Sarbananda Sonowal Condemns Attacks on Commercial Vessels, Orders Tighter Maritime Security for Indian Seafarers Sailing High-risk Waters

Sonowal directs DGMA to step up advisories and coordination with Ministry of External Affairs

Safety, security and welfare of every Indian seafarer remain our highest priority: Sarbananda Sonowal

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Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW), Sarbananda Sonowal condemned repeated attacks on commercial vessels, particularly those involving Indian seafarers, and reviewed the situation to strengthen maritime safety and security measures as the ministry tracks NINE India-flagged/ Indian-interest vessels in the west of the Strait of Hormuz.

"We strongly condemn the repeated attacks on commercial vessels, particularly those involving Indian seafarers, in various parts of the world," **Sonowal** said. "Such incidents pose a serious threat to the safety and security of seafarers, disrupt maritime trade and undermine the stability of global supply chains."

"Freedom of navigation and the unimpeded movement of merchant vessels through international waters are fundamental principles of international maritime law," **Sonowal** said. "Ensuring safe and secure sea lanes is essential not only for the continuity of global trade but also for sustaining economic growth, energy security and the prosperity of nations."

“As envisaged by our Prime Minister for the safety and security of our seafarers as the main objective, I have directed the Directorate General of Maritime Administration (DGMA) and all concerned officers to further strengthen maritime safety and security measures," **Sonowal** said.

"These shall include enhanced monitoring of developments in high-risk areas, timely dissemination of security advisories, regular communication with shipping companies and vessel operators, and heightened awareness among Indian seafarers regarding potential threats and precautionary measures."

Sarbananda Sonowal said he had also instructed the authorities concerned to coordinate closely with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Indian diplomatic missions, maritime stakeholders and international agencies. "I have also instructed the concerned authorities to maintain close coordination with the Ministry of External Affairs, Indian diplomatic missions, maritime stakeholders and relevant international agencies to ensure prompt assistance and effective response in the event of any incident involving Indian-flagged vessels or Indian seafarers," **Sonowal** said.

The ministry is monitoring nine vessels, India-flagged or of Indian interest, in the Persian Gulf region west of the Strait of Hormuz. A total of 86 transits of the strait have been made by India-flagged vessels or those carrying cargo bound for India.

Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal reviewed the compensation status of the victims and directed the Director General of Shipping to brief him personally on the progress. He also enquired about the measures being taken to ensure timely assistance to the victims' next of kin.

e-Navik — Tracking of Indian Sailors

The ministry's E-Navik seafarer tracking module is tracking more than 800 vessels in the Persian Gulf west of the strait while more than 200 vessels on the Gulf of Oman, east of Strait of Hormuz.

"The safety, security and welfare of every Indian seafarer remain our highest priority," **Sonowal** said. "The Government of India is firmly committed to protecting Indian maritime interests and upholding the principle of freedom of navigation in accordance with international law."



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