

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:387

ANSWERED ON:16.12.2009

ATTACKS ON INDIAN STUDENTS ABROAD

Singh Shri Ganesh;Toppo Shri Joseph

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

(a) whether a large number of incidents of attacks on Indians including students in various countries particularly in Australia and Canada have been reported in the recent past;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the number of such incidents that have been reported during the last three years and the current year and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether attacks on Indian students continued to occur in foreign countries despite the action taken by the Government including taking up the matter with the respective countries, issue of advisories to the students etc; and

(d) if so, the further steps taken/being taken by the Government to ensure safety and security of the Indian students in these countries?

Answer

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

(a) to (d): A statement is placed on the table of the House.

Statement referred to in reply to part (a) to (d) Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 387 for answer on 16.12.2009

(a) to (d): A few cases of attacks on Indians studying and working in Australia have been reported. However, no incident has been reported from Canada. The reasons for such attacks are reported as robbery, rivalry and racial element, in some cases. Available information on such incidents during the last three years in various countries is attached as Annexure.

The issue of attack on Indian students in Australia has been taken up at the highest level, conveying that such attacks should not be allowed to happen and that it is the responsibility of the Australian authorities to ensure the well-being and security of our students in Australia. The visiting Australian delegations, including that led by the Australian Prime Minister recently, have been conveyed the high priority that Government of India attaches to the safety, security and well-being of Indian community in Australia. The Australian Prime Minister had reiterated that Australia had a zero tolerance approach to violence and was committed to taking all possible measures to protect the safety and welfare of all international students including Indian students.

A Joint Working Group (JWG) on Student Mobility has been set up between the two countries, which held its first meeting on 6th October, 2009 and agreed on a number of concrete measures to enhance the interests and welfare of Indian students in Australia. The JWG agreed to collaborate in developing robust regulatory mechanisms for the activities of education providers and enrolment agents in India and Australia. The JWG also decided to conclude a Memorandum of cooperation on the better management of student mobility between the two countries, including the exchange of information on undesirable or illegal activities by agents.

The Australian Government has announced a series of measures, including stricter policing in Victoria and NSW, aimed at ensuring the safety and security of Indian students in Australia. These steps have been useful and the number of attacks has come down.