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Victorian Man Granted Visa After Machete Attack

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A 33-year-old Indian national who nearly lost his hand in an alleged machete attack has been granted a new visa, allowing him to continue medical treatment in Australia.

Saurabh Anand, who survived the incident at Central Square Shopping Centre in Altona Meadows, is now on a pathway to permanent residency after the federal government considered his case on compassionate grounds.

Five teenagers have been charged over the alleged attack, including a 15-year-old boy arrested last Thursday.

Mr Anand's temporary visa was due to expire on August 25. The new visa will allow him to remain in Australia for up to two years while pursuing permanent residency. His injuries include multiple fractures, severed nerves, tendons, and muscles, leaving him with an estimated 80 per cent loss of sensation in his left arm and hand.

"This is a moment where I feel relieved that the government and the community have come together to support me through one of the most horrifying moments in my life," Mr Anand told ABC program 7.30. He said the decision had restored his hope in humanity.

Mr Anand and his father, Nitin Anand, met with local MP Tim Watts and Assistant Minister for Citizenship Julian Hill to formalise the visa extension. The two-year renewal of his subclass 485 (Temporary Graduate) visa was finalised after a brief period of administrative detention, required to process the claim.

Assistant Minister Hill said granting the visa was "the right thing to do," noting the severity of the attack. He also highlighted Mr Anand's contributions to Australia, including his work as a sales representative and his master's degree from RMIT.

Mr Anand's recovery is expected to take up to 12 months and remains both physically and mentally demanding. "I am taking one day at a time. Every day gives me a new hope," he said.

After media coverage of his case earlier this month, Mr Anand wrote directly to the minister outlining his urgent need for medical care. His case drew bipartisan support, including from Victorian State Liberal MP Moira Deeming, who appealed to Home Affairs Minister Tony Burke for a bridging visa.

The federal government will now move to grant Mr Anand permanent residency, pending routine character checks and the Department of Home Affairs process.

Mr Hill emphasised that Mr Anand's education and community work were central to the decision: "He studied for a high-quality degree, worked, and contributed to the community."