

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6574
ANSWERED ON:05.05.2010
PROBLEM SHARING MECHANISM FOR STUDENTS
Antony Shri Anto;Shanavas Shri M. I.

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

- (a) whether the Government has set up any mechanism for redressal of grievances of the Indian students in Australia;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the number of students who have so far approached for redressal of their grievances; and
- (d) the measures taken by the Government to redress their grievances?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SMT. D. PURANDESWARI)

(a): Yes, Sir.

(b): The Indian High Commission in Australia and the Consulates General in Melbourne and Sydney each have a Community Welfare and Student Liaison Officer (CWSLO) who is on call 24 by 7, and whose mobile number is on the Indian High Commission's website as their emergency response number. Any problem involving an Indian student or member of the community, is handled by the CWSLO in coordination with the High Commissioner/ Consuls General. There is also a policy of 'Open Fridays', when any student can walk into the Chancery without an appointment and meet the concerned officer to discuss any problems. In addition, the students are given information brochures, and details regarding fair wages. Detailed guidelines have also been placed on the website of the High Commission as well as the Consulates, which are being regularly updated. The High Commission and the Consulates also provide whatever assistance it can in specific cases, such as legal aid, medical treatment, temporary accommodation, psychological counselling, intervention with the educational authorities or employers as the case may be, in co-operation with local governments and community services.

(c): 86 students have approached since August 2009 in person. Besides that a number of students have contacted the High Commission and Consulates through e-mail and phone for assistance, which were duly attended to.

(d): The Indian High Commission and the Consulates have been taking up the incidents of assaults on members of Indian community including students with the Australian authorities, at federal and State levels. The High Commissioner held several meetings with the concerned Ministers as well as senior officials to discuss the matter.

The Minister of Human Resource Development, during his visit to Australia from 6th to 10th April 2010 held extensive discussions with various dignitaries from the federal as well as State Governments of Australia regarding the safety and well being of Indian students in Australia. The Minister urged the Australian authorities to take stringent measures to stop such attacks and also to apprehend the culprits in recent incidents. The Minister also stressed the urgent need to set up an institutional mechanism for sharing of information on such incidents.