

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.3001**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 14.03.2018

**INDIAN FISHERMEN IN JAILS**

3001. SHRI DEVUSINH CHAUHAN:  
SHRI M. CHANDRAKASI:  
SHRI OM BIRLA:  
SHRI FEROZE VARUN GANDHI:  
SHRI BHAIRON PRASAD MISHRA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of Indian fishermen who were imprisoned/attacked by security forces of various countries, country-wise including their boats detained during the last three years including the Indian States to which they belong;
- (b) the number of Indian fishermen released along with their boats after completing their sentences in these countries during the last three years;
- (c) the details of steps taken by the Government to secure the release of imprisoned fishermen and to minimize these kind of instances and to make Indian fishermen stay in Indian waters; and
- (d) whether any discussions were held in this regard with the respective Governments and if so, the details thereof and the outcome of the discussions?

**ANSWER**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
[SHRI M.J. AKBAR]

(a) & (b) As per information available with the Ministry, the country-wise details of fishermen imprisoned/ attacked by security forces of various countries, including their boats detained, States to which they belong and the number of fishermen released along with their boats after completing their sentences are given in the Annexure.

(c) & (d) The Government attaches the highest priority to the safety, security and welfare of Indian fishermen. Our Missions and Posts regularly seek consular access to Indian fishermen detained in foreign countries, ensure their welfare and also pursue their early release and repatriation, along with their boats. Given the humanitarian and livelihood dimensions of this issue, the Government has put in place several bilateral mechanisms to ensure cooperation and understanding between India and the countries concerned, to promote the safety and security of Indian fishermen.

Due to geographical reasons, most of our fishermen land into problems with neighbouring countries.

In case of Pakistan, we have a bilateral Agreement on Consular Access, signed in May 2008. The India-Pakistan Joint Judicial Committee, consisting of retired

judges of superior judiciary from the two countries, visit jails in both countries to ensure humane treatment and expeditious release of prisoners, including fishermen on both sides, who have completed their prison terms.

In the case of Sri Lanka, our Mission works closely with the Sri Lankan Ministry of Defence, the Attorney General's Office and the law enforcement agencies concerned, to secure the release and repatriation of our fishermen. There is a Joint Working Group on Fisheries and a Joint Committee on Fisheries, which take up fishermen's issues for resolution on basis of the bilateral Understanding on Practical Arrangements of October 2008. In addition, talks are held from time to time between representatives of the Fishermen's Associations in India and Sri Lanka. Besides, it was also agreed between both the sides that there will be meeting at ministerial level every six months co-chaired by Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Government of India and Minister of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development, Government of Sri Lanka in order to find out a permanent solution to the India-Sri Lanka fishermen problem. So far the JWG had met thrice and two ministerial meetings in this regard have been held. The last (3<sup>rd</sup>) meeting of the JWG was held on 13 October 2017 in New Delhi followed by the Ministerial meeting held on 14 October 2017 in New Delhi.

In the case of Bangladesh, on receipt of information of the arrest of Indian fishermen, Mission contacts the concerned District Magistrates in India to ascertain their Indian nationality and thereafter pursue with the Bangladesh authorities for their release. For this, Mission seeks consular access from Ministry of Foreign Affairs and contacts local NGOs for their welfare during their imprisonment in Bangladesh.

Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare is implementing Centrally Sponsored Schemes, including for development of inland fisheries, aquaculture, marine fisheries that are implemented through the State Governments. These are, inter alia, aimed at promoting livelihood for Indian fishermen in a safe, secure and sustainable environment within India.

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## ANNEXURE

## Statement showing year-wise and country-wise apprehension of Indian fishermen and their release

<b>Bangladesh</b>					
Year	No. of fishermen imprisoned / attacked	No. of boats detained	Domicile-wise	No. of Indian fishermen released	No. of boats released
2015	340	27	West Bengal	217	19
2016	10	1	West Bengal	191	15
2017	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
2018 (as of 09.03.18)	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL

<b>Iran</b>					
Year	No. of fishermen imprisoned / attacked	No. of boats detained	Domicile-wise	No. of Indian fishermen released	No. of boats released
2015	49	NA	Tamil Nadu Kerala	Nil	NA
2016	109	Nil	Tamil Nadu Kerala Gujarat	87	NA
2017	84	Nil	NA	107	NA
2018 (as of 09.03.18)	10	Nil	Tamil Nadu Gujarat	15	NA

<b>Pakistan</b>					
Year	No. of fishermen imprisoned / attacked	No. of boats detained	Domicile-wise	No. of Indian fishermen released	No. of boats released
2015	366	NA	NA	NA	NA
2016	260	NA	NA	NA	NA
2017	494	NA	NA	NA	NA

2018(as of 09.03.18)	253	NA	Gujarat – 154 Uttar Pradesh – 18 Daman & Diu – 5 West Bengal – 4 Andhra Pradesh – 1 Others – 71	NA	NA
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**Qatar**

Year	No. of fishermen imprisoned / attacked	No. of boats detained	Domicile-wise	No. of Indian fishermen released	No. of boats released
2015	39	NA	Tamil Nadu	39	NA
2016	30	NA	Tamil Nadu	30	NA
2017	29	NA	Tamil Nadu	29	NA
2018 (as of 09.03.18)	10	NA	Tamil Nadu	10	NA

**Sri Lanka**

Year	No. of fishermen imprisoned / attacked	No. of boats detained	Domicile-wise	No. of Indian fishermen released	No. of boats released
2015	454	71	NA	375	87 (of 2014)
2016	290	NA	NA	333	NA
2017	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
2018 (as of 09.03.18)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

**United Kingdom**

Year	No. of fishermen imprisoned / attacked	No. of boats detained	Domicile-wise	No. of Indian fishermen released	No. of boats released
2015	23	NA	NA	23	NA
2016	19	NA	NA	19	NA
2017	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
2018 (as of 9.03.18)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

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