

THE ordeal of the 42 Pakistani fishermen released from Indian jails this week exposes yet again the inhuman cost of political hostility in South Asia. The men returned home not as criminals but as survivors of cruelty no human being should endure. Their stories of beatings, burn injuries, forced labour and humiliation reveal the depths to which empathy has sunk in the shadow of conflict. One man was left half-paralysed by torture; others showed charcoal scars on their legs where hot irons were pressed against their skin. Their only 'crime' was to have drifted unknowingly across an invisible maritime line while pursuing their livelihood. While such detentions are a frequent occurrence, this time the suffering has been far worse. After the May flare-up between Pakistan and India, the detained fishermen became easy targets for vengeance — punished merely for their nationality. Such treatment is indefensible. Both nations are signatories to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, which requires prompt release of detained fishermen after the posting of a reasonable bond. Yet, year after year, men are plucked from their boats, languish in foreign jails for years, and are released only as gestures of goodwill. Their families, often living hand-to-mouth, are left destitute and traumatized. These fishermen are among the poorest of the poor, and their plight deserves urgent humanitarian attention, not political exploitation. The two governments must immediately establish a joint mechanism to prevent arrests for unintentional crossings, ensure humane treatment of detainees, and repatriate those still in custody without delay. A permanent 'no-arrest zone' at sea, as rights groups have long demanded, would spare hundreds of families needless suffering. These men venture out to earn an honest living, not to wage war. They should not be treated as enemies. Compassion must anchor policy, not vengeance.

Words Count: 298

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## Title 2- Sufferings of Pakistani fishermen in Indian jails

42 Pakistani fishermen

of sufferings they faced during detention in Indian jails. Being easy targets, they were tortured by Indians following the conflict <sup>in</sup> May 2025. The only crime they did was that they were trying to earn livelihood and mistakenly crossed into Indian waters. Being a signatory of UN Convention of Law of Sea, India was supposed to immediately release them but she did not. Thus, to avoid repetition of such <sup>unfavourable</sup> incidents, both sides should formulate a comprehensive framework to facilitate the fishermen in such situations.

Word Count: (91)

Idea is ok. Spelling errors found.