

Five Indian fishing trawlers along with twenty three (23) crew members were arrested by the Sri Lankan Navy while they were engaged in trawling in Sri Lankan territorial waters at location 09 DEGS 09 MIN North, 079 DEGS 49 MIN East (065 DEGS from Thalaimannar light at a distance 06 NM) from 1345 hrs to 1500 hrs on 20 June 2011.

The incident had occurred close to Mannar, off the Pesalai coast, just 06 NM away from the Sri Lankan shores and not near the island of Kachchativu.

The Sri Lankan Navy authorities have confirmed that despite the fact that the GPSs installed in the trawlers were functioning, the fishermen were engaged in trawling in the Sri Lankan territorial waters.

The 23 Indian fishermen who have been thus arrested for violating the IMBL are in judicial custody at present in Sri Lanka along with their boats. Following the due process of the law, they are expected to be released at an early date. The fishermen are being treated in a humane manner, respecting their dignity.

The relevant authorities in Sri Lanka expect to repatriate the fishermen and the boats as soon as the judicial process is completed.

High Commission of Sri Lanka

New Delhi

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