 11th June and 31st July, 2011 respectively;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the further steps being taken by Government to check the occurrences of such incidents even after modernizing the monitoring system of Indian Coast Guard post 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) and (b) The two cargo vessels MV Wisdom and MT Pavit ran aground off Mumbai coast during June-July 2011. MV Wisdom, being towed from Colombo to Alang for dismantling lost tow approximately 12 nm west of Mumbai harbour and due to prevalent adverse sea conditions finally ran aground at Juhu beach on the night of 11th June, 2011.

MT Pavit was abandoned on 30th June, 2011 off Oman coast due to engine breakdown and ingress of water. All 13 Indian crew were rescued by Royal Navy warship and transferred to MT Jag Pushpa for disembarkation at Sikka Gujarat.

The Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) Mumbai remained in touch with the vessel throughout the ordeal till abandoning and requested the owner to monitor the vessel.

However the owner informed MRCC that the vessel has already sunk. An analysis carried out by Indian Navy has revealed that the reasons for non detection of MV Pavit could possibly be attributed to report of the vessel having been sunk, drift path of the ship through areas not covered by radar, prevailing monsoon weather (low and thick cloud base, poor visibility, heavy rain, rough seas) in the area, precluding satisfactory detection by radar or visual identification and MT Pavit was also not having operational Automatic Identification System (AIS) due to no power supply or batteries on the ship.

(c) Government has initiated several measures to strengthen Coastal Security, which includes improving surveillance mechanism and enhanced patrolling by following an integrated approach. Joint operational exercises are conducted on regular basis among Navy, Coast Guard, Coastal Police, Customs and others to check the effectiveness of this approach adopted for security of coastal areas including island territories. Further, continuous review and monitoring of various mechanisms have been established by the Government at different levels, involving various agencies, including the State/Union Territory authorities. The intelligence mechanism has also been streamlined through the creation of Joint Operation Centers and multi-agency coordination mechanism. Installation of radars covering the country's entire coastline and islands is also an essential part of this process.

Achievements of National Service Scheme

†2364. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that National Crime Records Bureau has revealed that 38 per cent people committing suicide in the country fall in the age group of 15-29 years;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the achievements of 'National Service Scheme' during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI JITENDRA SINGH): (a) and (b) The percentage of people who committed suicide in the age group of 15-29 years during the years 2008, 2009 and 2010 was 35.7%, 34.5% and 35.3% respectively. The age group-wise details of persons who committed suicides in the country during the years 2008, 2009 and 2010 are attached at Statement-I (See below).

(c) The National Service Scheme (NSS) aims at arousing social consciousness of the youth with an overall objective of 'personality development of the students through community service'. The achievement of 'National Service Scheme' during the last three years *i.e.* 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11 are attached at Statement-II.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.