

(d) if so, the steps Union Government proposes to take to protect the interest of Indian students who are already studying there?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) and (b) The Government of U.K has amended their immigration laws and launched a Point-Based System (PBS) in 2008 to streamline the entry into U.K of non EU workers. Under the new PBS, there is a five Tier framework, through which a non-EU national could gain entry into UK for work, study or training. The five tiers envisage different conditions, entitlements and entry clearance checks/procedures. On 10 February 2010, following a review of its operation, the UK Home Secretary announced a number of changes to the criteria of tier 4 of the PBS meant for students. These require a good standard of English which is required to be demonstrated in order to be permitted to study any course below degree level; restricting the lowest-level courses (A levels and equivalent) to only the most trusted institutions; halving the amount of time available for work for a student studying below first degree level or on a foundation degree course, to just 10 hours during term time; a ban on bringing in dependants for anyone studying a course for less than six months; and a ban on dependants of anyone studying a course lower than foundation or undergraduate degree level from working - who could face removal from the UK if found doing so.

(c) The measures are intended only for students who come to UK to study courses below degree level. There are no changes for students who come to UK to study a foundation degree, courses at degree level or those coming to UK as a child- student.

(d) The measures announced are not being implemented retrospectively.

Racially motivated attacks on Indians

804. SHRI THOMAS SANGMA: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has spoken to the Australian Prime Minister about the racially motivated attacks on Indians in Australia;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Australian Prime Minister has promised to take any concrete action or not; and

(d) the measures taken by Government to ensure protection and security of the Indians in Australia?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) to (d) The issue of attacks on Indian students in Australia has been taken up at the highest level. The Prime Minister of India conveyed the high priority that Government of India attaches to the safety, security and well-being of the Indian community in Australia, to the Prime Minister of Australia, Mr. Kevin Rudd, during his visit to India on 12 November, 2009. Mr. Rudd had reiterated that Australia had a zero tolerance to

violence and was committed to taking all possible measures to protect the safety and welfare of all international students, including Indian students. The Indian Mission and Posts are pro actively following up these incidents very closely and are in constant touch with the Federal and State Governments in Australia at all levels.

The Indian Mission/Posts also maintain regular liaison with the students in universities and other educational institutions, inter-alia, through participation in the meetings and seminars organised by the local government and law enforcement authorities, as well as the Indian community. Guidelines for students who propose to study in Australia, as also those already studying there, are posted on the websites of the Ministries of Overseas Indian Affairs, External Affairs as well as those of the Indian Mission/Posts in Australia. The steps taken by the Government of India to ensure the protection and security of Indians in Australia are given in the Statement.

Statement

Details of steps taken by the Government of India for security of Indians in Australia

- The issue of attack on Indian students in Australia has been taken up at the highest level.
- 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.
- The Prime Minister of India conveyed the high priority that Government of India attaches to the safety, security and well-being of Indian community in Australia to the Prime Minister of Australia, Mr. Kevin Rudd during his visit to India on 12 November, 2009. Mr. Rudd had reiterated that Australia had a zero tolerance approach to violence and was committed to taking all possible measures to protect the safety and welfare of all international students including Indian students.
- Hon. John Brumby, Premier of the State of Victoria visited India from 22 Sept. 2009 to 1st Oct. 2009. During the visit he called on the Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs, Minister for Human Resource Development.
- An advisory for students going for studies to Australia has been put on the website of Ministries of Overseas Indian Affairs and External Affairs, besides those of Indian Mission/Posts in Australia.
- An officer has been designated as the 'Students' Welfare Officer' in the High Commission of India, Canberra as well as our Consulates General in Sydney and Melbourne. As soon as a case of attack comes to the notice, the matter is taken up immediately with local government authorities.