

**Legal aid to Indians in jails abroad**

2817. SHRI K. K. RAGESH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any mechanism to provide legal aid to Indian citizens who are facing legal proceedings or jailed in foreign countries;

(b) if so, the details thereof, country-wise; and

(c) the procedures for availing of support from such mechanism?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GENERAL (Retd.) V. K. SINGH]: (a) to (c) The Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF), set up by the Government of India in 2009, has been extended to all Indian Missions and Posts abroad to meet contingency expenditure incurred by them for carrying out various on-site welfare activities for overseas Indian nationals who are in distress, on a means tested basis. Indian Missions and Posts abroad are empowered to provide initial legal assistance from the ICWF to Indian nationals in deserving cases. Indian nationals in need of legal assistance may approach Indian Missions and Posts abroad in this regard.

After verification of Indian nationality of the detained/arrested person, Missions request local authorities for speedy trials; seek remission of sentence; and seek fair and humane treatment in foreign jails. Missions also request the local Government for grant of amnesty to arrested Indians. Payment is made out of ICWF, on case-to-case basis for filing review petitions or mercy petitions on behalf of the Indian prisoners.

**Countries visited by Prime Minister**

2818. DR. PRADEEP KUMAR BALMUCHU: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the countries visited by Hon'ble Prime Minister during the last two months;

(b) the details of the Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs), bilateral agreements pertaining to socio-economic relations, diplomatic relations, etc. entered into with each of the countries; and

(c) the prospective to strengthen the relations amongst the countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI M. J. AKBAR): (a) to (c) Information is given in the Statement.