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Title: Need to impress upon the Sri Lanka Government to release Indian fishermen.

SHRI T.G. VENKATESH BABU (CHENNAI NORTH): Madam, the attack on Indian fisherman by the Sri Lankan Navy continued unabated since long. The frequency is escalated and the magnitude of incidents of abduction of our fishermen and seizure of boats as also fishing equipment is undeterred in recent days. They also infringe upon the historically enjoyed rights of our fishermen to fish in the traditional waters of the Palk Bay.

Once again in the early hours of 15th July, 2016, four fishermen from Tamil Nadu along with their motorized fishing boat who ventured into the sea for fishing from Pamban Fishing Base have been apprehended by the Sri Lankan Navy and taken to Talaimannar, Sri Lanka.

Madam, time and again, our hon. Chief Minister, Amma, had reiterated that the position of the international maritime boundary line itself is a matter which is *sub judice* in the hon. Supreme Court of India. The constitutional validity of ceding of Katchatheevu through Indo-Sri Lankan Agreements of 1974 and 1976 has been challenged. Subsequently, the Government of Tamil Nadu impleaded itself in this case.

Madam, keeping this in view, I urge upon the hon. Minister of External Affairs to take up this issue on top priority with the Sri Lankan authority and bring an immediate halt to the apprehensions at high seas and secure the immediate release of 77 Indian fishermen and 102 fishing boats including four fishermen along with their one motorized fishing boat apprehended recently and find a lasting solution to this vexed issue.

HON. SPEAKER:

Shri Bhairon Prasad Mishra,

Kunwar Pushpendra Singh Chandel and

Shrimati V. Sathyabama are permitted to associate with the issue raised by Shri T.G. Venkatesh Babu.