Among the recommendations implemented are:–

(i) An Integrated Nodal Agency (INA) has been constituted. It is aimed to be an effective mechanism to provide a single window timely solution to the problems of affected women and there would be a better monitoring of the welfare measures being undertaken in this regard. The INA is headed by Ministry of Women and Child Development with senior officials from Ministries of External Affairs, Home Affairs, Law and Justice and Women and Child Development as its members. The INA has already held its two meetings.

(ii) The scheme for distressed Indian women has been merged with Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) effective from September 1, 2017. The legal and financial assistance has been increased from US$ 3000/- to US$ 4000/- and it is applicable to all overseas Indian Missions and Posts. Missions/Posts have now been empowered to deal with such cases.

There is also a provision in the revised ICWF Guidelines for maintaining a panel of 3-5 local lawyers/firms proficient in local language and law, and who enjoy credibility and have commitment and experience to assist deserving Indian national in distress in Gulf Cooperation Countries (GCC) and Top 20 countries with major Overseas Indian national population.

Indians lodged in Pakistani jails

654. SHRI CHUNIBHAI KANJIBHAI GOHEL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indians currently lodged in jails in Pakistan and since when, the details thereof for less than five years, more than five years but less than ten years, more than ten years but less than fifteen years, and more than fifteen years;

(b) whether our consulates in Pakistan have relevant details of all Indian prisoners and whether they extend all legal/financial support to such prisoners and if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of Indian's fishermen detained in jails in Pakistan, as of now, and the efforts made to secure their release?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD.) V.K. SINGH]: (a) and (b) As per available information, presently 341 Indian

fishermen and 63 Indian civilian prisoners are believed to be in Pakistan's custody. However, as per the lists exchanged between the Governments of India and Pakistan on 1 January 2018, Pakistan has acknowledged custody of 253 fishermen and 58 civilian prisoners who are Indian or believed-to-be Indian in its jails.

(c) According to available information, the time since they are believed to be in Pakistan's custody is as below:

Prisoners who are Indian or believed-to-be Indian	Fishermen	Civilian Prisoners	Total
Less than 5 years	341 (all fishermen are in Pakistan jails since less than 1 year)	32	373
More than 5 years but less than 10 years	0	17	17
More than 10 years but less than 15 years	0	11	11
More than 15 years	0	02	02
Without any details of sentence/ period	0	01	01
TOTAL	341	63	404

In addition, there is the issue of 74 Missing Indian Defence personnel, whose custody has not been acknowledged by Pakistan so far.

Government consistently pursues the case of early release and repatriation of the Indian nationals languishing in Pakistan jails. In addition, the High Commission of India in Islamabad, on a continuing basis, provides humanitarian and legal assistance to Indian nationals imprisoned in Pakistan, including regular distribution of items of daily necessity to them through Pakistani jail authorities. As a result of persistent efforts, Government has secured the release and repatriation of 1697 Indian fishermen and 19 Indian civilian prisoners from Pakistan since 2014.