

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1340

ANSWERED ON:17.08.2012

INDIAN FISHERMEN IN PAK

Choudhary Shri Harish;Jardosh Smt. Darshana Vikram;Pathak Shri Harin;Patil Shri C. R. ;Premajibhai Dr. Solanki Kiritbhai;Shukla Shri Balkrishna Khanderao Balu Shukla;Vasava Shri Mansukhbhai D.

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

- (a) the total number of Indian fishermen in the custody of Pakistan at present along with the number of these captured fishermen belonging to Gujarat;
- (b) the details of steps taken/being taken by the Government to secure release of such fishermen;
- (c) the number of boats of the captured fishermen received back and the number of boats still in custody of Pakistan; and
- (d) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to rehabilitate fishermen and their families whose boats have been captured by Pakistan?

**Answer**

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

- (a) According to available information, as on 31 July 2012 136 fishermen believed to be Indian are in Pakistan's custody. Out of 108 fishermen whose nationality has been confirmed as Indians, 89 are from Gujarat.
- (b) Government has been consistently taking up the issue concerning all Indian fishermen and their boats in Pakistani custody 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, June 2011 and July 2012; at the Home/Interior Secretary level talks in March 2011 and May 2012 and at 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 from both countries to ensure humane treatment and expeditious release of prisoners, including fishermen, who have completed their prison term. India-Pakistan Joint Working Group between Indian Coast Guard and Pakistan Maritime Security Agency (PMSA) met at New Delhi on July 12, 2012 for working out a mechanism for release of fishermen and their boats who cross maritime borders inadvertently. High Commission of India, Islamabad, on a continuing basis, monitors the status of Indians prisoners including fishermen in Pakistani jails and takes up the matter with the Government of Pakistan for their early release and return of their boats. Due to Government's consistent efforts, 547 Indian fishermen have been released by Pakistan in 2012 so far; 103 fishermen were released in 2011, 454 fishermen in 2010 and 100 fishermen were released in 2009.
- (c) Pakistan has not released any boat belonging to these fishermen. There are approximately 575 Indian boats in Pakistan's custody.
- (d) 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).