

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

**MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

**LOK SABHA**

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO- 945**

**ANSWERED ON - 24/07/2026**

**INDIAN FISHERMEN DETAINED ABROAD**

**945. SHRI MANICKAM TAGORE B:**

**SHRI JAI PRAKASH:**

**SHRI VIJAYAKUMAR ALIAS VIJAY VASANTH:**

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

**(a) the number of Indian fishermen presently lodged in foreign prisons and those repatriated during last three years, country/year-wise;**

**(b) whether cases of prolonged detention without trial have been reported, if so, the details thereof, country-wise including Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Arab Countries;**

**(c) whether regular diplomatic talks address humanitarian concerns of detained fishermen, if so, the details thereof including recent discussions held in this regard and if not, the reasons therefor;**

**(d) whether Standard Operating Procedures and bilateral agreements exist for early identification and release of Indian fishermen, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor alongwith the further diplomatic initiatives to ensure their early release and prevent repeated arrests in the said countries; and**

**(e) whether rehabilitation measures are provided to fishermen after their release and return to India, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?**

## **ANSWER**

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

**(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)**

**(a) & (b) As per information available with the Ministry, the country-wise list on the number of Indian fishermen presently lodged in foreign prisons is placed at Annexure A and the country-wise list on the**

**number of Indian fishermen repatriated during last three years is placed at Annexure B. However, no case of prolonged detention without trial has been reported to the Ministry.**

**(c) to (e) The Government attaches high priority to the safety, security and welfare of Indian fishermen. The Government has been taking up all fishermen related issues, including the early release and repatriation of Indian fishermen and boats, with respective governments through diplomatic channels, various official interactions and established bilateral mechanisms. In all interactions, it is conveyed that the issues related to fishermen may be considered purely on humanitarian and livelihood grounds and that the use of force should be avoided in all circumstances. Further, Indian Missions/Posts in the respective countries make regular visits to local jails and detention centers to ascertain the condition of Indian fishermen and provide requisite help and support, including legal assistance. The Missions also provide necessary travel documents to facilitate repatriation of released fishermen to India.**

**Under the provisions of the Agreement on Consular Access signed between India and Pakistan on 21 May 2008, India and Pakistan exchange, through diplomatic channels simultaneously in New Delhi and Islamabad, the lists of civil prisoners and fishermen in each other's custody, every year on 1 January and on 1 July. All possible assistance is extended to the Indian fishermen for their early release and repatriation, along with the release of their boats. The issue is consistently raised with the Government of Pakistan underlining that the issue may be considered purely on humanitarian and livelihood grounds.**

**With respect to Sri Lanka, the issues related to fishermen are also dealt with through bilateral institutional mechanisms such as the regular meetings of the Joint Working Group (JWG) on Fisheries, which includes representatives from the Government of Tamil Nadu.**

**The Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Government of India runs various flagship programs for the welfare of fishermen. State Governments also run various relief**

**schemes to provide financial assistance to the family members of the detained fishermen.**

**ANNEXURE – A**

| <b>Country Name</b> | <b>Number of Indian fishermen presently lodged in<br/>foreign prisons</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Kuwait</b>       | <b>04</b>                                                                 |
| <b>Pakistan</b>     | <b>198</b>                                                                |
| <b>Saudi Arabia</b> | <b>12</b>                                                                 |
| <b>Sri Lanka</b>    | <b>24</b>                                                                 |

**ANNEXURE – B****Number of Indian fishermen repatriated, year-wise**

| <b>Country Name</b> | <b>2023</b> | <b>2024</b> | <b>2025</b> |
|---------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>Bangladesh</b>   | <b>0</b>    | <b>95</b>   | <b>48</b>   |
| <b>Indonesia</b>    | <b>7</b>    | <b>0</b>    | <b>0</b>    |
| <b>Iran</b>         | <b>21</b>   | <b>0</b>    | <b>2</b>    |
| <b>Kenya</b>        | <b>0</b>    | <b>0</b>    | <b>6</b>    |
| <b>Maldives</b>     | <b>12</b>   | <b>10</b>   | <b>0</b>    |
| <b>Pakistan</b>     | <b>478</b>  | <b>0</b>    | <b>22</b>   |
| <b>Qatar</b>        | <b>31</b>   | <b>29</b>   | <b>2</b>    |
| <b>Sri Lanka</b>    | <b>243</b>  | <b>477</b>  | <b>390</b>  |

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