

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2369
ANSWERED ON:05.02.2014
FISHERMEN IN SRI LANKAN JAILS
Thamaraiselvan Shri R.

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Sri Lanka has agreed to free all Indian fishermen languishing in Sri Lankan jails;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Sri Lanka has recently released some of the fishermen;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the number of Indian fishermen still in Sri Lankan jails?

Answer

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

(a) to (e) Government attaches the highest priority to the safety, security and welfare of Indian fishermen. From time to time, there have been reports of apprehension of Indian fishermen by the Sri Lankan Navy for allegedly fishing in Sri Lankan waters. As soon as reports of apprehensions of Indian fishermen are received, Government has, through diplomatic channels, immediately and consistently taken up the matter with the Government of Sri Lanka to secure an early release and repatriation of apprehended Indian fishermen. As a result of Government's efforts, 726 Indian fishermen in the custody of Sri Lanka were released in 2013 and 2014, and according to available information, there are 38 Indian fishermen in custody of Sri Lanka as on 31.1.2014.