

**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.646**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 06.02.2019

**ATTACK ON INDIAN FISHERMEN BY SRI LANKA**

646. K. PARASURAMAN:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has recently received any representations regarding continuous attacks by Sri Lanka on Indian fishermen and capture of their properties;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the total number of attacks on Indian fishermen by Sri Lanka reported during the last three years; and
- (c) the details of actions taken by the government to protect Indian fishermen in high sea?

**ANSWER**

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

(a) & (b) Government has received letters from the State Governments of Tamil Nadu and Puducherry and also from fishermen associations regarding alleged attacks on Indian fishermen and confiscation of their boats by Sri Lanka Navy. During the past three years there have been occasions when the arrested Indian fishermen have complained of assault by Sri Lanka Navy.

(c) The fishermen issues have been raised at the highest level, including by the Prime Minister with the Sri Lankan Prime Minister during the latter's visit to India in October 2018. 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. A total of 1915 fishermen and 380 boats have been released since May 2014.

Following the 2+2 initiative in November 2016 when the Foreign and Fisheries Ministers of the two countries met in New Delhi, a bilateral Joint Working Group mechanism and meeting of the Ministers for Fisheries of the two countries were institutionalized to address the fishermen issues with Sri Lanka. Government continues to take various measures to diversify our fishermen from the ecologically unsustainable method of bottom trawling to deep sea fishing using tuna long-liners. Government has initiated the "Assistance for Deep Sea Fishing" scheme to support the fishermen in this pursuit. Prime Minister had unveiled the scheme in the Palk Bay area in July 2017. Several batches of fishermen have been trained so far in deep-sea fishing, long-lining and onboard handling and processing of fish.

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