

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

**LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION No.1011  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 22.07.2022**

**CUSTODY OF FISHERMEN IN FOREIGN JAILS**

**1011. SHRI KURUVA GORANTLA MADHAV:  
SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA VISWANATH:  
SHRI LAVU SRI KRISHNA DEVARAYALU:  
SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI:**

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of Indian fishermen imprisoned in foreign prisons during last three years, year-wise;
- (b) the cases filed in foreign courts against them during the said period;
- (c) the details of fishermen released during the said period; and
- (d) the steps taken by the Government for the release of those still imprisoned in foreign jails?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
[SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN]

(a) As per the information available with the Ministry, the number of Indian fishermen imprisoned in foreign prisons was 504 (in 2019), 519 (in 2020) and 779 (in 2021). However, due to strong privacy laws prevailing in many countries, the local authorities do not share information on prisoners unless the person concerned consents to the disclosure of such information. Even countries which share information do not generally provide detailed information about the foreigners imprisoned.

(b) & (c) Indian fishermen are generally apprehended by countries on charges of fishing in their territorial waters and cases are filed related to illegal fishing, trespassing, crossing the international maritime boundary line illegally, etc under the respective Acts of the particular countries. The length of time Indian fishermen spend under trial in foreign jails and terms of imprisonment differs from country to country and some countries release/deport the arrested/imprisoned fishermen regularly without informing the Indian Missions/Posts about it.

(d) Government attaches high priority to the safety, security and welfare of Indian fishermen. Our Missions and Posts abroad extend all possible help and assistance like providing food, clothing, personal hygiene products, etc. to the imprisoned Indian fishermen when they are detained by local police/immigration authorities or put in jails. After

confirmation of nationality of such persons, our Missions and Posts also facilitate their early release and repatriation to India. Consular Officers of Missions/Posts make regular visits to local jails and detention centers to ascertain the condition of Indian fishermen lodged there and provide requisite help and support, including legal assistance in deserving cases.

Missions/ Posts abroad also approach the law enforcement agencies to complete the investigation and judicial proceedings at the earliest possible. The focus of the Government's efforts is on securing the early release of fishermen.

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