

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1784

ANSWERED ON:10.08.2011

RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

Bajirao Shri Patil Padamsinha ;Gandhi Shri Dilip Kumar Mansukhlal;Meghwal Shri Arjun Ram ;Mishra Shri Mahabal

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

- (a) whether Indians are still subjected to racial discrimination in Australia;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether a Sikh man was recently denied entry into a hotel as he refused to take off his turban;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether the Government has lodged any protest with the Australian Government in this regard; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a) & (b): In the past, there have been a number of cases of assault involving persons of Indian origin in Australia. In some of these cases racial angle was also reported. The issue of attacks on Indians in Australia has been taken up at the highest level by Government of India, including at the Ministerial level as well as through the High Commission and its Consulates in Australia. It has been conveyed to the Australian Government that it was the responsibility of the Australian authorities to ensure the well being and security of all Indians in Australia. High Commissioner and Consuls Generals in Australia remain in regular touch with the Australian authorities both at the federal and the state level. This has resulted in several measures being put in place on the ground to improve safety and security. The High Commission of India and Consulates also remain in constant touch with the Indian community to offer support and assistance and follow-up on all reported cases of attacks. The steps taken by the Australian authorities have been effective, as reflected in the substantial decrease in the number of attacks in recent times.

(c) & (d): Yes Sir. It has been informed by High Commission of India in Australia that on 3 July, 2011, a person belonging to the Sikh community was denied entry into the Royal English Hotel, Nundah (Queensland) apparently because he refused to take off his turban. One of the staff members asked the man to remove his turban under the Hotel's no headwear policy. It is learnt from the hotel that the manager of the hotel had apologized to the person concerned after the incident.

(e) & (f): Yes Sir. The High Commission of India, Canberra has taken up the issue with the Australian Government requesting it to take appropriate measures to prevent recurrence of such incidents in future.