

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1464
ANSWERED ON:30.07.2003
ILLEGAL DETENTION OF INDIAN FISHERMEN
P. RAJENDRAN

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the incidents of illegal detention of Indian fishermen by Sri Lanka are on the increase;
- (b) if so, the steps taken to tackle this problem and ensure the safety of Indian fishermen; and
- (c) the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH)

(a) The number of Indian fishermen apprehended has increased in the last three years from 25 in 2000, 85 in 2001, 116 in 2002 and 208 upto July 16, 2003. The Indian fishermen are apprehended when they happen to stray into Sri Lankan waters, either by the Sri Lankan Navy or fishermen's associations. Therefore, the detentions are not illegal. The apprehended fishermen are treated humanely and repatriated quickly. The Indian High Commission in Colombo, the Indian Coast Guard, the Indian Navy and the Tamil Nadu Government facilitate their return in cooperation with the Sri Lankan Government and its agencies.

(b & c) Does not arise.