

[19 August, 2004]

RAJYA SABHA

Safety of Indian students in Russia

1693. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that a youth terrorist group in Russia is targeting non-white foreigners, particularly students, studying in Russia which has spread a panic amongst Indian students in Russia; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken or are proposed to be taken to ensure safety of Indians, particularly students in Russia?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) While there are no well identified organized youth terrorist groups in Russia, there are criminal elements including 'skinheads' targeting from time to time non-white foreigners, including students. Many foreign nationals, including Indians, have been the victims. This has caused some anxiety in the Indian community. However, there seems to have been a certain level of decline in this trend in recent months.

(b) Our Embassy in Moscow monitors the local law and order situation and periodically advises the Indian community, including students, on necessary safety precautions. Our concerns are also taken up with the concerned Russian authorities as and when required.

Hostage truck drivers in Iraq

1694. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have seriously taken the issue of the three truck drivers held hostage in Iraq recently;

(b) whether Government have any report of the Indian working in Iraq in different fields; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Government have received reports of Indians working