

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-3898**  
ANSWERED ON- 11/08/2023

**DETAINED INDIAN CITIZENS**

†3898. SHRI ARUN KUMAR SAGAR

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

- (a) whether India and Pakistan have freed each other's prisoners during the last three years and till date;
- (b) if so, the number of prisoners freed by each country as on date, category and year-wise;
- (c) whether talks have been held for release of remaining prisoners, if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether Pakistan has detained some Indian citizens, if so, the number of such Indian citizens detained by Pakistan as on date; and
- (e) the effective steps taken by the Government till date to free the said prisoners?

**ANSWER**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN)

(a to e) As per the India-Pakistan 'Agreement on Consular Access' signed on 21 May 2008, lists of prisoners of each country, lodged in the jails of the other, are exchanged on 1 January and 1 July of every year. According to the lists exchanged on 1 July 2023, Pakistan has acknowledged the custody of 266 fishermen and 42 civilian prisoners who are Indian or are believed-to-be-Indian. There are 343 civilian prisoners and 74 fishermen in Indian custody who are Pakistani or are believed-to-be-Pakistani.

Government attaches the highest priority to the welfare, safety and security of Indian prisoners in Pakistani custody. As soon as cases of apprehension of Indian nationals by Pakistan are reported, immediate steps are taken by the Indian Mission in Islamabad towards seeking Consular Access from the Government of Pakistan. During Consular Access, officials from the High Commission of India visit the Indian prisoners in Pakistani jails to ascertain their well-being and distribute daily-use welfare items. All possible assistance, including legal assistance, is extended to the Indian prisoners for their early release and repatriation.

The Government has called for early release and repatriation of civilian prisoners, and fishermen along with their boats, from Pakistan's custody.

Year-wise and country-wise details of prisoners released from each other's custody in the last three years is tabulated below:

<b>Country</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023 (till date)</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Year</b>					
<b>Indian prisoners released by Pakistan</b>	30	30	45	403	<b>508</b>
<b>Pakistani prisoners released by India</b>	34	23	27	59	<b>143</b>

As a result of sustained efforts by the Government, 508 Indian prisoners have been repatriated from Pakistan in the last three years. Similarly, India has repatriated 143 Pakistani prisoners in the last three years.

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