

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:431
ANSWERED ON:25.02.2015
RETRIEVING KATCHATHEEVU ISLAND
Reddy Shri Ponguleti Srinivasa;Vellaigounder Shri Elumalai

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to address the issue of Katchatheevu with the Sri Lankan Government;
- (b) whether discussions have been held recently to resolve this issue with Sri Lanka; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof and the measures taken by the Government to ensure the safety of Indian fishermen while fishing in territorial waters?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
(GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD))

- (a) to (c) The matter relating to the Katchatheevu Island issue is currently sub-judice in the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India.

Since 2009, the Indian Coast Guard has been conducting community interaction programmes for the fishermen throughout the year in coordination with the State Fisheries Departments and other stakeholders. For issues being faced by Indian fishermen in Tamil Nadu, the Government of Tamil Nadu has established a round-the-clock Control Room at the Coastal Security Group (CSG) Headquarters, Chennai to attend to emergency calls from fishermen. The CSG conducts meetings of "Village Vigilance Committee" to sensitise the fishermen on the safety and security aspects from time to time. The CSG also circulates pamphlets and displays banners to the fishing community in each coastal village of the State to create awareness, in coordination with Postal Department. Besides, the CSG personnel carry out routine sea patrolling to safeguard the fishermen and to ensure that the fishermen should not cross the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL).

Government has a scheme on safety of fishermen at sea under which subsidy of 75% of unit cost of kit consisting of GPS, communication equipment, echo-sounder and search & rescue beacon is given.