GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO: 213

ANSWERED ON:18.07.2018

Prisoners in Indian and Pakistani Jails

HARISH DWIVEDI

(a) whether India and Pakistan have exchanged the list of people who are languishing in their respective jails;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of the number of prisoners who have been released by both the countries during the last three years, years-wise and category-wise;

(d) whether both countries have any concrete proposal regarding release of prisoners; and

(e) if so, the time by which the modalities are likely to be made in this regard?

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRSbe pleased to state:-

ANSWER

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

(a) & (b) As per 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.

According to the lists exchanged on 1 July 2018, there were 108 Pakistan fishermen and 249 Pakistan civilian prisoners in India’s custody. Pakistan has acknowledged the custody of 418 fishermen and 53 civilian prisoners who are Indian or believed-to-be Indian in their jails. In addition, there is the issue of 83 Missing Indian Defence personnel, whose custody has not been acknowledged by Pakistan so far.

(c) The number of civilian prisoners and fishermen released in the last three years is as follows:

Details2015201620172018 (till date)Total
Indian civilian prisoners released by Pakistan427114
Indian fishermen released by Pakistan4484105081481514
Pakistan civilian prisoners released by India44106010124
Pakistan fishermen released by India1159310155

(d) & (e) The External Affairs Minister, in October 2017, suggested to the High Commissioner of Pakistan that the two sides could work together to resolve humanitarian issues related to elderly, women and mentally unsound prisoners in each other’s custody and consider their early release and repatriation. It was, inter alia, proposed to revive the mechanism of Joint Judicial Committee and that a team of Indian medical experts could be allowed to visit the mentally unsound prisoners with a view to facilitate their nationality verification and subsequent repatriation. Pakistan responded positively on 7 March 2018.

India has shared the details of the medical experts team and the reconstituted Joint Judicial Committee to Pakistan with a request to organise their visit. Pakistan has not responded so far.