

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:198
ANSWERED ON:02.12.2009
ATTACKS ON INDIANS
Owaisi Shri Asaduddin

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

- (a) whether the Prime Minister of the State of the Victoria, Australia visited India recently and had meetings in regard to the alleged racial attacks on Indians;
- (b) if so, the details of the discussion held and the outcome thereof;
- (c) whether the visiting dignitary has given any assurance about the safety of Indians in Australia;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the steps taken or being taken by Australian Government for safety and security of Indians in that country?

Answer

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

(a) to (e): Yes, Sir. Hon. John Brumby, Premier of Victoria, Australia visited India from 22 Sept. 2009 to 1st Oct. 2009. Details are placed on the Table on the House, as Annexure.

Annexure referred to in reply to Part (a) to (e) of Lok Sabha Starred Question No.198 for answer on 2nd December 2009

Hon. John Brumby, Premier of Victoria, Australia visited India from 22 Sept. 2009 to 1st Oct.2009. During his visit, he met the Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs, Minister for Human Resource Development, Chief Minister of Delhi and Chief Secretary of Karnataka, to reassure them that Victorian Government, alongwith the Federal Australian Government, is doing its utmost to protect the interests of Indian students in the state of Victoria.

The visiting Australian dignitary was emphatically conveyed Government of India's deep concern on the recent incidents of attacks on Indians in Australia, particularly the recent attack in Epping, Melbourne and the lack of any information/data on the prosecutions and convictions on incidents of attacks on Indians in the recent past.

The premier of Victoria shared our concerns on such instances of continuing attacks on Indian nationals in Australia and said that such attacks are indeed a matter of great concern to him and his Government. He further said the Indian Community in Australia is well established and in these long years has not faced such assaults. The recent incidents are an aberration and his (state) Government as also the Federal Government (of Australia), are addressing this problem in right earnest. He assured that the well being of the Indian community in Melbourne is their prime concern. With a view to ensure this, his Government has given more powers to the police to deal with crimes, especially those committed with a racial overtone or motivation, and has made the laws more stringent, to enable the judiciary to hand down more severe punishment, whenever a crime is committed out of racial hatred. He also stated that in the recent incident in Epping, the Australian police apprehended four suspects within hours of the incident and interrogated them.

As a result of a series of discussions with visiting high level Australian delegations and demarches made by Indian Mission/Posts in Australia, the Australian Government has taken various steps. They have announced a series of measures, including stricter policing in Victoria and NSW, aimed at ensuring the safety and security of Indian nationals especially in Australia. These steps have been useful and the incidence of attacks has decreased.