

patient at all, and giving the doctors the right information, this problem would not have arisen.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY : You are wrong.

[*Translation*]

MR. SPEAKER : Choubey ji has done a good thing after all.

(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER : Looks like that.

**Demarcation of Maritime Boundary
with Pakistan**

*124. **SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK :** Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there have been incidents of fishing by Pakistani fishermen in the Indian waters off the Kutch Coast into undermarked maritime boundary ; and

(b) if so, the steps taken to fix the maritime boundary with Pakistan and the outcome thereof ?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
(SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH) :** (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government are taking steps to enter into negotiations with the Government of Pakistan for the demarcation of the Indo-Pak maritime boundary.

SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK : It is clear from the reply of the hon. Minister that the Government have not so far entered into negotiations but they are taking steps to enter into the negotiations. But in some Press reports it has appeared that some rounds of talks have taken place at diplomatic levels between Pakistan and India. When the Government is admitting that there have been incidents of fishing by Pakistani fishermen, why have they not so far started discussions ? Did not they envisage this before ? What is the difficulty and

when are they going to enter into the negotiations ?

SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH : A number of meetings have been held between India and Pakistan on this particular matter, especially since last year when 41 Indian vessels along with 364 crewmen were captured by Pakistan and then their shipping vessels came into India and we had taken a number of their vessels and crewmen into custody. The difficulty has been that the maritime boundary has not been demarcated for a number of years although we have had very good results in marking the boundary with Indonesia, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Burma. But on this point we have some differences with the Pakistani authorities. A paper has been prepared for a meeting at the highest level, before the CCPA.

Now, with regard to the arrest of Indian crewmen, Pakistani crewmen in India and ours in their custody, talks were held in the month of February, on the 10th and the 11th. And a decision was reached that all personnel arrested will be released within 60 days and all vessels will be discharged. This is a one-time arrangement and we are looking into what we can do permanently. I have also written to my colleague, the Minister of Defence, for tightening up the Coast Guard arrangements because there is a very large area. The fishermen from Saurashtra saw me along with three hon. Members of Parliament and we have assured them that everything possible is being done to alleviate the difficulties. But the basic and fundamental matter relates to the settlement of maritime boundary.

SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK : Excluding the fishing, may I know from the hon Minister how many incidents of violation of India exclusive economic zone have been found with regard to smuggling, poaching ? Are the present arrangements of Coast Guard sufficient ? Or is Government going to strengthen the Coast Guard arrangements ?

SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH : Purely, as a matter of interest, I am quite intrigued that the hon. Member's concern should be in the Bay of Bengal rather than in the

Arabian Sea. Nevertheless, I shall certainly satisfy her as much as I can. This we have taken up and the Defence Minister has assured me that arrangements have been made for tightening up the arrangements by the Coast Guard. The violations are taken in the economic zone. As soon as that violation takes place, action is taken by our people to apprehend these fishing boats. Now, it is a very lucrative undertaking. The Pakistani boats have been coming into our waters because of the shortage of rainfall in some areas of Pakistan and where the river comes in. They have been saying that we have been violating their boundary. We have contradicted this claim of the Pakistani authorities. But what I want to assure the hon. House and the hon. Member is that we are fully alive to the problem of the community of our fishermen, who earn a considerable amount for the country and fair amount for themselves and if they are going to be submitted to the kind of difficulties they are encountering from the Pakistani side, we would certainly take it up as and when necessary. As I said, all crew men who were arrested, will be released by the end of April.

SHRI SHANTARAM NAIK : May I know from the hon. Minister whether his Ministry has taken any international convention or law as the basis of that negotiation and whether Pakistanis have opposed that international convention or law which you have taken as the basis? If so, what are the grounds for objection?

SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH : This is a bilateral matter between Pakistan and India. There was an agreement signed in 1914. I do not want to go into the details of that. There was some arrangement made in 1224 where some pillars were erected for the Sindh-Kutch areas. Now, we have discovered that out of 67 erected pillars 38 are still standing. But here again we have differences with the Government of Pakistan relating to the Creek. Similarly, we have some differences on the main Gujarat-Pakistan boundary. I really do not wish to go into the details. But this is a matter which we have been taking up with the Pakistan Government for a number of years. We are hoping that we will be able to have a substantial meeting on the demarcation of boundary as early as possible.

DR. DATTA SAMANT : Sir, the hon. Minister has given the reply but for the last three-four years, the fishermen are being constantly arrested by the Pakistan Government from the Kutch areas of Gujarat. Last year they were kept behind the bars for nine months. This is repeatedly happening but the Government has not taken care even to see what is happening. If there is some controversy regarding border, why not the Government at least assure the fishermen of their safety by keeping some enlightened guards and by having some permanent arrangement for release of fishermen on both the sides? It is very difficult to define the boundary on the sea and it is difficult for the fishermen to know the border because the Government may be deciding it at a higher level. The fishermen from both the sides go for fishing at night. So, why not have some permanent solution for the exchange of the fishermen till the border issue is decided?

SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH : Sir, this is what I have said that we are getting in touch with the Government of Pakistan to have substantial discussions on the maritime boundary. With regards to what has happened during the last few months, I fully share the hon. Members concern about our crew men and boats being apprehended by Pakistan and kept in custody. We have taken this up with them immediately and as I have said, I have written to the Defence Minister that extra arrangement should be made for tightening up the patrolling by our Coast Guard, and he is going to do that. We are fully conscious of the problem that has been raised by the hon. Members and I am grateful for their interest so that the Government could make quite clear what we have been doing, what we are doing and what we would continue to do.

Meeting to Check Naxalite Activities

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*127. **SHRI AKHTAR HASAN :**

SHRI H.B. PATIL :

Will the Minister of **HOME AFFAIRS** be pleased to state :

(a) whether a high-level meeting was held in Delhi in January, 1988 to review