

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2163  
ANSWERED ON:02.12.2009  
FISHERMEN IN PAKISTANI JAILS  
Pratapsinh Shri Chauhan Prabhatsinh,Veljibhai Jat Poonamben

**Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:**

- (a) the progress so far made towards the release of Indian fishermen and their fishing boats from the Pakistani jails;
- (b) the details of the fishermen and boats released till date during the current year since January, State-wise including Gujarat; and
- (c) the outcome of the Judicial Committee which was set-up to ensure the expeditious release of fishermen and fishing boats?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S.M. KRISHNA)

(a) & (b) According to available information, 593 Indian fishermen and 426 Indian boats are in Pakistani custody. 277 Indian fishermen were given consular access on 11-12 June 2009, bringing the number of fishermen granted consular access to 553. Pakistan had last released 99 Indian fishermen on 26 November 2008. Efforts are being made to secure release of the remaining Indian fishermen and their boats.

(c) The decision to form an India-Pakistan Judicial Committee on Prisoners was taken during EAM's visit to Pakistan in January 2007, and the first meeting of the Committee was held on 26 February 2008. The Committee made recommendations to the two Governments, which inter alia, included immediate release of and consular access to fishermen, and exchange of a consolidated list of nationals in each other's jails. The Committee visited jails in Pakistan in June 2008 and jails in India in August 2008. It also held its meetings during these visits. In its last meeting held in India in August 2008, the Committee again recommended, inter alia, immediate release and repatriation of all prisoners to their respective countries who had completed their sentences and whose nationality had been confirmed. Pakistan released 34 Indian fishermen in August 2008, and another 99 fishermen in November 2008. India had released 14 Pakistani fishermen in its jails in May 2008 in pursuance of the Committee's recommendations.