

INDIA TO RELEASE 26 MORE PAKISTANI CIVIL PRISONERS

New Delhi, November 9,2005

Government of India will release 26 more Pakistani civil prisoners on the 18th of this month from the Wagah border. Nationalities of these prisoners have been verified by Pak High Commission and they have completed their sentences. States have been advised to bring them to the Wagah border on that day for handing them over to Pak authorities. The State-wise break up of these prisoners from where they would be released is as under:

States	No.
Delhi	2
Gujarat	11
Haryana	1
J&K	3
Maharashtra	1
Nagaland	1
Punjab	2
Rajasthan	5
Total	26

The decision follows the agreement between India and Pakistan during the second round of Home Secretary Level Talks between the two countries on *Terrorism and Drug Trafficking*. These talks were held in New Delhi on August 29-30, 2005 as part of the ongoing Composite Dialogue process. In these talks, it was agreed to provide consular access to all persons within three months of arrest and release prisoners immediately after completion of sentence and nationality verification. They had also agreed to release all fishermen and civilian prisoners who have completed their sentence and whose national status has been confirmed.

In pursuance of this decision, the Government of India released 97 Pak civil prisoners and 51 Pak fishermen on 12th September, 2005 across the Wagah Border. On the same day Government of Pakistan repatriated 371 Indian fishermen and 64 Indian prisoners lodged in various jails of Pakistan, to India. This repatriation of prisoners across the borders has generated goodwill on both sides.

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