

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
DEFENCE  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3319

ANSWERED ON:18.03.2013

SECURITY OF FISHERMEN

Dhotre Shri Sanjay Shamrao;Mahtab Shri Bhartruhari;Shukla Shri Balkrishna Khanderao Balu Shukla

**Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether Pakistan has arrested 388 Indian fishermen;
- (b) if so, the details of the efforts being made by the Government to secure their release and action taken to recover the boats of such fishermen;
- (c) whether the Government has distributed Distress Alert Transmitters (DAT) to fishermen through the community interaction programmes in maritime States including Odisha to protect distressed fishermen in deep seas in emergency;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (e) the steps taken / being taken by the Government to ensure safety of fishermen at sea?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY)

(a) & (b): As per available information with Ministry of External Affairs, as on date, there are reports of nearly four hundred fishermen believed to be Indian in Pakistan custody. Government consistently takes up the issue concerning the release of all Indian fishermen and their boats in Pakistani custody with the Government of Pakistan at all appropriate levels regularly. 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. High Commission of India, Islamabad, on a continuing basis, monitors the status of Indian 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, 677 Indian fishermen were released by Pakistan in 2012 and 7 have been released so far in 2013; 103 fishermen were released in 2011 and 454 fishermen in 2010.

(c) & (d): 798 DATs and 980 DATs were distributed during the year 2009 and 2011 respectively to fishermen through the community interaction programmes in maritime States including Odisha to protect distressed fishermen in deep seas in emergency.

(e) Indian Coast Guard has been conducting Community Interaction Programmes to sensitise fishermen about safety of life at sea and importance of carriage of safety equipment at sea. Further, on receipt of information regarding fishermen in distress, ICG initiates search and rescue (SAR) operations for the rescue of distressed fishermen.