

(b) The focus of development cooperation has been the countries in India's neighbourhood and in Africa, though India is also expanding its development cooperation reach to South East Asia, East and Central Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America, Pacific Island Countries, etc.

With a view to enhance our engagement with African countries, various development partnership initiatives were undertaken in the last decade, especially after India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS) III in 2015. India announced LOCs of US\$10 billion for development projects at IAFS-III in 2015 to be spread over 5 years. Projects for developing infrastructure, public transport, clean energy, irrigation, agriculture and manufacturing capacity have been envisaged to be taken up under these LOCs. Projects are under various stages of implementation under 32 LOCs extended to African countries after IAFS-III in 2015.

In the year 2015, guidelines governing GoI LOCs were revised with a view to improve efficiency and make the system robust and transparent. The rate of interest and tenor offered to developing countries has also been made more attractive. There has been marked improvement in the formulation and execution of projects since the new guidelines have come into effect.

Government has undertaken close consultations with the solar industry to ascertain sectors/projects where we have expertise. Close consultations have been held with the member countries of the International Solar Alliance (ISA), Indian Missions abroad and Missions of foreign countries in India. As a result of these sustained efforts, a total of 27 specific projects in 15 countries have been identified for implementation with an estimated funding of US\$ 1,392.48 million under GoI LOCs. These project were announced at the ISA Summit held in New Delhi on 11 March 2018.

In the year 2018, Project Preparation Facility (PPF) was set up to assist partner countries in coming up with viable projects that can be considered under LOCs since many countries need support in identifying, conceiving and preparing a proper project proposal. PPF provides a quick access and demand driven mechanism in this context. Expenditure for preparing the reports for project proposed under PPF are covered by the Government.

#### **Release of Indian prisoners from Middle East**

461. SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are cases of Indians languishing in prisons especially of Middle East countries even after their period of conviction is over; and

(b) if so, the steps that are being taken by the Government for their release?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH]: (a) As per information available, the total number of Indians who have completed their jail terms but are still lodged in prisons in Gulf countries is 20 (04 in Oman and 16 in UAE). However, due to stringent privacy laws prevailing in many countries, the local authorities do not share information on prisoners unless the person concerned consents to the disclosure of such information. Even countries, which share information, do not generally provide detailed information about the persons who have been imprisoned.

(b) The process of release and repatriation of Indian nationals who complete their sentences in foreign prisons is dynamic and the number keeps changing. Our Missions and Posts abroad provide all possible consular support and humanitarian and legal assistance on a case to case basis, for completing formalities by coordinating with local immigration authorities for early deportation of the Indians who have completed their jails terms. This includes issue of emergency certificates, if required, and also provision of airfare on a means tested basis in deserving cases from the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF).

#### **Improving the performance of loss making PSUs**

462. SHRI HISHEY LACHUNGPA: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any fresh initiatives have been taken by Government for improving the performance of loss making Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs);

(b) whether there is any plan for better or alternate utilisation of excess employees in many of these PSUs;

(c) whether there are any attempts to bring down the component of wasteful or avoidable expenditure in these PSUs; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO): (a) Department of Public Enterprises (DPE) has issued guidelines on 29.10.2015 for “Streamlining the mechanism for revival and restructuring of sick/incipient sick and weak CPSEs”. As per the guidelines, the administrative Ministries/Departments are responsible to monitor the sickness of CPSEs under their control based on their performance and to take redressal measures. Based on their review, the concerned administrative