

2. It has been conveyed to the Australian Government that such attacks should not be allowed to happen and that it is the responsibility of the Australian authorities to ensure the well-being and security of our students in Australia. Our High Commissioner and Consuls General in Australia are in constant touch with the Australian authorities both at the federal as well as State level, including the Ministers, senior officers and the police authorities, besides the Australian Foreign Office, the Universities and the students.

3. The Government of Australia has in response to these demarches, strongly condemned these attacks. The Australian authorities have conveyed their firm commitment to ensuring the safety and security of Indian students in Australia. When the matter came up in the Australian Parliament, the Australian Prime Minister as well as the Leader of the opposition and several Members of Parliament denounced the attacks and called for immediate steps to ensure the safety and security of Indian students studying in Australia. Premier of the Victoria state has further promised that the state would do everything in its power to track down the perpetrators of these cowardly acts and bring them to justice.

4. On 23 June, 2009, a delegation led by Ms. Lisa Paul, Secretary, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, Government of Australia, called on the Hon'ble Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs. Government of India's deep concerns over the matter were conveyed to the Australian delegation. In response to some suggestions made by the Indian delegation, the Australian side undertook to consider the following:—

- (i) Registration of Education Agents;
- (ii) Ensuring quality of education provided at private educational institutions;
- (iii) Steps to ensure that Education Agents brief deporting Indian students properly, on the basis of the latest advisory booklet published by the Australian Education Department for international students;
- (iv) Steps to prevent exploitation of Indian students by unscrupulous employers who underpay them and employ them beyond the maximum prescribed 20 hours a week;

5. The High Commission of India in Canberra and Consulates General in Sydney and Melbourne will continue to extend all possible assistance. An advisory for students going for studies to Australia has been put on the website of this Ministry.

Welfare of Indians abroad

26. SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR:
SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether additional activities now being performed by our Foreign Missions relating to “overseeing the welfare of the Indian Community abroad”, as per the requirements of his Ministry are being adequately taken care of by the existing staff of the Foreign Mission;

(b) if so, in what way the usual complaints of Indian migrants, who, till lately were sending 50 per cent of our remittances, being promptly attended;

(c) the number of qualified, skilled and semi-skilled persons, who had to migrate to India since June, 2008 due to global recessionary trends; and

(d) whether they face any problems regarding receiving their full and final dues from the foreign employer?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SHASHI THAROOR): (a) to (d) Information is being collected by the concerned Ministry (Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs) and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Assurance over racial attacks

27. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:

Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attacks against Indian students in Australia continue unabated in spite of assurance given that action would be taken by Australian Government;

(b) if so, whether Australian Government has admitted that some attacks were racist;

(c) if so, whether in spite of responding positively, no serious action has been taken by the Australian Government on our request;

(d) the total students affected so far and whether there are reports of racial attacks in Canada also;

(e) the latest position in this regard; and

(f) whether Australia has agreed to take steps against culprits who attacked Indians?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) Some incidents of attacks on Indian students are still being reported.

(b) In Victoria, where most of the recent attacks have taken place, Premier John Brumby announced during Question Time in the State Parliament on 02 June, 2009 that his Government condemned racially motivated crimes in the strongest possible terms and will do everything in its power to track down the perpetrators of these cowardly acts and bring them to justice as well. He also announced that his Government proposes to amend the Sentencing Act to enable judges to take into account hatred for or prejudice against a particular group of people while sentencing persons found guilty.

(c) It has been conveyed by the Australian Government, that it has taken/is taking a series of steps to check such attacks.

(d) and (e) Total number of confirmed cases of attacks on Indians including students since 23 May, 2009 is 81. There has been no report of attacks on Indian students in Canada.