

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.717
TO BE ANSWERED ON 20.12.2017**

ATTACKS ON INDIAN FISHERMEN

**717. SHRI BHARATHI MOHAN R.K.:
SHRI PR. SENTHIL NATHAN:**

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether incidents of attacks on Indian fishermen by Sri Lankan Navy still continue inspite of several measures taken by both Indian and Sri Lankan Governments;**
- (b) if so, the details of such cases reported during each of the last three years till date and the number of Indian fishermen injured, captured or killed in such incidents;**
- (c) whether the Government is providing satellite phones to fishermen as a safety measure and to track them during the encounters with Sri Lankan Navy;**
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and**
- (e) the steps taken by the Government for safety and security of the fishermen against such attacks?**

ANSWER

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

(a) & (b) During the last three years, there have been reports of alleged attacks on Indian fishermen by the Sri Lankan Navy. The details are enclosed as Annexure. Our High Commission in Colombo has taken up all such cases with the Sri Lankan Government. The Sri Lankan side has refuted the allegations and denied their involvement in the attacks.

The details of Indian fishermen detained by Sri Lanka during the last three years are given below:

Sl No.	Year	No. of fishermen arrested
1	2014	787
2	2015	454
3	2016	290
4	2017 (till 14 Dec.)	440

In the last three years, one incident of firing on an Indian fisherman has been reported. A fishing vessel from Tamil Nadu was reportedly fired upon by the Sri Lankan Navy in Palk Bay at around 2230 hrs on 6 March 2017, leading to the death of an Indian fisherman. Another fisherman was injured in the firing.

(c) & (d) The Third Meeting of the Joint Working Group on Fisheries between India and Sri Lanka held on 13 October 2017 reviewed the progress made on installation of tracking systems. Both sides agreed on the urgent need for installing tracking devices to the vessels operating in the Palk Bay Area on priority basis.

(e) Government of India attaches the highest priority to the safety, security and welfare of Indian fishermen. Government has taken up the fishermen issues at the highest level, including by the Prime Minister in his meetings with his Sri Lankan counterparts. It was reiterated that Sri Lankan Government may consider the fishermen issue as a purely humanitarian and livelihood concern, and both sides should ensure that there was no use of force under any circumstances. The safety and security of our fishermen was also taken up during the meetings of the Joint Working Group on fishermen issues and the meeting of the Fisheries Ministers of the two countries.

ANNEXURE

Cases of alleged attacks on Indian fishermen by Sri Lankan Navy reported in the last 3 years.

Sl. No.	Brief of the incident
01	A fishing boat with registration No. IND/TN/10/MM/435 was allegedly hit (09.04.2014) by Sri Lankan Navy (SLN) boat near Katchatheevu Island. SLN allegedly threw away fish catch, GPS, anchor and fishing equipment.
02	A fishing boat with registration No. IND/TN/06/MM/236 with 04 fishermen was allegedly hit by SLN boat twice thereby causing cracks on the boat. One of the crew members, Mr. Manikandan, who tried to save his boat, was allegedly beaten with pipes by SLN personnel (08/06/14).
03	A fishing boat with registration No. IND/TN/06/MM/203 with 05 fishermen was allegedly hit by SLN boat causing slight damages to the boat (08/06/14).
04	A fishing boat with registration No. IND/TN/06/MM/540 with 04 fishermen was alleged hit by SLN boat causing oil leakage and damage to gear box. A crew member was allegedly beaten by hands when he refused to hand over fish catch to SLN personnel (08/06/14).
05	A fishing boat with registration No. IND/TN/06/MM/639 with 03 fishermen was allegedly hit by SLN boat causing breakage of the ice-box. Crew members were allegedly beaten by logs, pipes, ropes causing breaking of front tooth of one of crew member by SLN personnel (08/06/14).
06	A fishing boat with registration No. IND/TN/08/MM/35 with 04 fishermen was allegedly hit by SLN boat causing minor damages to one side of the fishing boat. One trawling net was allegedly cut by SLN personnel.
07	A fishing boat with registration No. IND/TN/08/MM/122 with 03 fishermen was allegedly hit by SLN boat causing minor damages to one side of the fishing boat. One trawling net was allegedly cut by SLN personnel.
08	A fishing boat with registration No. IND/TN/10/MM/51 with 04 fishermen was allegedly hit by SLN boat causing damage to one side of the fishing boat. One trawling net was allegedly cut by SLN personnel.
09	A fishing boat with registration No. IND/TN/10/MM/244 with 05 fishermen was allegedly hit by SLN boat causing damage to one side of the fishing boat and GPS was removed from the boat. One trawling net was allegedly cut by SLN personnel.
10	A fishing boat with registration No. IND/TN/11/MM/147 with 04 fishermen was allegedly hit by SLN boat causing damage to one side of the fishing boat.
11	A fishing boat with registration No. IND/TN/08/MM/174 was allegedly hit thrice by SLN boat causing major damages to one side of the fishing boat. SLN personnel allegedly slapped two crew members for not slowing down their boat prior to arrest.
12	A fishing boat with registration No. IND/TN/08/MM/310 was allegedly hit by SLN boat causing major damages to one side of the fishing boat. One crew member was allegedly kicked by SLN personnel causing swelling on his back.
13	Two crew members of a fishing boat with registration No. IND/TN/06/MM/701 was allegedly hit by SLN personnel with the handle of knives for not speeding up from Analaitivu to KKS after their arrest.
14	A fishing boat with registration No. IND/TN/08/MM/687 was allegedly hit by SLN boat causing major damages to one side and steering room of the fishing boat. All the crew members were allegedly slapped and kicked as they had tried to escape arrest.

