

2016, 392 fishermen are in Pakistani jails who are Indian or believed-to-be Indian. State-wise breakup is not available since consular access and nationality verification of all prisoners have not taken place. Government has asked Pakistani authorities to provide early consular access to the remaining fishermen who are believed-to-be Indian. As per the list exchanged on 1st July, 2016, 37 Pakistani fishermen are in Indian jails.

Government regularly takes up with the Pakistani authorities the issue of early release and repatriation of all Indian prisoners as well as providing them regular consular access. Government of India also, on a continuing basis, monitors the status of all Indian prisoners in Pakistani jails. Due to Government's efforts, 190 Indian fishermen have been released by Pakistan in 2016, so far. In 2015, 335 Indian fishermen were released by Pakistani authorities.

Talks with Pakistan after visit of JIT to Pathankot

2807. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has entered into any talks, formal or other-wise, with Pakistan after the visit of Pakistan Joint Investigation Team (JIT) to Pathankot, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether it was agreed by Pakistan to allow the National Investigation Agency (NIA) to visit Pakistan to investigate the Pathankot attack incident; and

(c) whether any information has been received from Pakistan regarding the visit of NIA team to Pakistan for the above mentioned probe, if so, when would the NIA team visit Pakistan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI M. J. AKBAR): (a) to (c) The Government of Pakistan constituted a Joint Investigation Team (JIT) on 25th February, 2016 under Section 19(I) of its Anti Terrorism Act, 1997, to conduct investigation into the terrorist attack on Pathankot Air Force base, in furtherance to an FIR registered at Police Station Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD), Gujranwala in Pakistan. The interaction of JIT with National Investigation Agency (NIA) was permitted in accordance with the Terms of Reference mutually agreed on the basis of reciprocity. The exercise was aimed at providing evidence to the JIT so that all those guilty of Pathankot attack could be prosecuted effectively in Pakistan. The NIA briefed the JIT on investigations carried out in the Pathankot Airbase terror attack. The Pakistan JIT, in turn, shared with NIA the results of investigations carried out by them in Pakistan. Subsequently, Government conveyed

to Pakistan when the Foreign Secretaries of the two countries met on the sidelines of the Senior Officials Meeting of the 'Heart of Asia Process' in New Delhi on 26th April, 2016 the need for early and visible progress in the investigation in Pakistan regarding the Pathankot Airbase terrorist attack and reviewing the progress in the investigation, including through a visit by NIA. The Government remains engaged with the Government of Pakistan in this regard.

Failure of Foreign Secretary level talks between India and Pakistan

2808. SHRI A. K. SELVARAJ: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the much anticipated talks between the India and Pakistan Foreign Secretaries failed to make headway on the comprehensive bilateral dialogues with both sides trading allegations, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether it is also a fact that India has made clear to Pakistan that Pakistan cannot be in denial on the impact of terrorism on the bilateral relationship; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that India told Pakistan that terrorist groups based in Pakistan targeting India must not be allowed to operate with impunity, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI M. J. AKBAR): (a) On 09th December, 2015, following discussions between External Affairs Minister and Pakistan's leadership, the two sides agreed on a comprehensive bilateral dialogue to address all outstanding issues bilaterally and through peaceful means. The Foreign Secretaries were directed to work out the modalities and schedule of the meetings under the Dialogue. However, in the wake of Pathankot airbase terrorist attack on 2nd January, 2016, their meeting to discuss modalities of the dialogue did not take place. Progress by Pakistan in Pathankot airbase attack investigation to bring its perpetrators to justice and putting an end to anti-India terrorism and violence emanating from the territories under its control would allow Pakistan to move forward in its ties with India.

(b) and (c) When Pakistan's Foreign Secretary visited New Delhi for the Senior Officials Meeting of the 'Heart of Asia Process' for regional cooperation on Afghanistan in New Delhi on April 26, 2016, the two Foreign Secretaries met on the sidelines. It was clearly conveyed to Pakistan that it cannot be in denial about the impact of terrorism on bilateral relationship. Pakistan was also advised to ensure that terrorist groups based in Pakistan targeting India must not be allowed to operate with impunity.