



Ministry of External Affairs

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Internal Stakeholders Meeting on the India-Sri Lanka Fishermen Issues

July 29, 2016

External Affairs Minister Chaired a meeting of Internal Stakeholders earlier today afternoon (July 29, 2016) to discuss the way forward towards a permanent solution to the fishermen issue between India and Sri Lanka. The Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare/ Fisheries co-Chaired the meeting. Minister of State for Transport, Highways and Shipping, Shri Radha Krishnan was also present at the meeting.

The meeting included representatives of the State Governments of Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Odisha and 13 representatives from the Fishermen Association of Tamil Nadu as also 5 representatives from the Fishermen Association of Puducherry, besides the Coast Guard, Senior Officials from the Ministries of Agriculture/ Department of Animal Husbandry/ Dairying & Fisheries, Home Affairs, Defence, External Affairs, the Indian Navy and PMO.

The meeting was held in the context of the invitation to the Minister of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development of Sri Lanka to visit India in August for discussions. The 9th India-Sri Lanka Joint Commission Meeting on February 5, 2016 had agreed on the need to work out a permanent solution to the fishermen issue during a visit by the Minister of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Development of Sri Lanka to India.

The release of 77 Indian fishermen on July 25-26, 2016 and their repatriation to India on July 27, 2016 set the immediate backdrop to the meeting.

The discussions between Stakeholders on the Indian side focussed on different aspects requiring attention, including the livelihood concerns of Indian fishermen and introduction of sustainable fishing practices.

All Stakeholders agreed with External Affairs Minister that it was important to resolve the issues quickly. There was consensus that the various measures proposed by the External Affairs Minister would help efforts towards a permanent resolution of the issue. It was agreed that Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare/ Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries would take action on specific measures suggested to meet livelihood concerns of Indian fishermen. There was agreement amongst all Stakeholders that practical and pragmatic solutions needed to be pursued so that fishermen on both sides can pursue their livelihood in a safe, secure and sustainable manner.

New Delhi
July 29, 2016

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Working hours at Headquarters 9:00 A.M. To 5:30 P.M.