

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-1339
ANSWERED ON- 09/02/2024**

SCHEMES TO FISHERMEN

1339. SHRI RAM MOHAN NAIDU KINJARAPU

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :-

- (a) the details regarding the total number of fishermen of India behind bars in Bangladesh during the last three years, State-wise including Andhra Pradesh;**
- (b) the steps and initiatives undertaken by the Government for release and repatriation of our fishermen from prisons of Bangladesh alongwith the funds allocated and utilised therefor during the last five years;**
- (c) whether the Government has undertaken any initiatives, schemes and programs to prevent fishermen from accidentally straying into foreign waters, if so details regarding the same; and**
- (d) whether the Government has any scheme/initiative to provide support to families of fishermen imprisoned in foreign jails; if so details regarding the same?**

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
(SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN)**

(a) The details are as below:

| Year | Fishermen arrested | Fishermen released | State |
|-------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| 2021 | 54 | 54 | West Bengal |
| 2022 | 184 | 184 | West Bengal |
| 2023 | 04 | 04 | West Bengal |

Fishermen from Andhra Pradesh- Nil

(b) The Government attaches highest priority to the safety, security and welfare of Indian fishermen. As soon as cases of apprehension of Indian fishermen and their fishing boats are reported, immediate steps are taken by Indian Missions and Posts to seek consular access, ensure their welfare and also pursue their early release and repatriation along with their boats. Consular Officers of Missions/Posts make regular visits to jails and detention centers to ascertain the condition of Indian fishermen and provide requisite help and support, including legal assistance in deserving cases.

As a result of sustained efforts by the Government, all Indian fishermen, detained in Bangladesh, stand repatriated.

(c & d) Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying issues advisory to the coastal States and Union Territories (UTs) from time to time to sensitize the fishermen on the implications of crossing the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL). Besides, Indian Navy and Indian Coast Guard (ICG) regularly conduct Community Interaction Programmes (CIPs) for the fishermen in the coastal villages on the same. ICG ships and aircraft, during regular patrol close to IMBL undertake shepherding of Indian fishing boats into the Indian waters. Coordinated patrols with neighbouring countries are also undertaken in order to sensitize the fishermen in this regard. Standard Operating Procedures have been promulgated by the Ministry of Home Affairs in November 2016 to prevent transgression of IMBL by Indian fishermen.
