

M.S. Notice 03 of 2010

No:35-NT(2)/2010

Dated: 31.03.2010

**Subject: Maritime security advisory for mechanized sailing vessels (Dhows)
operating around Somalia region**

Recent reports reaching this Directorate have further highlighted the dangers, in particular to the Dhows, operating out of West Asia Gulf States. It has been also informed that these Dhows may be engaged in carrying export-banned commodities, such as, Charcoal, illegal export of gems, precious metals, Ivory, wildlife or wildlife derivatives, fish without license. There are also reports that Dhows may be involved in illegal human trafficking, drug smuggling and arms shipment.

2. Enquiries into the trade pattern of Dhows have revealed that these vessels are operating out of Kismaayo port of Somalia. It has to be noted that the Transitional Federal Govt. (TFG) of Somalia has declared that Kismaayo in southern Somalia is not, repeat NOT, an official port of entry to the country. All vessels have to first report to Mogadishu if they want to obtain permission to enter Kismaayo. Likewise, such vessels would have to report to Mogadishu first, before leaving Somalia. These provisions are also applicable for all ports of southern Somalia (e.g. Merca, Brawa) or makeshift harbours like Khuda, Stambul etc.

3. The TFG along with naval forces in the area have declared a blockade of Kismaayo port. Any vessel breaking this blockade to deliver/take goods is likely to be committing a crime. Operating in this region, therefore, considerably, endangers the safety of innocent seafarers.

4. During the last few months, Dhows have been one of the preferred prey of the pirates. There are several reasons for this. They are easy to seize, the ransom paid, while not as high as for other merchant vessels, is still considerable and above all a Dhows can be used as mother ship to operate further away off the coast. Also, dhows are more difficult to track than other ships because they do not have the requisite technical equipment and normally the piracy monitoring agencies do not even know that the dhow is hijacked. Many of these agencies lack the information concerning the Dhow traffic/trading along the east coast of Africa.

5. All owners/operators of Dhows (mechanized sailing vessel), registered in India, All India Federation of sailing vessel owners and other similar sailing vessel associations/registrars of sailing vessels etc are;

a. to take note of this maritime security advisory and desist from operating in waters south or

west of line joining Salalah and Male which has been prohibited for trading in compliance with this Directorate's circular No. NT/ISPS/05/2010 dated 30.03.2010 and,

b. positively report to the DG Commcentre (e-mail: dgcommcentre@satyammal.net, Tel: 022-22614646 / 0606, 022-32959320, fax: 022-22613636) which is manned 24 X 7, in case their vessel is missing or presumed captured by pirates, or in case of an attack by pirates, as soon as possible, so as to enable initiation of appropriate action.

6. This is issued with the approval of Director General of Shipping.

Sd/-

(Capt. Harish Khatri)

Nautical Surveyor-cum-DDG (Tech.)