

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:592

ANSWERED ON:03.08.2011

CAPTURE OF FISHERMEN BY PAKISTAN

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Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a large number of Indian fishermen have been captured by the Pakistani authorities during the last one year and the current year;
- (b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the number of fishermen released during the above period and the number of fishermen under the captivity of Pakistan as on date;
- (c) the details of the steps taken by the Government for the release of remaining fishermen and the outcome thereof;
- (d) whether there is any scheme to render financial help to such fishermen; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS(SMT. PRENEET KAUR)

(a) & (b) Pakistan arrested 100 Indian fishermen in 2010 and 156 Indian fishermen till date in 2011. 454 Indian fishermen have been released by Pakistan in 2010 and 103 Indian fishermen have been released in 2011. At present, there are 252 Indian fishermen in Pakistan's jails.

(c) High Commission of India, Islamabad, on a continuing basis, monitors the status of Indian fishermen in Pakistani jails and requests for consular access for these fishermen. Once 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 fishermen. High Commission of India, on a continuing basis, takes up the matter with the Government of Pakistan for the release of all those Indian fishermen who have completed their sentences.

The matter was raised with Pakistan at the Foreign Secretary Level talks on February 25, 2010 in New Delhi, on June 24, 2010 and June 24, 2011 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. It was raised discussed during the recently concluded Foreign Minister level talks held in New Delhi on July 27, 2011.

(d) & (e) The Ministry of Agriculture, (Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries) is the nodal agency for payment of compensation to the fishermen lodged in Pakistani jails and the scheme – " Soft Loan Package for Replacement of Fishing vessels held in captivity in Pakistan" which is being implemented by Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA).