



Government on Highest Alert to Safeguard Indian Seafarers Amid Evolving Maritime Security Situation in Gulf Region

Fully committed to the safety, security & welfare of every Indian seafarer: Sarbananda Sonowal

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In view of the rapidly evolving security situation in the Gulf region and surrounding waters, the Government of India continue to monitor, and coordinate response mechanisms to safeguard Indian seafarers and protect India's maritime interests. The **Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW)**, through the **Directorate General of Shipping (DGS)**, is maintaining sustained surveillance of developments in and around the Strait of Hormuz, the Gulf of Oman and adjoining maritime areas.

The Government is closely coordinating with the Ministry of External Affairs, Indian Navy, Indian Missions abroad, maritime administrations of friendly countries, shipping companies, seafarers' welfare organisations and other relevant stakeholders to ensure timely support and assistance to Indian seafarers.

Recent security incidents involving merchant vessels operating in the region have highlighted the increasing risks faced by commercial shipping. Recognising the strategic importance of these international shipping lanes to global trade and energy security, the Government has directed all concerned agencies to remain on heightened alert and maintain readiness to respond to any contingency involving Indian seafarers or Indian maritime interests.

The Directorate General of Shipping has advised all Indian seafarers serving onboard Indian and foreign-flagged vessels transiting through conflict-affected waters to exercise the highest degree of caution and vigilance. Vessel operators, ship managers and shipping companies have also been advised to adhere strictly to prevailing maritime security protocols, maintain enhanced situational awareness and continuously monitor advisories issued by the Government of India and competent international authorities.

Stakeholders have been directed to promptly report any incident involving Indian seafarers to the Directorate General of Shipping to facilitate immediate intervention and coordination. Dedicated communication channels and emergency response mechanisms remain operational round-the-clock to provide assistance to Indian seafarers and their families.

The **Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW), Sarbananda Sonowal**, said, "The Government is closely monitoring the evolving situation in the Gulf region and remains fully committed to the safety, security and welfare of every Indian seafarer. All relevant ministries, agencies and missions abroad are working in close coordination to ensure timely support and assistance whenever required."

Attack on MT Settebello and Assistance to Indian Seafarers

Among the recent incidents reported in the region, MT Settebello (IMO 9162916), a Palau-flagged Medium Range Tanker carrying 28 crew members, including 24 Indian seafarers, was reportedly subjected to a missile attack on 10 June 2026 while operating approximately 20 nautical miles north-east of Sohar, Oman.

According to information received from the Maritime Security Centre of Oman and subsequent reports from the vessel's management, three Indian seafarers tragically lost their lives in the attack. On receipt of this information the Government of India actively coordinated with all concerned authorities, ship owners and RPSL to provide all necessary assistance. The mortal remains of the three missing Indian seafarers have been expeditiously located and identified, and all other crew members have been rescued safely. Efforts are now being fast-tracked to repatriate the rescued seafarers and ensure the dignified return of the mortal remains to their families at the earliest.

The Government of India expresses its profound condolences to the bereaved families. The loss of Indian seafarers while performing their duties at sea is a matter of deep sorrow for the nation.

Expressing at this tragic incident, **Sarbananda Sonowal** said, "It is deeply unfortunate to learn of the tragic incident aboard the Palau-flagged MT Settebello. Sadly, three Indian seafarers initially reported missing are now confirmed dead after bodies have been located and identified. The safety of Indian citizens, protection of Indian maritime interests and uninterrupted movement of legitimate cargo remain our highest priorities. The Government of India is keeping a close watch on developments and will take all necessary measures to safeguard the lives of Indian seafarers and uphold the nation's interests."

The Government has further reiterated that the welfare and security of Indian seafarers remain paramount. The Seafarers Welfare Fund Society (SWFS), functioning under the Directorate General of Shipping, stands ready to extend eligible welfare benefits, financial assistance and other support measures to affected seafarers and their families whenever required. As per protocol, SWFS is releasing Rs 10 lakhs to the families of the deceased.

Adding further, **Sonowal** said, "This is a profound loss to our maritime family. The Modi Govt stands firmly with the bereaved during this difficult hour and is fully committed to supporting the next of kin. I have directed officials to ensure immediate repatriation of the rescued crew members and swift return of the mortal remains of the deceased for their final rites."

The Directorate General of Shipping, along with the concerned Recruitment and Placement Service License (RPSL) agencies, remains in constant contact with the next of kin of the affected seafarers. The Government is actively coordinating with relevant authorities for the repatriation of rescued crew members, transportation of mortal remains and provision of all necessary assistance and support to the families concerned.

All stakeholders are advised to continuously monitor advisories issued by the government as well as for any emergency assistance, citizens may contact MMDAC (DG Comm Centre) via email to [dgcommcentre-dgs\[at\]nic\[dot\]in](mailto:dgcommcentre-dgs[at]nic[dot]in) or WhatsApp/Call at +91 8657549760. Alternate Numbers to contact are +91 2222613606, +91 8657549752) or the 24x7 grievance redressal channels including Toll-Free Number (Domestic): 1800-889-7768, International Toll-Free: +1-888-988-0256, WhatsApp: +91 8655856830, and email to [enavik.24x7\[at\]gov\[dot\]in](mailto:enavik.24x7[at]gov[dot]in).

The Government of India reiterates that it stands firmly with Indian seafarers and their families and will continue to take every necessary measure to ensure their welfare, security and well-being during this period of heightened geopolitical uncertainty.

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