

- Over 54 arrests have been made and sentences have been handed down; investigations are continuing and more arrests are expected.
- Community reference group involving the police, state government and members of the Indian community and representatives of the High Commission and Consulates have been set up in several states - Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland, West Australia and South Australia, to facilitate communication and increase awareness on safety issues
- The Federal and State Governments have taken steps to regulate and reform the universities and institutions, including the appointment of educational agents abroad. Several private colleges have been audited and many closed down; the students so affected have been placed in other colleges offering the same courses.

Attack on Indian Community

802. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that a number of violent attacks have taken place in Australia against members of Indian community;
- (b) if so, the number of attacks that have taken place since January 2009 till date;
- (c) whether Government has obtained information regarding the investigation made, prosecutions launched in each of these cases; and
- (d) if so, the details in respect to each of the cases and the nature of offences the culprits charged with in the cases where prosecutions have been launched?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) to (d) There have been reports of over a hundred incidents of attacks on Indian nationals, including students, from Australia since January, 2009. Details, as reported by Indian Mission/Posts in Australia, including place of attack, nature of attack and available details of the investigations, made by the police are given in the Annexure-I [Refer to the Annexure No.11 Appendix 219 in respect of Unstarred Question No. 801 parts (b) to (d) Answered on 04/03/2010]

Immigration norms changed by UK

803. SHRI N.K. SINGH: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the UK Government has recently made tougher immigration norms particularly for students;
- (b) if so, the facts and details thereof;
- (c) whether a large number of professionals and students who wish to have higher studies in U.K. would be badly affected due to tough immigration norms; and

(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