

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2920
ANSWERED ON:11.08.2010
INDIANS IN CHINESE JAIL
Mani Shri Jose K.

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether more than 20 Indian traders held by the Chinese authorities in the southern port city of Shenzhen on charges of diamond smuggling six months ago, are still languishing in Jail;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether under the Chinese law, those charged with economic crimes can be held indefinitely for trial and punished upto fifteen years imprisonment;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the measures taken by the Government to get them released at the earliest?

Answer

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

(a) to (d): Twenty one Indian nationals were arrested in January 2010 and one in April 2010 by the Anti-Smuggling Bureau of the Shenzhen Customs under the Criminal Procedure Law of the Peoples' Republic of China for illegal transportation of diamonds from Hong Kong to Shenzhen. The matter is currently being investigated. At the conclusion of the investigation, the prosecution would prepare the case for trial in court.

(e): The Consulate General of India, Guangzhou was provided consular access to the detainees on 13-14 January, 29 January, 4 February and 16 July 2010. The Consulate General is in constant contact with the law firm which has been arranged to provide legal assistance to the Indian nationals. The detainees are being provided Indian vegetarian food, allowed religious books, given English newspapers and magazines. In response to the continuous efforts of the Consulate General of India, Guangzhou, the Shenzhen authorities allowed the family members of the detainees to visit them on 7-9 April 2010 and again on 19-21 July 2010.