

- (a) the total number of Indian students in Australia, New Zealand and Singapore;
- (b) that States from where the students go to these countries, each year;
- (c) the total number of incidents like attacks, misbehaviors and discrimination against Indians in last one year;
- (d) the steps taken by Government for security of Indian students after such incidents; and
- (e) the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) As per reports received from Indian Missions in these countries, there are about 1,21,000 Indian students in Australia and about 6,861 Indian students in New Zealand. Figures of the number of Indian students pursuing studies in Singapore is not available.

(b) Data regarding states from where students go to these countries is not available. However, in Australia the students are predominantly from Punjab, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and Haryana.

(c) No reports of attacks misbehavior and discrimination against Indian students have been reported from New Zealand and Singapore. A total of 100 attacks on Indians, including students, have been reported from Australia during the last one year.

(d) and (e) The matter has been taken up at the highest level by our Prime Minister with the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister of Australia during their visits to India. As a result of a series of high-level discussions and demarches made by Indian Mission/Posts in Australia, the Australian Government has taken various steps. They have announced a series of measures, including stricter policing in Victoria and NSW, aimed at ensuring the safety and security of Indian students in Australia. The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Education, Ms. Julia Gillard introduced in the Parliament, a bill to amend the Education Services for Overseas Students Act, 2000, under which all educational institutions will now be required to re-register under new and tighter criteria by 31 December, 2010. Similarly rapid audit of service providers is being undertaken by the Australian authorities, as a result of which some colleges have already been de-registered and shut down. These steps have been useful and the incidence of attacks has decreased.

#### **Attack on Indian students**

‡1595. SHRI KAPTAN SINGH SOLANKI: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the incidents of attacks on Indian students in foreign countries especially in Australia are increasing;

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‡Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) whether any steps have been taken by Government for protection of Indian students, keeping in view increasing incidents of attacks;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether victim students are being provided any economic assistance by Government; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) No, Sir. However, a few cases of attacks on Indian students in Australia have been reported.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The issue of attack on Indian students has been taken up with the Australian Government at the highest level. As a result of a series of discussions with visiting high level Australian delegations and demarches made by Indian Mission/Posts in Australia, the Australian Government has taken various steps, which have resulted in decrease of such attacks. To address the problems faced by Indian students in Australia and to recommend measures for enhancing their safety and wellbeing, the Government has set up a Joint Working Group (JWG) with the Australian side on student mobility. The JWG held its first meeting on 6th October, 2009.

Detailed advisory for Indian students who plan to study in Australia has been placed on the websites of MEA, MOIA and the Indian Mission and Consulates in Australia. Advisory to students who wish to study in certain other countries, have been placed on the website of MOIA.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

#### **Problem of CIC**

1596. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the recently held fourth anniversary convention of the Central and State Information Commissioners, has highlighted the problems faced by the CIC and its State units in terms of sparse office premises, lack of basic office equipments/furniture and manpower including low budgetary provisions; and

(b) considering the laudable role played by the Central Information Commission (CIC) as a window between Government and the citizenry, whether Government would ensure that the offices of the CIC and its State units are provided with basic amenities and manpower commensurate with the increasing volume of complaints/applications they handle daily under RTI Act?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) Yes, Sir.