

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2144
ANSWERED ON:02.12.2009
DEFENCE PERSONNEL IN PAKISTANI JAIL
Jindal Shri Naveen

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of Indian Defence personnel in Pakistani jails;
- (b) whether any efforts have been made in the past two years to negotiate with the Pakistani Government for release of Indian POWs languishing in Pakistani jails; and
- (c) if so, the number of Indian POWs released so far?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S. M. KRISHNA)

- (a) According to available information, 74 Missing Defence Personnel are believed to be in Pakistani jails, including 54 since 1971.
- (b) &(c) Government has repeatedly taken up the matter with the Government of Pakistan through diplomatic channels and during high-level contacts for their release. However, Pakistan does not acknowledge the presence of any Missing Defence Personnel in its custody. During the visit of External Affairs Minister to Pakistan in January 2007, Pakistan Government was persuaded to receive a delegation of relatives of Missing Defence Personnel to permit them to visit prisons in Pakistan, where they are believed to be incarcerated. A delegation of relatives, accordingly, visited 10 jails in Pakistan from June 1-14, 2007. The delegation could not conclusively confirm the physical presence of the 74 Missing Defence Personnel. Pursuant to the visit of the delegation of the relatives of Missing Defence Personnel, a Tri-Service Committee for monitoring matters on the subject has been formed in the Ministry of Defence.