

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO-154
ANSWERED ON-17.07.2014

Release of Indian fishermen caught by Pakistan and Sri Lanka

154 . Shri Chunibhai Kanjibhai Gohel

- (a) whether the Indian Government succeeded in releasing of some fishermen from Pakistan and Sri Lankan jails on 26th June, 2014;
- (b) the number of fishermen who are still in Pakistan and Sri Lankan jails; and
- (c) by when they would be released by both the nations?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
(SHRIMATI SUSHMA SAWARAJ)

(a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) to (c) OF RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 154 REGARDING “RELEASE OF INDIAN FISHERMEN CAUGHT BY PAKISTAN AND SRI LANKA” FOR ANSWER ON 17.07.2014

On 26 May 2014, just prior to the visit of Prime Minister of Pakistan Nawaz Sharif to India, Government of Pakistan released 150 Indian fishermen. In the first six months of the current year (1st January-12th July) Government of Sri Lanka has released 532 Indian fishermen.

Presently, 249 fishermen believed to be Indian continue to remain lodged in jails in Pakistan (as on 1 July 2014), while 4 Indian fishermen are in the custody of the Sri Lankan authorities (as on 12 July 2014).

Government continuously monitors the status of all Indian prisoners and Indian fishermen in Pakistani jails and regularly takes up the issue of their early release and repatriation with the Pakistan authorities. There is also an India-Pakistan Judicial Committee that visits the jails of both countries regularly to ensure the welfare and early release and repatriation of prisoners and fishermen who have completed their sentences. In respect of Sri Lanka, in 2004 an India-Sri Lanka Joint Working Group (JWG) was established which has been dealing with all issues related to straying Indian fishermen in Sri Lankan waters, including working out the modalities for prevention of use of force against them and securing early release of their confiscated boats.

Governments will continue to take all the necessary steps required to ensure the early release and repatriation of Indian fishermen currently being

held in the custody of Pakistan and Sri Lankan authorities.
