

(b) A number of Indian students enrolled at the Tri-Valley University were questioned and 18 of them, facing investigations into involvement in the case, were initially detained and released with radio monitoring devices on their ankles.

(c) Approximately, 1500 Indian students were enrolled at the university, constituting 95% of the university's student population. A vast majority of the Indian students hailed from Andhra Pradesh.

(d) The Government has repeatedly raised with the US Government, including during the recent visits of External Affairs Minister and the Foreign Secretary to USA in February, 2011, its strong concerns about radio-tagging, welfare of the students, and their academic future in the United States. In particular, Government has asked for adequate opportunity for students to transfer to other universities in the United States. Our Mission and Consulates in USA are providing all assistance possible to the students, including through regular meetings with them, a free legal aid camp organized in San Francisco on February, 5, connecting students to attorneys providing assistance to the students, and issuing appropriate guidance and advisories.

(e) The US Government has removed radio collars from 12 of the 18 Indian students and is reviewing the case against the other six. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has assured us that the students would be given fair treatment and that their interests will be fully considered.

Setting up Anti-corruption Watchdog Authority

*107. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether he has recently stated that corruption is denting the image of the country abroad and demeaning Government before the people;

(b) if so, whether Government proposes to revamp the administrative practices and procedures in view of fast growing corruption;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Union Government proposes to set up Anti-corruption Watchdog Authority to effectively check corruption cases; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) The Prime Minister in his address at the 2nd Annual Conference of Chief Secretaries on 4th February, 2011 while stating that corruption is an impediment to faster growth, also stated that it not only dilutes but also negates out efforts at social inclusion and dents our international image and demeans us before our own people.

(b) and (c) To combat corruption, a Group of Ministers has been set up to look into all measures, legal or administrative. Two bills have been introduced in Parliament relating to judicial accountability and protection of whistle blowers. Besides the legislation, necessary revamping of administrative practices and procedures are on fast-track. Several steps have already been taken by the Government in the recent past to combat corruption and improve the functioning of Government. These include:-

- (i) Issue of Whistle Blowers' Resolution, 2004 and introduction of a comprehensive Bill in the Lok Sabha in 2010 for protection of whistle- blower;
- (ii) Enactment of Right to Information Act, 2005;
- (iii) The pro-active involvement of Ministry/Department through Annual Action Plan on Vigilance as a preventive measure;
- (iv) Issue of comprehensive instructions on transparency in tendering and contracting process by the CVC;
- (v) Issue of instructions by the CVC asking the organizations to adopt Integrity Pact in major Government procurement activities; Similar instructions have been issued by the Central Government on 16th June, 2009 advising the State Governments to adopt Integrity Pact in major procurements;
- (vi) Signing of the United Nations Convention against Corruption;
- (vii) Introduction of e-Governance and simplification of procedures and systems;
- (viii) Issue of Citizen Charters.

(d) and (e) No, Sir. The Central Vigilance Commission and the Central Bureau of Investigation are the two premier agencies of the Government of India to investigate into instances of corruption.

Irregularity in purchases by Department of Space

† *108. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that more than 50 per cent amount of budget allocation made to the Department of Space is spent on purchases only;

(b) if so, the percentage of expenses out of an average annual expenditure made on purchasing during the last five years;

(c) whether it is also a fact that irregularities in the purchases made by the Department-wise reported in the audit conducted by CAG in the year 2008; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.