

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-1884
ANSWERED ON- 02/08/2024
MUTUAL RELEASE OF PRISONERS

†1884. SHRI BHAUSAHEB RAJARAM WAKCHAURE

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

(a) whether India and Pakistan have released prisoners belonging to each country during the last three years, till date;

(b) if so, the prisoners freed by each country as on date, category-wise and year-wise;

(c) whether any talks have been held to free the remaining prisoners and if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether Pakistan has detained Indian citizens and if so, the number of Indian citizens under detention as on date; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government so far to free the said prisoners?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a) Yes.

(b) Year-wise and category-wise details of release of Indian and Pakistani fishermen in each other's custody, in the last three years, is tabulated below:

Year	Indian prisoners		Pakistani prisoners	
	Number of fishermen released by Pakistan	Number of civilian prisoners released by Pakistan	Number of fishermen released by India	Number of civilian prisoners released by India
2021	20	10	15	8
2022	40	5	6	21
2023	478	9	27	35
2024 (till date)	Nil	4	Nil	4
Total	538	28	48	68

(c) As per the India-Pakistan 'Agreement on Consular Access' signed on 21 May 2008, lists of civilian prisoners and fishermen of each country, lodged in the jails of the other, are exchanged on 1 January and 1 July of every year. The matter of early release and repatriation of Indian prisoners on humanitarian and livelihood grounds is regularly raised with the Government of Pakistan through diplomatic channels.

(d) According to the lists exchanged on 1 July 2024, Pakistan has acknowledged the custody of 211 fishermen and 43 civilian prisoners who are Indian or are believed to be Indian.

(e) Government of India attaches the highest priority to the welfare, safety and security of Indian prisoners. As soon as cases of apprehension of Indian prisoners by Pakistan are reported, immediate steps are taken by the Indian

Mission in Islamabad towards seeking consular access from the Pakistan Government. 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.