15	Crew of a fishing boat with registration No. IND/TN/06/MM/978 reported that they were allegedly slapped, punched and beaten up with ropes as they could not roll their nets quickly as told by SLN personnel to speed up the process of rolling the nets. Two crew members jumped into the sea and were allegedly beaten up by the SLN personnel for jumping into the sea without permission.
16	Crew of a fishing boat with registration No. IND/TN/06/MM/4963 reported that they were allegedly slapped, punched and kicked as they could not roll their nets quickly as demanded by the SLN personnel. One member accidentally fell into the sea. He was rescued and allegedly beaten up by nearly five SLN personnel who tied his hands and legs, and kicked him at his abdomen after placing an ice brick. Hands and legs of four other members were also tied.
17	A fishing boat with registration No.IND/TN/10/MM/478 while fishing at Palk Bay/Straits was allegedly hit by SLN boat which sped away without arresting anyone. Due to the extensive damage, the boat started sinking and the five fishermen contacted their friends in another fishing boat with registration No.IND/TN/10/MM/544 and managed to swim to the same to save their lives. Within half-an-hour of the attack, the damaged boat sunk completely. At this point of time, the above mentioned SLN boat returned and arrested all the nine fishermen.
18	Some of the fishermen in an Indian fishing boat were physically assaulted during arrest by SLN on 03 April 2015
19	One Indian fishing boat was allegedly hit by SLN boat causing damage to the boat and one fishermen was reportedly missing on 26/09/2015
20	One Indian fishing boat carrying 04 fishermen was allegedly hit by SLN on 17-18/10/2015
21	One Indian fishing boat was allegedly hit by SLN boat and 04 fishermen on board were assaulted after the arrest on 31/10/2015.
22	One Indian fisherman was allegedly pelted metal balls by SLN resulting in head injury on 21/11/2015
23	06 Indian fishermen were allegedly beaten up by SLN personnel with cricket bat while making arrest on 25/11/2015.
24	On 02/07/2016, fishermen were allegedly tied up and beaten up by SLN. Further, their boat was allegedly hit by SLN boats at the time of arrest.
25	A fishing boat with registration no. IND/PY/PK/MM/641 with 09 crew members was allegedly shot by SLN on 16/11/2016 and injured two crew members, namely Aravindan and Balamurugan.
26	A fishing boat with registration no. IND/TN/10/MM/514 while fishing in Palk Bay area was allegedly fired upon by the SLN. One fisherman, Mr. Britjo S/O Hemeles, died and another fisherman suffered injuries.
27	One fisherman, Mr. Kebas Anthony Royappar, was allegedly attacked with iron pipe by SLN while arresting a fishing boat with registration no. IND/TN/10/MFB/780 with ten fishermen while fishing in KKS area. He sustained head injuries.
