

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 155
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11TH FEBRUARY, 2022

JOINT STUDY ON SAFETY OF SHIPS

*155. DR. T. SUMATHY (a) THAMIZHACHI THANGAPANDIAN:
SHRI D.M. KATHIR ANAND:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE
be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Indian Navy and the Sri Lankan Navy have conducted a joint safety study and submitted report on the sinking of the Singapore flagged cargo vessel MV X-Press Pearl near the Colombo port;
- (b) if so, the details thereof including that of marine debris and hazardous chemicals found; and
- (c) the other steps taken by the Government to ensure safety for deep sea fishing and navigation of ships in Indian and international waters?

A N S W E R

MINISTER OF DEFENCE

(SHRI RAJNATH SINGH)

(a) to (c) : A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (c) OF LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 155 FOR ANSWER ON 11.02.2022 REGARDING 'JOINT
STUDY ON SAFETY OF SHIPS';**

(a) No, Sir. No joint study was conducted by Indian Navy (IN) and Sri Lankan Navy (SLN). However, post sinking of MV X-Press Pearl, a container carrying ship, a formal request was received from Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) through High Commission of India, Colombo seeking assistance for undertaking survey of the area off Colombo to locate the debris of MV X-Press Pearl. Accordingly, INS Sarvekshak, a hydrographic survey ship, was deployed off Colombo, Sri Lanka, from 25 June – 02 July 2021 for undertaking survey of the affected area.

(b) The ship undertook survey off Colombo harbour using Side Scan SONAR (Sound Navigation and Ranging) traversing over 807 NM from 25 June to 02 July 2021. During the survey, 54 containers were detected on the seabed as well as an old wreck of a boat. However, no hazardous chemical was reported by the ship.

(c) (i) In order to ensure Safety of Deep Sea Fishing in Indian and International Waters, sufficient funds have been earmarked under the Department of Fisheries (DoF)'s Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) for provision for safety kits such as Global Positioning System (GPS), life-jackets, other life-saving appliances, search & rescue beacons etc. including Distress Alert Transmitters (DATs), Automatic Identification System (AIS), Navigation with Indian Constellation (NAVIC), etc. to fishermen. DoF has released an amount of Rs. 3489.74 lakh for providing safety kits to the fishermen under Blue Revolution Scheme. Under the PMMSY, Rs. 5899.36 lakh has so far been sanctioned for providing 14120 communication/tracking devices and 1351 safety kits for the fishermen/ fishing boats, and more such devices can be provided in case States/ UTs send further proposals. In addition, Rs. 18.01 Crore has been released to Government of Tamil Nadu for installation of 4997 transponders in fishing vessels under Blue Revolution Scheme. Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is also coming up with an OCEANSAT-III Satellite for which DoF is providing Rs. 30.65 crores in 2021-22 budget. This will cover entire Indian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and hence track the fishermen in a comprehensive manner.

(ii) In order to ensure safety of Navigation of ships in Indian and International waters, Directorate of Shipping has issued Merchant Shipping Notice – 11 of 2020, which pertains to routing of ships at the south-west coast of India. It has also issued Merchant Shipping Notice – 11 of 2017 which pertains to regulating Maritime Traffic off Mumbai and Mumbai High.
