

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO- 1678
ANSWERED ON- 13/03/2025

INDIAN FISHERMEN IMPRISONED IN PAKISTAN

1678. SHRI PARIMAL NATHWANI

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:-

- (a) the number of Indian fishermen currently imprisoned in Pakistan, and how many of them belong to Gujarat and since when;
- (b) the steps taken by Government for their release and repatriation;
- (c) whether there is any joint judicial and/or diplomatic mechanism of both the countries to deal with the cases of fishermen and their timely repatriation; and
- (d) the details of assistance and support, including legal aid and financial compensation, etc that are being provided to the families of these detained fishermen?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a) India and Pakistan exchange lists of fishermen and civilian prisoners of each country, lodged in jails of the other, on 1st January and 1st July every year. According to the lists exchanged on 01.01.2025, Pakistan acknowledged the custody of 217 Indian/believed-to-be Indian fishermen. Since the exchange of these lists, 01 Indian fisherman passed away and 22 Indian fishermen were released and repatriated to India.

Out of the remaining 194 Indian/believed-to-be Indian fishermen currently imprisoned in Pakistan, 123 fishermen are from/believed-to-be from Gujarat. Out of these 123 fishermen, 33 fishermen were apprehended in 2021; 68 fishermen in 2022; 09 fishermen in 2023; and 13 fishermen in 2024.

(b) Government of India attaches the highest priority to the welfare, safety and security of Indian fishermen. As soon as cases of apprehension of Indian fishermen by Pakistan are reported, immediate steps are taken by the Indian Mission in Islamabad towards seeking consular access from the Pakistan Government and securing their early release and repatriation. All possible assistance, including legal assistance, is extended to the Indian fishermen. The matter of early release and repatriation of Indian fishermen is consistently raised with the Pakistan Government and it is conveyed that this issue may be considered purely on humanitarian and livelihood grounds.

(c) The 'India-Pakistan Agreement on Consular Access 2008' guides the process of release and repatriation of the fishermen arrested by Pakistan. The 'India-Pakistan Judicial Committee on

Prisoners' comprising retired High Court Judges from both sides to recommend steps for humane treatment of prisoners and fishermen and their expeditious release was setup in 2008 by the Governments of India and Pakistan. The committee had conducted 07 meetings so far.

(d) The Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Government of India runs various flagship programs for the welfare of fishermen. The Government of Gujarat also runs a relief scheme to provide financial assistance to the family members of the detained fishermen.
