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Title: Regarding frequent attacks by Srilankan Navy on fishermen from Tamil Nadu.

SHRI C. RAJENDRAN (CHENNAI SOUTH): Thank you, Chairman, Sir. The attacks on the Indian Tamil fishermen by the Sri Lankan Navy have become a regular feature, and it has become a perennial problem. ...(*Interruptions*) The Government of India should mediate with the Sri Lankan authorities to find out a permanent solution to this problem. ...(*Interruptions*)

On 3rd February morning, the Sri Lankan Navy captured 16 fishermen belonging to Tuticorin area who were fishing in the Gulf of Mannar. They were captured and taken to Sri Lanka; and produced before a court, which sentenced them to 15-days imprisonment. The families of the arrested fishermen had appealed to the State Government of Tamil Nadu for their release and safe return.

Secondly, last week, Indian fishermen were fired at; they were injured; and admitted in a hospital in Chennai. These types of attacks by Sri Lankan Navy are going on unabated. I wonder what our Indian Navy is doing. It has failed completely in protecting the lives of the Indian Tamil fishermen. The poor fishermen do not have any other employment opportunity than doing traditional fishing.

Hence, as was appealed by the hon. Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Dr. Amma, I request the Indian Government to immediately discuss this vexed issue with the Sri Lankan authorities so that they do not continue their attacks on the Indian fishermen and also release those 16 arrested fishermen immediately.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri P. Karunakaran is permitted to associate himself with the issue raised by Shri C. Rajendran just now. Next is Shri P. Karunakaran.

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN : Sir, kindly permit me to speak from here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.