

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.329
TO BE ANSWERED ON 13.12.2018

**BILATERAL AGREEMENT WITH PAKISTAN FOR RELEASE OF
PRISONERS**

329. SHRI T. RATHINAVEL:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that India and Pakistan exchanged a list of civilian prisoners and fishermen lodged in each other's jails, as per the provisions of a bilateral agreement;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Pakistan was asked to expedite the release of nine Indian civilian prisoners and 229 Indian fishermen who have completed their sentences and whose nationality have been confirmed; and
- (d) whether India has conveyed to Pakistan the need for early release and repatriation of civilian prisoners, missing Indian defence personnel and fishermen along with their boats?

ANSWER

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

(a) & (b) India and Pakistan, in keeping with the provisions of the Agreement on Consular Access (2008) between the two countries, exchange lists of civilian prisoners and fishermen lodged in each others' jails through diplomatic channels, twice each year, on the 1st of January and 1st of July. While Pakistan handed over lists of 53 Indian and believed-to-be-Indian civilian prisoners and 418 fishermen in their custody on 1st July 2018, India handed over lists of 249 Pakistani and believed-to-be-Pakistani civil prisoners and 108 fishermen to Pakistan.

(c) & (d) Government has consistently pursued the matter of early release and repatriation of all Indian prisoners, including civilians, fishermen with boats, and missing Indian defence personnel who are believed to be in Pakistan's custody. Government's persistent efforts have succeeded in securing release of 1748 Indian prisoners, including 1725 fishermen along with 57 boats from Pakistan's custody since 2014. This include 178 Indian prisoners and fishermen who have been repatriated from Pakistan in 2018, so far. The Government has asked Pakistan to provide consular access as also release and repatriate remaining Indian prisoners and fishermen along with their boats in Pakistan's custody. This includes 11 Indian civilian prisoners and 369 fishermen whose nationality has been confirmed and have completed their sentence.
