GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO: 462

ANSWERED ON:06.02.2019

Indian Fishermen in Pakistani Jails

DEVUSINH JESINGBHAI CHAUHAN

(a)whether Pakistan Marine Security Agency (PMSA) very often apprehends the Indian fishermen and their boats and if so, the details thereof;

(b)whether a large number of fishermen are lodged in Pakistani jails even after completing 22 months of their jail term and if so, the details thereof; and

(c)the steps taken by the Government to get all the fishermen and their boats released by Pakistani authorities?

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) to (c)According to the available information, 503 Indian fishermen are believed to be in Pakistan’s custody. According to the list shared on 1 January 2019, Pakistan has acknowledged the custody of 483 fishermen who are Indian or believed-to-be-Indian in their jails. These include fishermen who are in Pakistan for over 20 months. Besides, more than 1050 Indian fishing boats are believed to be in Pakistan’s custody. However, Pakistan has not acknowledged their custody so far.

The Government, upon receipt of reports of apprehensions of the Indian fishermen, immediately takes up the matter with Pakistan through diplomatic channels and seeks consular access and their early release and repatriation, along with boats. Government’s persistent efforts have succeeded in securing release and repatriation of 1749 Indian prisoners, including 1725 fishermen along with 57 boats from Pakistan’s custody since 2014. This include 179 Indian prisoners and fishermen who were repatriated from Pakistan in 2018.

The Government has asked Pakistan to provide consular access as also early release and repatriation of the remaining Indian prisoners and fishermen along with their boats in Pakistan’s custody.

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