

Need for permanent solution to the problems posed by Sri Lankan Navy for Indian fishermen ? laid

SHRI SELVARAJ V. (NAGAPATTINAM): The Indian fishermen are constantly facing assaults, pirate attacks, fines and humiliation at the hands of Sri Lankan Navy. In August, the Government had told the Parliament that 83 Indian fishermen were currently in judicial custody, 4 were serving sentences and 169 Indian fishing vessels had been seized. On September 14, five fishermen returned home to Pamban with their heads tonsured by Sri Lankan authorities for poaching in their territorial waters. They were released only after their families coughed up a fine of 50,000 Sri Lankan rupee. Their boats are not returned.

Lately, on November 10 Sri Lankan Navy apprehended 23 fishermen from Rameshwaram and seized their three boats. It is learnt that since January 2024, Sri Lankan Navy has confiscated 65 fishing boats and detained 485 fishermen. These fishermen are mainly from my Parliamentary Constituency Nagapattinam and Puthukottai districts of Tamil Nadu. There are complaints that the Indian Embassy in Sri Lanka is not providing any legal help to the detained fishermen.

Now a new regime has come to power in Sri Lanka. So, I request the Indian Government to initiate fruitful talks with the Sri Lankan Government to find a permanent solution to the problems of Indian fishermen.