

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:631
ANSWERED ON:28.07.2010
AUSTRALIA S MIGRATION POLICY
Singh Shri Uday Pratap;Tewari Shri Manish

Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government of Australia has recently amended its skilled migration policy;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether a large number of trades which were incorporated in the earlier policy have now been deleted;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether a large number of students who were pursuing courses in the deleted trades in Australia under the erstwhile policy on the legitimate expectation that it would entitle them to work visas would be placed in a position of unendurable hardship;
- (f) if so, the details thereof;
- (g) whether a large number of students have been rendered without education as colleges offering the deleted trades from the Skilled Migration List have shut shops overnight leaving the students on the streets;
- (h) if so, the details thereof including the number of students; and
- (i) the steps taken by the Government to alleviate the sufferings of these students? ANSWER

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a): Yes, Sir.

(b): The Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) announced, on 8th Feb., 2010 an overhaul of the skilled migration programme in Australia, aiming to make it a demand-driven programme. Migrations Occupations in Demand List (MODL) has been replaced by Skilled Occupations List (SOL).

(c): Yes, Sir.

(d): The new SOL excludes professions such as hairdressers, cooks, community welfare, fitters, pharmacists, journalists, fashion designers, marketing specialists, general managers; primary School teachers and teachers of English as a Second Language; most associate professional occupations, apart from engineering associates; Welfare Workers; Translators and Interpreters etc.

(e) & (f): To mitigate the effect of the recent changes in the SOL on the current students, the Australian Government has announced transitional arrangements that would allow such students to stay / work in Australia till 31 December 2012 during which they may try to avail alternative options.

(g) & (h): No Sir. So far 37 colleges have closed down in Australia, affecting over 5000 Indian students. In case of the closure of a college/institution providing international education, the Australian Education Services for Education (ESOS) Act provides for placement of the affected students into an alternative college /institution or refund their fees according to the provisions of the Act.

(i): Our High Commissioner in Australia has taken up the matter with the Minister of Immigration and Citizenship as well as other ministers and senior officials in the Australian government. The Australian authorities have been requested that the retrospective impact of new measures needs to be reviewed and action taken to process pending applications for PR in keeping with the implicit understanding under which the Indian students were given student visas under the previous visa regime, wherein the linkage between education and immigration was implicitly accepted. The matter was also taken up with the Australian leaders during the visits of Shri Kapil Sibal, Minister of Human Resource Development in April, 2010 and my visit in June 2010 to Australia.