

- (b) if so, the details thereof in this regard; and
- (c) the details of action taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN): (a) to (c) As per the established practice, the High Commission of India in Islamabad organised an Iftar and Dinner reception on 1 June, 2019. Pakistan guests, who were invited to the Iftar event, were harassed, intimidated, actively dissuaded and physically stopped from attending the function by the Pakistan security forces/agencies. Many guests from the diplomatic community based in Islamabad were also harassed.

The Government of India has lodged a strong protest with Pakistan side in the matter. It has been conveyed that such act was in blatant violation of diplomatic norms and civilised behaviour. The Government has called upon Pakistan to investigate into the events with all seriousness, and share the results of the investigation.

Engagement with Maldives

658. DR. R. LAKSHMANAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has committed itself to engage fully with Maldives in view of its strategic location;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Government has identified any nations with whom it wants to establish bilateral ties and mutual relationship;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN): (a) and (b) India and Maldives enjoy a uniquely special, close and friendly relationship. This is based on shared culture and extensive socio-economic people-to-people interaction. India has multifaceted and comprehensive cooperation with frequent high-level engagements and wide ranging developmental assistance.

(c) to (e) India has bilateral relations with all countries through resident Missions and concurrent accreditation in countries where resident Indian Missions are not present. India currently has resident Missions in 126 countries.

With a view to expand India's global footprint, the Union Cabinet on 21 March 2018 approved the opening of 18 new Missions in Africa over a four year period from 2018 to 2021, thereby increasing the number of resident Indian Missions in Africa from 29 to 47.

These countries include Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mauritania, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Swaziland and Togo. Missions have already been opened in five of these countries.

Extradition of Indians involved in financial irregularities

659. SHRI KANAKAMEDALA RAVINDRA KUMAR:

SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of people living abroad who have been involved in financial irregularities with the banks as well as of those who are under criminal investigation; and
- (b) the details of the steps being taken for the extradition of these persons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN): (a) Ministry of External Affairs, not being the original repository of information requested in (a) and (b), the same has been obtained from the primary investigating agencies namely the CBI, the Directorate of Enforcement (ED) and the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI).

According to the information provided by the CBI, the number of Indians living abroad who are involved in financial irregularities with the Banks and fled the country and undergoing criminal investigation in CBI cases during the last three years is 24.

According to the Directorate of Enforcement there are 28 individuals who are accused in criminal cases being investigated by Enforcement Directorate (ED) and who are either residing abroad or have left the country before initiation of investigation by ED.

According to the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), one Indian living abroad, viz., Nirav Modi, is under criminal investigation by DRI.

- (b) Efforts are being made for securing presence of these accused in the country.

According to the CBI, efforts are being made for securing presence of these accused in the country by way of issuance of extradition requests. During the last three years,