

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN): (a) and (b) India and China have each appointed a Special Representative (SR) to explore the framework for a boundary settlement from the political perspective of the overall bilateral relationship. There have been twenty one meetings of SRs so far with the last meeting held in Chengdu on 24 November 2018. At the Wuhan Informal Summit in April 2018, the leaders of India and China expressed their support for the work of the Special Representatives and urged them to intensify their efforts to seek a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable settlement.

(c) and (d) Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar have agreed to establish a Joint Study Group (JSG) on strengthening connectivity in the BCIM region for closer economic, trade, and people-to-people linkages through the development of a BCIM Economic Corridor (BCIM-EC). There have been three meetings of BCIM-EC JSG so far with the last meeting held in Kolkata on 24-25 April 2017.

Indian MBBS students in Ukrainian universities

2099. SHRI RAM KUMAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that the Indian MBBS students admitted in some of the Ukrainian Universities are being suspended without any reasons due to harassment tactics of the agents and role of Embassy;

(b) if so, whether any inquiry has been conducted in this regard;

(c) if so, the details and the outcomes thereof; and

(d) the steps being taken to protect the career of Indian students?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN): (a) The Ministry is aware of the problems being faced by some Indian students of the Donetsk National Medical University (DNMU) Kropivnitsky Campus, Ukraine. There is high demand from Indian students for education in Ukraine due to low costs and less demanding admission requirements. The problems being faced by Indian students in Ukraine are a result of the admission process being conducted through intermediaries and recruitment agencies, and the presence of some unscrupulous agents. The problem is compounded by the shifting of campuses of

some Universities due to the ongoing conflict in certain regions of Ukraine, the governance mechanism to regulate Universities, lack of transparency in the admission process and fee payment mechanisms and state of infrastructure.

(b) Our Embassy in Kyiv has taken up the issue strongly with concerned Ukrainian authorities. It has been found that the main reason behind students' problems is collusion between foreign agents based in Ukraine, University management, and some unscrupulous Indian agents.

(c) Medical Council of India (MCI) has removed DNMU from the list of its approved Ukrainian medical universities. Local authorities have informed that legal actions have been initiated against the University officials and the agents involved. In addition, the Ministry of Education of Ukraine is in the process of shifting the aggrieved students to other Universities. MCI has also removed from its List of approved Ukrainian medical universities, the Odessa National Medical University and the Luhansk State Medical University-Rubizhne Campus based on concerns on quality of education and infrastructure.

(d) To safeguard the interest of Indian students going abroad, Ministry has developed a "Students Registration Module" within the MADAD portal to create a database of Indian students going abroad, which enables Indian students abroad to register themselves voluntarily and provide data about their courses, location, institution, duration of the course, etc. Also, a separate category of grievances for the Indian students abroad has been created.

Senior officials of the Missions/ Posts regularly visit local universities and colleges to meet Indian students. Student Welfare officers of Indian Embassy are constantly in contact with Indian students associations and University administrations. Social media is used to disseminate information about student related issues in many countries. Advisories on "dos and don'ts" in foreign countries, including issues related to fraudulent agents are issued by Indian Missions on their respective websites.

An Expert group, with officials from stakeholder Ministries and government bodies and diplomats of select foreign embassies in New Delhi dealing with Consular and Educational matters has been established.

Further, the Ministry constantly collaborates with various foreign Missions in India on issues related to the welfare of Indian students.