

[26 August, 2004]

RAJYA SABHA

also meet, as necessary, to review the situation and take appropriate decisions. This mechanism remains in force until the crisis ends. It needs to be pointed out that no two hostage situations are entirely similar and different responses may be required depending upon specific circumstances to reach the objectives of Government policy.

India's policy towards West Asia

2448. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there have been a paradigm shift in India's policy towards the West Asia; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) & (b) The objective of the Government is to give a fresh thrust to India's traditional ties with the countries of West Asia. In this context, Government will remain committed to fully supporting, the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people for a homeland of their own. It is also committed to participating in all endeavours aimed at bringing stability to Iraq and for ensuring the well being of the Iraqi people. Government will build upon the traditionally strong relations with the countries of West Asia which are based on cultural affinities, economic interaction and a vibrant Indian expatriate community.

Norms for U.S. citizenship

2449. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the U.S. Administration has set very rigorous norms for the immigrants who intend to adopt the U.S. citizenship;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) The rules for acquisition of US citizenship by naturalisation require that the applicant:

i. must be 18 years of age;