Eight fishermen from Vizag are reported to be detained in Bangladesh after they intruded into their territorial waters. Such activities immediately caught the notice of the Bangladeshi Coast Guards.

The fishermen had left the Indian coast of Vizag on September 24 on the boat named Amrita. The acts of the fishermen are in violation of the international law of the sea, the UNCLOS.

Territorial waters of a country are defined as the territory extending upto twelve nautical miles from the baseline of the coast of the coastal state. According to UNCLOS, the coastal state has jurisdiction over its territorial waters and thus is considered as the sovereign territory of the coastal state. However, foreigners and military can be granted authority to travel through the territorial waters of the coastal state provided that they have a right to innocent passage. According to Article 19 of the UNCLOS, which defines innocent passage, a passage is considered as innocent as long as it is not prejudicial to peace or tranquillity of the coastal state. Additionally, it does not engage in certain exclusively specified activities, which is inclusive of the act of carrying on fishing in such territorial waters of the coastal state.

The news came in just after the recent news of 15 Indian fishermen hailing from West Bengal being sentenced to jail by the Bagherhat court, Bangladesh after they had allegedly intruded into the territorial waters of Bangladesh. Those fishermen were reported to conduct their fishing activities 90 nautical miles from the Mongola Port, which is inside the territorial waters of Bangladesh.

Such intruding activities are very common among the neighbouring countries. According, to the authorities, there is a bipartite agreement signed between the two countries. This agreement will facilitate the fishermen to be brought back to India, once the due process of law has been followed by the country.