

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:301

ANSWERED ON:01.12.2010

INDIANS IN PAKISTANI JAILS

Agarwal Shri Jai Prakash;Nirupam Shri Sanjay Brijkishorilal

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of Indian prisoners in the Pakistani jails at present;
- (b) the number of such persons languishing even after completing their jail term;
- (c) whether the Government has taken any steps in securing the release of these prisoners;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (e) the time by which they are likely to be released?

Answer

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

(a) to (e) A statement is placed on the Table of the house.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.301 REGARDING 'INDIANS IN PAKISTANI JAILS' FOR ANSWER ON 01.12.2010

According to available reports, there are 474 Indian nationals in custody in Pakistan. Out of them, 218 are civilian prisoners, 182 Indian fishermen and 74 Missing Defence Personnel, including 54 Prisoners of War since 1971. Government of Pakistan has acknowledged the presence of only 63 Indian civilian prisoners and 182 Indian fishermen in their jails. Pakistan does not acknowledge the presence of any Missing Defence Personnel in its custody.

Government of India has been consistently taking up the issue concerning all Indian prisoners in Pakistani jails with the Government of Pakistan at all appropriate levels. Further, an India-Pakistan Judicial Committee on Prisoners consisting of four retired judges from each side has been set up to recommend steps for humane treatment and expeditious release prisoners of the respective countries in each other's jails. The committee has so far had three meetings and has given several recommendations. Government of India has asked the Government of Pakistan to convene the next meeting of the Committee.

High Commission of India, Islamabad, on a continuing basis, monitors the status of Indians prisoners in Pakistani jails and requests for consular access for these prisoners. Once the consular access is granted by the Government of Pakistan, the verification papers are sent to the Ministry of Home Affairs through the Ministry of External Affairs for nationality status verification of these prisoners. High Commission of India, on a continuing basis, takes up the matter with the Government of Pakistan for the release of all those Indian prisoners who have completed their sentences.

The matter was raised with Pakistan at the Foreign Secretary Level talks on February 25, 2010 in New Delhi and again on June 24, 2010 in Islamabad. The issue was also raised during Home Minister's visit to Islamabad on June 25-26, 2010 and during Foreign Minister level talks in Islamabad on July 15, 2010.

Government of Pakistan released 18 Indian civilian prisoners and 442 Indian fishermen lodged in Pakistani jails in 2010.