

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1324
ANSWERED ON:17.08.2012
RELEASE OF FISHERMEN
Sivakumar Alias J.K. Ritheesh Shri K.

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Sri Lanka Government has released the five fishermen arrested on 28th November, 2011 by Sri Lanka Navy on the charges of drug smuggling; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor along with the steps taken by the Government for their timely/early release?

Answer

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

(a) & (b) According to available information, five fishermen along with their boat were detained on 29th November 2012 on charges of drug trafficking near Delft Island (very close to Palaitivu-Persalai) in Sri Lankan waters.

The Government, through diplomatic channels, immediately took up the matter with the Government of Sri Lanka. The Consulate General of India in Jaffna secured consular access and arranged necessary medical and legal assistance for the detained Indian nationals. As per available information, the matter is sub-judice and the next date of hearing the case is on 22nd August 2012 in Magistrate's Court, Mallakam, Jaffna District.