

**Pact with Canada's Forum of Federations**

1941. SHRI PAUL MANOJ PANDIAN: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Inter-State Council Secretariat has signed a pact with Canada's Forum of Federations for creating a mutually supportive international partnership for improving governance and enhancing democracy, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether it also offers partner countries an opportunity to be part of global network which provides a mechanism for insight into both internal and international governance debates, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI HARIBHAI PARTHIBHAI CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Inter-State Council Secretariat (ISCS), Ministry of Home Affairs had entered into a Framework Arrangement on behalf of Govt. of India with Forum of Federations (FoF), Ottawa, Canada with the approval of Ministry of External Affairs on 24th March, 2015 for three years. The objective of this arrangement is to create an international partnership that will support the Forum and Partner Government in improving governance and enhancing democracy by promoting dialogue on practices, principles and possibilities of federalism.

**Witness protection system**

1942. DR. CHANDAN MITRA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that the absence of a witness protection system is causing rise in unmerited acquittals in the country;

(b) if so, the reasons for delay in putting in place a strong witness protection system in order to ensure justice to victims; and

(c) the corrective steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI HARIBHAI PARTHIBHAI CHAUDHARY): (a) to (c) The 198th Report of the Law Commission of India on 'Witness Identity Protection and Witness Protection Programme' has been circulated to the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations for consultation. However, there are provisions in Section 154A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and Section 154A of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) to provide legal recourse to the witnesses. Information on unmerited acquittals is not maintained separately.