

Indian man 'racially' abused, assaulted in Australia

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Melbourne: In yet another incident of crime against Indians, a man from Kerala was allegedly assaulted by a group of people including a woman in a restaurant in Australia's Tasmania state.

Li Max Joy, who is pursuing a nursing course and working as a part-time taxi driver in Australia, alleged that five people including a girl hurled racial abuses like "you bloody black Indians" at him and assaulted him up at the McDonald's restaurant at North Hobart.

33-year-old Joy, who hails from Puthuppally in Kerala's Kottayam district, told PTI that the incident took place when he went to the restaurant for a coffee after returning from a trip.

He alleged that the five accused were arguing with a worker inside the store but soon turned their attention to him the moment they noticed him.

When others in the restaurant telephoned police, the attackers left, but they returned later and assaulted him again.

Joy was admitted to Royal Hobart Hospital with bleeding wounds. He was later discharged from hospital and he reported the incident to police.

"They were angry at the McDonald's staff but turned their anger on me in the car park and then inside the store," he said.

Joy, who has been living in Hobart for the last eight years, was quoted as saying by Australian media that "the racial mood is definitely changing. It is continuous now. Many other drivers have been abused but not everyone reports it to the police."

Joy has sought intervention of External Affairs Ministry to ensure punishment to the accused.

He alleged that there was no serious efforts from the authorities to bring the guilty to justice.

Meanwhile, Kottayam Lok Sabha MP Jose K Mani condemned the incident and said he will raise the issue with the External Affairs Ministry on Monday.

On March 20, an Indian-origin Catholic priest was stabbed in the neck at a church in Melbourne by a man who called him unqualified to say mass as he was an Indian, prompting the Indian consulate to take up the matter with the police.

A man armed with a knife approached Tomy Kalathoor Mathew, 48, in the church foyer moments before the Italian-language mass at St Matthew's Parish in Fawkner.

- (With inputs from PTI)