

# **Call to secure release of Pakistan fishermen in Indian jails before Eid**

Sunday 14 July 2013, by [Correspondent\(s\)](#) (Date first published: 12 July 2013).

THATTA, July 12: Families of 57 fishermen belonging to a village in Thatta who have been languishing in Indian jails for some time have appealed to the president and the prime Minister to help secure the release of their dear ones before Eidul Fitr.

These fishermen from Ali Muhammad Thamore village in Ladiyun union council along Shah Bunder taluka had gone to sea in their fishing vessels to catch fish but they were taken away on gunpoint by the Indian Naval personnel, say their family members.

“A comprehensive list of 57 captive Thatta fishermen has been acknowledged and signed by the secretary of the Ladiyun union council,” said Laung Mallah. His five sons are among the jailed fishermen.

“Our men had gone to sea in five fishing vessels including Al Razzaq and Al Faraz and were trawling in Pakistan’s territorial waters along the Kajor Creek a few nautical miles away from the controversial Sir Creek during the first week of January 2013. But Indian naval personnel violating Pakistan territorial waters came over and took away the Pakistani fishermen confiscating their vessels and catch,” said Sakina, a fisherwoman and a widow whose five sons are among the 57 jailed fishermen in Indian jails.

The families told the media that for a long time they were clueless about the whereabouts of their relatives however after lengthy efforts they found out that the fishermen were being kept in Kutch, Bhuj and Okha jails in the Indian state of Gujarat.

The relatives of these men, who are living in poor conditions attired in tattered clothes and were bare-footed, have appealed to the president and the prime minister to make efforts in releasing their dear ones from Indian jails before Eidul Fitr.

The chairman of Pakistan Fisher Folk Forum, Syed Muhammad Ali Shah, said that it was the 96-kilometre narrow stretch of water between India’s Gujarat state and Pakistan’s Sindh province that had been a contentious issue between the two nations for decades.

“Both India and Pakistan must address the issue and clear the territorial line of demarcation in the Arabian Sea as soon as possible so as to help minimize such incidents with Pakistan fishermen.

So far nearly 170 Pakistan fishermen are behind bars in Indian jails and their families are undergoing immense hardships in Pakistan,” said Mr Shah.

He added that regrettably the concerned government functionaries as well as semi-government representative body, the Fishermen Cooperative Society, had failed to solve the issues of fishermen.

DAWN’S CORRESPONDENT

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