

Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Stephen Smith. In these meetings, the Hon'ble Minister highlighted, apart from the safety and security issues, the problems being faced by the Indian students due to closure of private colleges and changes in the migration programme.

- Shrimati Preneet Kaur, Minister of State for External Affairs, visited Sydney and Melbourne on 07-08 August, 2010, on her way back to Delhi after attending the 41st Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Leaders meeting in Port Vila, Vanuatu. She met members of Indian community including Indian students in Sydney and Melbourne and also visited the Blackburn Gurdwara in Melbourne.
- During his visit for the Foreign Ministers' Framework Dialogue in Melbourne on 20 January, 2011, EAM Shri S.M. Krishna discussed the issues relating to safety and security of Indian students in Australia with Foreign Minister Kevin Rudd and Premier of Victoria Mr. Ted Baillieu, who assured EAM that the safety and security of the Indian community will continue to be addressed pro-actively by increasing the number of police on the public transport system, introducing tougher sentencing for attackers etc.
- Our High Commission in Australia as well as the Consulates General in Melbourne and Sydney has a Community Welfare and Student Liaison Officer (CWSLO) who is on call 24x7. Any problem involving an Indian student or member of the community is handled by the CWSLO in coordination with our High Commissioner/Consuls General.

Students duped by fake university

352. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Indian students duped by fake university in the US face an uncertain future and they are being subjected to inhuman treatment by the US authorities for no fault of theirs;
- (b) if so, Government's response thereto;
- (c) whether these students had requested for their rescue and help for transfer to other US universities; and
- (d) if so, Government's reaction thereto and the details of steps taken or proposed to be taken towards the request of Indian students in the US?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED):
 (a) Approximately 1500 Indian students face uncertainty due to the closure of Tri Valley University in California on 19 January, 2011 for alleged fraudulent practices.

(b) to (d) Government's primary concern is the welfare of the affected Indian students and to ensure that their academic career is not jeopardized. The Government has repeatedly conveyed to the US Government that the students, who are themselves victims of the fraud, should be given adequate time and opportunity to transfer to other universities, adjust their status or, if they desire, return to India honourably.

Our Mission and the Consulates in the United States have been regularly meeting students and issuing appropriate advisories. Among other steps, the Consulate in San Francisco organized a free legal aid camp for the affected students to enable them to present their case effectively to local authorities.

The U.S. Government has conveyed that it will seek to provide innocent students an opportunity to transfer to other universities.

Detention and violence against fishermen

353. SHRI D. RAJA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn into the incidents of detention and violence against Indian fishermen by the Sri Lankan Navy;

(b) whether it is a fact that a fisherman was killed in January this year when Sri Lankan Navy opened fire on his boat off the Pudukottai coast; and

(c) if so, the details of such incidents and the steps that were taken by Government to take up the matter with Sri Lankan Government to protect the Indian fishermen?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED):
(a) to (c) On 12th January, 2011, an Indian fishing trawler is reported to have been fired at allegedly by the Sri Lankan Navy resulting in an Indian fisherman Mr. Pandiyan being killed. The Indian trawler was on the Sri Lankan side of the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL). A second incident took place on 22-23 January, 2011 where one Indian fisherman Mr. Jaikumar died in the waters between India and Sri Lanka by strangulation allegedly by Sri Lankan Navy personnel. The Sri Lankan Government have denied any involvement of their Navy in either of these incidents.

In two separate incidents in February, 2011, 112 Indian fishermen and 24 Indian fishermen respectively were surrounded by Sri Lankan fishermen, apprehended and handed over to Sri Lankan police custody. They were apprehended in Sri Lankan waters near Jaffna/Point Pedro. All 136 Indian fishermen were subsequently released.

As soon as the news of the death of our fishermen in January, 2011 was received, the Government had immediately taken up the matter with the Government of Sri Lanka and we had expressed our deep concern at these incidents. We emphasized that resort to firing or use of