



Ministry of External Affairs

Government of India

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Q NO.817 NEGOTIATION ON FISHERMEN WITH SRI LANKA

March 03, 2016

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.817
TO BE ANSWERED ON 03.03.2016

NEGOTIATION ON FISHERMEN WITH SRI LANKA

817. DR. E. M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has negotiated with Sri Lanka to customarily allow the fishermen from Tamil Nadu to use the Sri Lankan waters further affirmed by the Memorandum of Understanding between two countries which has settled in three round talks of both countries' fishermen and officials taken place from 2010 to 2014; and

(b) if so, the barriers in bringing back 55 boats seized by Sri Lanka and stopping recurring arrests of Indian fishermen by Sri Lanka?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
[GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD)]

(a) & (b) Government attaches the highest importance to the safety, security and welfare of Indian fishermen. As soon as reports of apprehension of Indian fishermen by Sri Lankan authorities are received, Government, through diplomatic channels, immediately takes up the matter with Government of Sri Lanka to secure their early release and repatriation along with their vessels. The number of fishermen apprehended by Sri Lankan Navy in 2012 was 197, in 2013 it was 676, in 2014 it was 787 and in 2015 was 454. Due to efforts made, all these fishermen have been released and repatriated. Government remains engaged with the Government of Sri Lanka to secure the expeditious release and repatriation of 27 Indian fishermen and 79 vessels which are currently in Sri Lankan custody; India has 9 Sri Lankan fishermen and 13 boats in its custody.

Seven rounds of talks have been held between the Fishermen's Associations of India and Sri Lanka (May 2004, Apr 2010, Mar 2011, Jan 2012, Jan 2014, May 2014 and the last round at Chennai on Mar 24, 2015). However, no understanding was reached.



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