

implementation of the Sixth Central Pay Commission recommendations, the fee hike is found reasonable.

(c) and (d) The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 provides for free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years.

Attack on Indian students in Australia

3941. PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of incidents in Australia in which Indian students were attacked in the last two years;

(b) the total number of cases registered by the Australian authorities in such incidents;

(c) the number of culprits punished in such incidents so far; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to ensure the safety and security of the Indian students?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (c) Since January, 2008, the number of incidents of attacks on Indian students in Australia is 83 as per information available with the Indian High Commission in Australia. Out of these 36 cases have been registered and 31 arrests have been made. The cases are pending in the courts.

(d) The matter regarding attacks on members of Indian community including Indian students in Australia has been taken up with the Australian authorities by the Indian side during various Ministerial visits as well as the visit of Prime Minister of Australia to India in November, 2009. The high Commission of India in Canberra and the Consulates General in Sydney and Melbourne are in close and constant touch with the Australian authorities including the Ministers, the Australian Foreign Office, senior officers and police authorities and have impressed upon them that such attacks cannot be allowed to happen and that stringent measures should be taken to stop these attacks as well as to apprehend the culprits.

Minister of Human Resource Development visited Australia from 6th to 10th April, 2010 and discussed the matter regarding attacks on Indian students, their safety and the steps taken by the Australian Government with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations of Australia; Foreign Minister of Australia; Premier of Victoria; Premier of New South Wales; Deputy Premiers of Western Australia and New South Wales and Ministers of Education of Victoria and New South Wales. In these meetings, the Minister of Human Resource Development expressed his deep concern on the continued incidents of assaults on Indian students. He also requested Premier of Victoria for credible data on the incidents that

have taken place over the past one year as also information relating to the status of the trials, the charges framed and convictions. He stressed the importance of setting up an institutional mechanism for sharing such information. He also requested the Premier of Victoria and New South Wales about extending transport concession to international students and increase in accommodation facilities for international students.

Immediately after the above visit, the Premier of Victoria has sent an update to the Minister of Human Resource Development on the measures taken by the Victorian Government to improve the experience of international students in Victoria and to help safeguard the well-being of Indian students and the Indian community in Victoria, as well as to provide further information on cases involving Indian victims.

Payment for foodgrains for Mid-Day-Meal Scheme

3942. SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that the Mid-Day-Meal Scheme which is one of the biggest cooked meal programme is facing foodgrain shortage and is likely to be disrupted;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the dispute between his Ministry and Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution over payment has directly affected the Mid-Day-Meal programme; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government to settle the dispute and to implement the scheme in an effective manner?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) Due to insistence of the Department of Food and Public Distribution for pre-payment of cost of foodgrains, there has been delay in intimating the State-wise allocation of foodgrains to its field units by the Food Corporation of India (FCI). Consequently, some States like Rajasthan, West Bengal, Jharkhand and Punjab have pointed out shortage of foodgrains for implementing the scheme.

(c) and (d) Inter-ministerial consultations have been held to resolve the issue. On the direction of Department of Food and Public Distribution, the FCI has instructed its regional offices on 12.4.2010 to release the foodgrains for the first quarter as per the allocation made by this Ministry. Accordingly, all the States/UTs have been advised by this Ministry *vide* letter dated 13.4.2010 to lift foodgrains from the FCI.

Suicide by students

3943. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE:

SHRI VIJAYKUMAR RUPANI:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state: