

[15 July, 2004]

RAJYA SABHA

Implementation of New Visa Rules by USA

† *159. SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH:
SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the US Government has recently made extensive changes with regard to the issue of some major categories of working visas;

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) the possible repercussions on the Indian visa holders and the steps proposed to be taken by Government to protect their interests?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) The Government of the U.S.A. with effect from 16 July, 2004 has introduced new procedure for revalidation/renewal of certain type of visas like E1/E2, H, I, O, L, P.

(b) The holders of visas in above mentioned categories, as mentioned in (a), residing in the USA will have to go back to their home country or any other third country for revalidation/renewal before they are allowed to stay for further period in U.S.A. The procedure for grant of visa is a sovereign right of the country issuing it. U.S. Government has introduced these procedures to comply with their domestic legislation.

(c) The new procedure would affect Indian visa holders in the above categories as mentioned in (a). They would suffer hardships and financial loss in travelling out of USA to get their visas extended. The application of these rules is universal to all countries. The grant of visa by any country is a sovereign right of that country. U.S. Government has introduced these procedures to comply with their domestic legislation.

Common approach towards nuclear doctrines between India and Pakistan

*160. PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are convinced that India and Pakistan should explore a common approach towards nuclear doctrines; and

(b) if so, whether Government would like to propose steps beyond confidence building measures to promote stability?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) During the India-Pakistan Expert Level Dialogue on Nuclear Confidence Building Measures held in New Delhi on June 19-20, 2004, the two sides exchanged views on their respective security concepts and nuclear doctrines. No discussions have been held with the Government of Pakistan or proposals made so far specifically addressing the idea of a common nuclear doctrine.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Export of coir products

400. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the increasing demand for natural fibres in global market;

(b) if so the action taken for increasing the export of coir and coir products; and

(c) the details of the coir and coir products exported and the amount of foreign exchange earned during the last three years, year-wise/State-wise and category-wise?

THE MINISTER OF AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) With a view to increase the trade with existing export markets and capture new markets, Coir Board is either implementing or proposing to implement schemes of Market Study Surveys, participation in International seminars and conferences, participation in exhibitions/fairs, catalogue shows and Product Promotion Programmes. Besides, the Coir Board has moved the Bureau of Indian Standards and also the Ministry of Environment and Forests for acquiring ecomark labelling for coir and coir products. This will make the products more acceptable to the ecologically conscious Western countries. '

(c) The details of the coir and coir products exported and the amount of foreign exchange earned during the last three years, year-wise and category-wise are given in the statement.