

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2851

ANSWERED ON:30.07.2014

INDIAN FISHERMEN IN PAK CUSTODY

Fatepara Shri Devajibhai Govindbhai;Kachhadia Shri Naranbhai;Kundariya Shri Mohanbhai Kalyanjibhai;Rathod Shri Dipsinh Shankarsinh

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the total number of Indian fishermen who are in the custody of Pakistan as on date;
- (b) whether requests have been received from various quarters for the early release of these fishermen and if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government for the release of these fishermen and their fishing boats?

Answer

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

(a) As on 1 July 2014, there are 249 fishermen believed to be Indian lodged in Pakistani jails.

(b) & (c) Government remains in touch with representatives of Indian fishermen who are in Pakistani jails. Based on the information gathered during these interactions Government regularly takes up with the Pakistan authorities the issue of the early release and repatriation of all such fishermen in Pakistan's custody as well as providing regular consular access to them. Government of India also, on a continuing basis, monitors the status of all such Indian prisoners in Pakistani jails. The India-Pakistan Judicial Committee consisting of retired judges from both countries visits jails in both countries to ensure humane treatment and expeditious release of prisoners, including fishermen, who have completed their prison term. A delegation comprising government official and representatives of fishermen community visited Pakistan on 18-19 July 2014 to explore the modalities for release of 57 fishing vessels held in Pakistan's custody.

As a result of consistent efforts of the Government, 150 fishermen have so far been released by Pakistan this year.