

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:960
ANSWERED ON:25.11.2009
VISIT OF AUSTRALIAN FOREIGN MINISTER TO INDIA
Satpathy Shri Tathagata

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Australian Foreign Minister has visited India recently;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the details of the issues discussed during his visit and the outcome thereof;
- (d) whether the Government of Australia has assured the safety of Indian students in Australia; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (DR. SHASHI THAROOR)

- (a) Yes.
- (b) Mr. Stephen Smith, Foreign Minister of Australia visited India from 12 to 15 October, 2009 for the sixth meeting of the India-Australia Foreign Ministers Framework Dialogue. A Joint Statement was issued at the conclusion of the visit.
- (c) During his visit, he met External Affairs Minister, Home Minister, Governor of Maharashtra, MOS(IC) Environment and Forests and National Security Advisor to discuss bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest.
- (d) & (e) Government of India conveyed deep concerns on the issue of the safety and security of Indian students in Australia. Australian Foreign Minister reiterated that Australia Federal Government and Governments of the Australian states are determined to address the concerns about the safety and the well-being of the Indian students in Australia. Noting that Australia was a culturally diverse country, Australian Foreign Minister stressed that Australia had a zero tolerance approach towards violence and racial prejudice. People who had committed offences against Indian nationals would face the full force of the law. The Australian Government had introduced legislation to require all international education providers to re-register by the end of 2010 against strengthened criteria.