

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:258

ANSWERED ON:24.02.2010

RELEASE OF FISHERMEN

Patel Shri Kishanbhai Vestabhai; Pathak Shri Harin; Rathwa Shri Ramsinhbhai Patalbhai; Reddy Shri Anantha Venkatarami; Shukla Shri Balkrishna Khanderao Balu Shukla; Viswanathan Shri P.

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

- (a) the number of Indian fishermen and fishing boats captured by the neighbouring countries since January 2004 to January 2010, country-wise and State-wise;
- (b) the number of fishermen and boats released by them during the above period, State-wise;
- (c) the number of fishermen died/injured in the incidents/captivity, State-wise and country-wise; and
- (d) the steps taken by the Government of India to get the fishermen and their boats released from these countries ?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S.M. KRISHNA)

(a) According to information available, from January 2004 to January 2010, the details are as follows:

Sl.	No.	Country	No. of Fishermen Captured	No. of Boats Captured	State belonging to
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1. Pakistan 2302 437 Most of them belonged to Gujarat and Diu & Daman

2. Sri Lanka 1818 413 Most of them belonged to Tamil Nadu

(b) While no Indian fisherman was released in 2004, Pakistan released 1909 Indian fishermen between January 2005 and January 2010. No Indian boat has been released by Pakistan since October 2003.

All the fishermen and their boats were released by Sri Lanka except 6 boats which were beyond salvage.

(c) 6 Indian fishermen have died in Pakistani jails while in custody during the above period.

As far as Sri Lanka is concerned, since 2004, there have been 24 incidents of firing on Indian fishermen. A total of 10 fishermen were reported dead and two were reported to be missing/presumed dead.

(d) Government has been making persistent efforts for the release of Indian fishermen and their boats from Pakistan and Sri Lanka. An India-Pakistan Judicial Committee on Prisoners was formed on 26 February 2008 to make recommendations to the two Governments, which inter alia included immediate release of and consular access to fishermen, and exchange of a consolidated list of nationals in each other's jails. India and Sri Lanka agreed on 26th October 2008 to put in place practical arrangements to deal with bonafide Indian and Sri Lankan fishermen crossing the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL). As part of these practical arrangements, it was decided that there will be no firing on Indian fishermen and vessels, and Indian fishing vessels will not tread into sensitive areas designated by Government of Sri Lanka along its coastline.