

FISA calls for established Indian community in Australia to adopt a 10-point plan to help Indian students

After a spate of racial attacks on Indian students in Melbourne and other Australian cities it has become obvious that young Indians are facing racism and exploitation with little help from the established and largely successful Indian community.

FISA has therefore drafted a 10-point plan for the local Indian community to reach out and assist students in their hour of need. In Melbourne alone there are 100,000 established Indian migrants who can help the 47,000 Indian students who now feel very insecure and vulnerable.

In developing this plan FISA consulted with a number of people including long term Melbourne resident and elected Local Councillor Tim Singh.

‘The students and FISA have taken a brave step to protest and speak up and risk deportation. The government cannot deport us long-term Indian residents with Permanent Resident status or Australian citizenship so we need to show some courage and lend the Indian students a hand. I commend FISA’s Gautam Gupta for developing the 10-point plan. If the established Indian community adopt this it will send a strong message to the Australian government that we want you to do something but here is what we are doing to help ourselves.’ said Councillor Tim Singh.

1) Free food kitchens across Melbourne to help students survive

Many students are now unemployed or working for as little as one quarter of the legal minimum wage. (Note: The Sikh Temple in Blackburn in Melbourne’s east current feeds thousands of students seven days a week and are happy to help

extend this to other suburbs but we need more Australian Indians to help with extend this southern, northern and western suburbs.)

2) Free two weeks board to welcome each and every Indian student.

If Melbourne's 100,000-strong Indian community gave each student 2 week's free board it would help them find their feet in a strange land. (Note: the City of Darebin has launched a borders without borders program with the general Australian community along these lines sure the Indian community can help with free accommodation). Together we can help all students settle easily as many professional Indians have large homes with empty rooms.

3) Donate to the FISA Victims of crime fund

Indian migrants are one of the richest migrant groups in Australia. Indian business people and Indian professionals can afford to donate generously to the FISA victims of crime fund so that victims like Sravan Kumar who was savagely attacked in his home in Glenroy are looked after properly.

4) Free medical check ups

The local Indian community has thousands of medical doctors and medical specialists. By offer free medical check ups to students we can ensure they are looked after health wise while they are here. This will also ensure a point of contact that is badly needed.

5) Free legal advice from Indian lawyers

The local Indian community has thousands of lawyers. By offering free legal service the established Indian community can help students on critical issues. Indian lawyers could also join together to lodge human rights cases against Victorian and Australian governments, education institutions and immigrations agents who are ripping off many students with false claims and

promises. Lawyers could also help lodge disputes for unfair treatment and discrimination at work.

6) More student Hotlines in all Indian languages

We need all community groups to chip in and establish hotlines in all Indian languages. These need to be staffed with qualified counsellors. Most students look to the Indian association that speaks their language few have heard of FIAV or other umbrella groups.

7) Safety watch committees

Local established Indian groups could adopt a station to provide community or neighbourhood watch committees. If middle class and educated people are at stations at night then the risk of attacks will be reduced. Police are more likely to listen to wealthy professional Indians than students. In addition these safety watch committees can report back to Police and work to reduce poor lighting and other hazards at stations in the poorer neighbourhoods.

8) Political power – the great Indian vote boycott

Established Indians have huge political power given that they live in large numbers in marginal seats in the Melbourne's more affluent east. By refusing to vote for the major Liberal and Labor parties until action is taken to ensure students safety they can send a powerful message to state and federal government. Established Indians should boycott voting for major parties until students' demands are met and their security assured. Politicians are power hungry and will meet our demands if they know established Indians are boycotting their parties. By boycotting both parties we will also stop the state and federal opposition's 'political play acting' and get them to vote for real changes in parliament for Indian students.

9) Public shaming of community rip off merchants

In many cases Indian landlords, bosses, immigration agents and Indian owned education institutions are ripping off our Indian students. Indian community groups need to name and shame these people who are bringing the reputation of Indians in to disrepute and exploiting Indian students. Each community groups could publish the name of 'rip off merchants' on their websites so that students know exactly who they should avoid.

10) Local Indians to support FISA demands

Established Indians can call their local MPs and lobby them to support FISA 6 point plan for better student safety.

Many Australian MPs are not scared of students because they do not vote and will not take FISA's demands seriously. These same MPs are more likely to address FISA's student demands if the local voting Indian's call, email and write to politicians demanding action on student safety. If premier John Brumby receives 100,000 letters or Kevin Rudd receives 200,000 letters from local voting Indians then they will both act swiftly on Indian student safety.