

been taking up Road projects through special purpose vehicles (SPVs)/Companies of NHAI. Major ports are also joining hands with Railways and National Highways by forming SPVs for construction of Rail and Road links.

(c) In so far as New Mangalore Port is concerned, the work on Road connectivity for 4 laning of NH-66 (Surathkal - Nantur Section), Nantur to Padil (By Pass) along NH-169 and Padil to B C Road along NH-73 (Padil Bantwal Section) with 37 kms. length has been completed during December, 2012. The balance work of road over bridge is to be completed by April, 2013. Similarly the work on Rail connectivity for gauge conversion of Aresikere-Hassan-Mangalore Rail link with 183 kms. length has been completed and commissioned during May, 2006.

#### **Indians held hostages by Somalia pirates**

†1981. SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that pirates of Somalia have kept many Indians captive;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Government has made any contract with the pirates; and
- (d) the efforts being made by Government to get Indians free from captivity of Somalian pirates?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI G.K. VASAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. There are 10 Indians presently held captive and yet to be released by Somalian pirates as per details given below:-

Sl. No.	Name of the ship	Flag	No. of Indian crew held as hostages	Date when hijacked
1.	M.V. Iceberg I	Panama	1	29/3/2010
2.	Ex-M.T. Asphalt Venture	Panama	7	29/9/2010
3.	M.V. Albedo	Malaysia	2	26/11/2010
TOTAL:			10	

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) An Inter-Ministerial Group (IMG) set up by the Government under the Ministry of Shipping with representatives from all Ministries and Government agencies concerned, to deal with the hostage situation arising out of the hijacking at sea of merchant vessels with Indian crew on board has been regularly reviewing the situation of Indian hostages under captivity of the pirates. Ministry of External Affairs, through its concerned Missions abroad, continuously seeks the help of the concerned foreign Governments to liaise with ship owners to secure early release of Indian hostages held captive by Somali pirates. Government has also approved the Contingency Plan for dealing with piracy and hijacking of merchant ships and constituted a Committee of Secretaries on Anti-Piracy and hijack at sea (COSAPH) under the Chairmanship of Cabinet Secretary for crisis management and to advise the Government on major policy and strategy decisions. In addition to this, the following steps have been initiated by Ministry of Shipping as part of various preventing/mitigating security measures to secure the release of the Indian hostages from the pirates:

- Issuance of DGS M.S. Notice No.1 of 2011 providing for elaborate anti-piracy measures (Best Management Practices), including safe house/citadel.
- Banning of sailing vessels to ply in waters south or west of the line joining Salalah and Male *vide* DGS M.S. Notice No. 3/2010.
- Naval escort provided by Indian naval ships in the Gulf of Aden since 2008.
- Enhanced vigil by the Indian Navy in the Indian EEZ and westward upto 65 degree east longitude.
- Active participation of India in the security meetings of the International Maritime Organization, Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) and other international fora.
- Submission of Document No. 27/9/1 at the IMO Assembly meeting held at London in November, 2011 for flag states to provide information on the welfare of captive crew, efforts for their release and also on continued payment of their wages.