

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2191  
ANSWERED ON:07.12.2011  
INDIAN FISHERMEN  
Natarajan Shri P.R.

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

- (a) the number of Indian fishermen shot down by coastal guards/navy of Sri Lanka and Pakistan during the last five years;
- (b) the details of negotiations conducted with Sri Lanka and Pakistan in the past in this regard; and
- (c) the response of these nations thereto?

**Answer**

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

(a) According to information available, in the last five years, a total of 30 incidents of attacks on Indian fishermen, allegedly by the Sri Lankan Navy, in which 11 Indian fishermen died, have been reported. The Government of Sri Lanka has, however, denied the allegations. As per the available information there are no reports of Indian fishermen shot down by Pakistan Maritime Security Agency/Navy in the last five years.

(b) & (c) The Government attaches the highest importance to the safety, security and welfare of Indian fishermen and has, through diplomatic channels, immediately and consistently taken up with the Government of Sri Lanka any reported incident involving arrest or violence against Indian fishermen and to ensure their early release and repatriation. The issue of the safety, security and welfare of Indian fishermen has been consistently taken up, including at the recent meeting of the Prime Minister with the President of Sri Lanka. Keeping in mind the humanitarian and livelihood dimensions of the fishermen's issue, the Government had reached an understanding through a Joint Statement with the Sri Lankan Government 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. As part of these arrangements, it was agreed that there would be no firing on Indian fishing vessels and Indian fishing vessels would not tread into sensitive areas designated by the Government of Sri Lanka along its coastline. Following the October 2008 understanding, the incidents of attack and apprehension of Indian fishermen by Sri Lankan authorities have significantly come down. In 2008, a total of 1456 Indian fishermen along with 334 boats were apprehended by the Sri Lankan Navy. In 2009, those apprehended came down to 127 fishermen and 32 boats and in 2010, only 34 fishermen and 4 boats were apprehended. As on 30th November 2011, a total of 164 Indian fishermen along with 32 boats were apprehended this year and all fishermen and boats were subsequently released. As per information available, presently there are no Indian fishermen or boats in Sri Lankan custody on charges of fishing related violations.