

Revival of joint judicial committee on prisoners with Pakistan

1195. SHRI RIPUN BORA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to revive the joint judicial committee on prisoners with the Pakistan Government;

(b) if so, details of the proposal and policy of the Pakistan's Government thereon;

(c) the details of the result of said committee from 2008-2014 and repatriation process since last two years; and

(d) the present status and the revival plans of the joint committee?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI M. J. AKBAR): (a) to (d) The 'India-Pakistan Judicial Committee on Prisoners' comprising retired High Court Judges from both sides to recommend steps for humane treatment of prisoners and fishermen and their expeditious release was set up in 2008 by the Governments of India and Pakistan. The Committee, which is hosted by the two countries on an alternating basis, has had seven meetings so far, the last convened by India from 25-30 October 2013. The next visit is to be hosted by Pakistan.

During the meeting of the Foreign Secretaries of the two countries on the side-lines of 'Heart of Asia-Senior Officials Meeting' in New Delhi on 26th April 2016, India suggested that both sides should take steps to address humanitarian matters, including scheduling next visits by the Judicial Committee.

The details of the repatriation of Indian prisoners in Pakistani jails have been tabulated below:

Category	2014	2015	2016 (as on date)
Fishermen	185	448	190
Civil Prisoners	06	05	02

In 2016, India has released 09 Pakistani fishermen and 03 civil prisoners so far. In 2015, 115 Pakistani fishermen and 44 Pakistani civil prisoners were released.

Nelson Mandela Chair

1196. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is no taker for Nelson Mandela Chair funded by the Ministry of External Affairs; and

(b) if so, details thereof and reasons therefor, and the steps taken/being taken to correct the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI M. J. AKBAR): (a) Presently, this Chair is vacant and selection is under process.

(b) As per existing practice, the Council sought nominations for Nelson Mandela Chair in Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) from our Missions in Africa for the academic year 2015-16. Nominations are received both in ICCR and JNU. Those received in ICCR are forwarded to JNU, which is responsible for selecting the candidate. JNU had selected Prof. Percyslage Chigora from Midland State University, Zimbabwe for the said Chair for academic year 2015-16. However, he could not join due to non favourable leave conditions in his parent University, reason why the Chair was vacant. For the academic year 2016-17, selection of the Chair is already in process.

Passport offices set up in country

†1197. SHRI PRAMOD TIWARI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of passport offices set-up in the country during each of the last three years, State-wise;

(b) the criteria fixed for setting up new regional passport offices in the country; and

(c) the details of the action plan for the modernization and expansion of the existing passport offices in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI M. J. AKBAR): (a) There are 37 Passport Offices and 89 Passport Seva Kendras (PSKs) working as extended arms of the Passport Offices across the country. A list of Passport Offices along with PSKs is given in the Statement (*See below*). 12 of these Passport Seva Kendras were set up during the last three years at the following places:

Sl. No.	Location of PSK	State/UT
1.	Karimnagar	Telangana
2.	Shillong	Meghalaya
3.	Imphal	Manipur
4.	Gangtok	Sikkim

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.