

**Arrest of fishermen by neighbouring countries**

951. DR. CHANDAN MITRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has broached the issue of frequent arrest of Indian fishermen by certain neighbouring countries including Sri Lanka and Pakistan with concerned Governments;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with its outcome; and

(c) the concrete steps taken by Government to lay down a time bound action plan to achieve a long term and permanent solution of the problem and also to put in place a strong and robust diplomatic reasons to the issue?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (GENERAL (RETD.) V.K. SINGH): (a) to (c) Government attaches the highest importance to the safety, security and welfare of Indian fishermen. As soon as the reports of apprehension of Indian fishermen are received, Government, through diplomatic channels, immediately takes up with the Governments concerned the issue of their expeditious release and repatriation. The matter has also been taken up during bilateral meetings with concerned governments at various levels. Government has also emphasized upon the need to ensure humane treatment and that there should be no resort to violence against fishermen under any circumstances. Government remains engaged with the concerned Governments with a view to ensuring that fishermen on both sides can continue to pursue their livelihood in a safe, secure and sustainable manner.

As of 11 July 2014, the details of Indian fishermen who have been detained and released by countries, including Sri Lanka and Pakistan, since 2012 are as follows:

Country	2012	2013	2014 as on (11.07.14)
Sri Lanka	197- all released	676- all released	536-detained 532-released
Bangladesh	72- all released	73- all released	15- all released
Pakistan	250- detained 667-released	349-detained 390-released	249-detained 150-released
Maldives	11- all released	Nil	Nil
Qatar	44- all released	59- all released	13- all released