

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5303
ANSWERED ON:09.05.2012
INDIAN PRISONERS IN PAKISTANI JAILS
Owaisi Shri Asaduddin

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of Indian prisoners lodged in Pakistani jails who are undergoing treatment for mental disorder and who are deaf and dumb;
- (b) whether the Hon. Supreme Court has taken a serious view for not addressing the concerns of these prisoners on priority basis and especially during the bilateral talks between the two countries;
- (c) if so, the reasons therefor; and
- (d) the steps taken or being taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

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

- (a) Out of the prisoners lodged in Pakistani jails who are Indian or believed to be Indian and for whom consular access has been provided, 17 persons were in various mental hospitals/asylums and 2 are deaf and dumb.
- (b) to (d) Hon'ble Supreme Court of India has issued orders with reference to the men tally challenged Pakistani nationals lodged in Indian jails. Government has consistently taken up the issue concerning all Indian prisoners in Pakistani jails with the Government of Pakistan at all appropriate levels. The matter was taken up at the Foreign Secretary level talks in February 2010, June 2010 and June 2011; in the Home/Interior Secretary level talks in March 2011 and Foreign Minister level talks in July 2010 and July 2011. Home Minister also raised the issue during his visit to Islamabad in June 2010. An India-Pakistan Judicial Committee has also been set up consisting of retired judges to ensure humane treatment and expeditious release of prisoners, including fishermen, who have completed their prison term. The Committee has held five meetings so far and given several recommendations. In its fifth meeting in January 2012, The Committee recommended that a mechanism should be developed for compassionate and humanitarian consideration to be given to women, juvenile, mentally challenged, old aged and all those prisoners suffering from serious illness/permanent physical disability; and that seriously/terminally mentally challenged prisoners must be kept in hospitals irrespective of confirmation of their nationality status and offence. 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. Due to Government's consistent efforts 218 Indian fishermen and 17 civilian prisoners have been released by Pakistan in 2012. 103 fishermen and 13 civilian prisoners were released by Pakistan in 2011, and 454 fishermen and 19 civilian prisoners were released in 2010.