

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-2956**  
ANSWERED ON- 17/03/2023

**SAILORS DETAINED ABROAD**

2956. SHRI HIBI EDEN  
SHRIMATI SARMISTHA SETHI

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

(a) the total number of sailors detained abroad during the last three years, year-wise and country-wise along with the sailors released during the said period and present status of these detainees;

(b) whether the Government is in touch with various authorities for the release of 16 Indian sailors including three from Kerala detained in Nigeria and if so, the details thereof including the replies received from Nigerian authorities; and

(c) the steps taken/being taken by the Government for early release of the said persons from foreign prisons?

**ANSWER**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN)

(a) The information available with the Ministry is placed at Annexure.

(b) The Government is in regular touch with the concerned Nigerian authorities for early release of 16 Indian sailors including three from Kerala. The High Commission of India in Abuja is also engaged with the concerned shipping company's lawyers representing the sailors. Consular access was granted on the request of High Commission during which the Indian High Commissioner had interacted with the seafarers and ascertained their well-being.

The matter is sub-judice in Nigeria. However, all efforts are being made for early release of the Indian sailors. The High Commissioner has had interactions with all the key stakeholders including Nigerian Foreign Minister, Minister of Justice, Attorney General, Chief of Naval Staff of Nigerian Navy, senior officers of Ministry of Defence, among others, to expedite the judicial process. The next date of Court hearing is on 24 March 2023.

(c) The Government attaches highest priority to the safety, security and well-being of Indians abroad. As soon as any case of Indian sailor(s) being detained abroad is reported, the Indian Mission/Post concerned immediately takes up the matter with local Foreign office with a request to advise the concerned law enforcement agencies to expedite the investigation/trial as also early release/deportation of the sailor(s). Indian Missions/Posts abroad also obtain consular access to visit the detained Indians regularly and follow up their cases with Courts, jails and public prosecution offices and other concerned agencies. Apart from extending all possible consular assistance, Missions/Posts abroad also use Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) to provide financial assistance to distressed Indian nationals for legal aid as well as travel documents / air tickets on a means tested basis in deserving cases.

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## Lok Sabha FAQ No. 2956 - Sailors Detained Abroad

| S.No. | Country           | Number of Indian sailors detained in last 3 years |      |      | Number of Indian sailors released in last 3 years |      |  | Number of Indian sailors in detention at present |
|-------|-------------------|---|------|------|---|------|--|--|
|       |                   | 2020  | 2021 | 2022 | 2020  | 2021 | 2022                                       |  |
| 1     | Equatorial Guinea | 0   | 0    | 16   | 0   | 0    | All 16 sailors were handed over to Nigeria | 0  |
| 2     | China             | 22  | 0    | 0    | 17  | 0    | 0  | 5  |
| 3     | Ivory Coast       | 0   | 2    | 0    | 0   | 0    | 0  | 2  |
| 4     | Egypt             | 0   | 25   | 0    | 0   | 25   | 0  | 0  |
| 5     | Indonesia         | 0   | 67   | 17   | 0   | 67   | 17   | 0  |
| 6     | Iran              | 18  | 9    | 14   | 0   | 23   | 9  | 10   |
| 7     | Italy             | 0   | 0    | 3    | 0   | 0    | 0  | 3  |
| 8     | Mauritius         | 6   | 0    | 0    | 0   | 3    | 0  | 3  |
| 9     | Nigeria           | 5   | 7    | 16   | 16  | 1    | 6  | 16   |
| 10    | Qatar             | 0   | 1    | 0    | 0   | 0    | 1  | 0  |
| 11    | Senegal           | 0   | 4    | 0    | 0   | 0    | 0  | 4  |
| 12    | Trinidad & Tobago | 17  | 0    | 0    | 15  | 0    | 0  | 2  |
| 13    | Tanzania          | 0   | 0    | 1    | 0   | 0    | 1  | 0  |
| 14    | Yemen             | 0   | 0    | 7    | 0   | 0    | 7  | 0  |

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