

1	2	3	4
	Tamil Nadu	5	5
	Telangana	10	10
	TOTAL	30	30
2018	@ Andhra Pradesh	4	4
	Delhi	1	1
	Goa	1	1
	Kerala	3	3
	Telangana	1	1
	Tamil Nadu	2	2
	Uttar Pradesh	3	3
	TOTAL	15	15

@ upto 30th November, 2018.

Fishermen in Pakistan's jails

†2420. SHRI RAM NATH THAKUR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indian citizens and fishermen imprisoned in the jails of Pakistan and since when they have been imprisoned;

(b) whether any financial or other assistance has been provided by Government, to the family of such persons, and

(c) the action taken by Government for getting these people released?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH]: (a) As per India-Pakistan 'Agreement on Consular Access' signed on 21 May 2008, lists of civilian prisoners and fishermen of each country lodged in the jails of the other are exchanged on 1 January and 1 July of every year. According to the lists exchanged on 1 January 2019, Pakistan has acknowledged the custody of 483 fishermen and 54 civilian prisoners who are Indian or believed-to-

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

be Indian in their jails. In addition, there is the issue of 83 missing Indian defence personnel, whose custody has not been acknowledged by Pakistan, so far.

(b) The Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries (DADF) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has a non-plan scheme on Soft Loan Package for replacement of fishing vessels held captive in Pakistan. This scheme envisage one time replacement of a total of 326 fishing vessel held captive in Pakistan with a capital subsidy to the tune of 30% cost of each vessel subject to a ceiling of ₹ 6 lakhs. The Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) has been designated as an implementing agency. In addition, DADF has been providing insurance coverage through Group Accident Insurance Scheme for active fishermen.

(c) The External Affairs Minister, in October 2017, suggested to the High Commissioner of Pakistan that the two sides could work together to resolve humanitarian issues related to elderly, women and mentally unsound prisoners in each other's custody and consider their early release and repatriation. It was, *inter alia*, proposed to revive the mechanism of Joint Judicial Committee and that a team of Indian medical experts could be allowed to visit the mentally unsound prisoners with a view to facilitate their nationality verification and subsequent repatriation. Pakistan responded positively on 7 March 2018, India has already shared the details of the medical experts team and the re-constituted Joint Judicial Committee with Pakistan with the request to organise their visit. Pakistan has not responded so far.

Government continues to pursue the matter of early release and repatriation of all Indian prisoners, including civilians, fishermen with boats, and missing Indian defence personnel who are believed to be in Pakistan's custody. Government's persistent efforts have succeeded in securing release of 1749 Indian prisoners, including 1725 fishermen along with 57 boats from Pakistan's custody since 2014. This include 179 Indian prisoners and fishermen who have been repatriated from Pakistan in 2018, so far. The Government has asked Pakistan to provide consular access as also early release and repatriation of the remaining Indian prisoners and fishermen along with their boats in Pakistan's custody.

Passport offices in Madhya Pradesh

†2421. SHRI AJAY PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of districts of Madhya Pradesh where passport offices are functioning along with the criteria for opening such offices;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.