

Fear of attacks on Sikhs

969. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn towards the new-items captioned "Sikh killed in US, revives fear of more hate attacks", published in the "Hindustan Times" dated the 7th August, 2002;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether Government have taken up the matter with the U.S. Government;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps being taken to ensure the safety of the Indian community (Sikhs) in US?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes.

(b) Government condemn all acts of senseless violence against Indian nationals abroad. We will continue to do all that we can to prevent such attacks against our nationals in other countries.

(c) to (e) Immediately after the killing of Sukhpal Singh Sodhi in San Francisco, a report was lodged with the FBI and the California Police, who stated that there was no evidence pointing to a hate crime. However, the police investigation is reportedly still in progress. The Indian embassy in Washington and the Consulates General in San Francisco, Chicago and Houston have been regularly sensitizing state government authorities and city mayors about the security and protection of Indian communities in the United States. In addition, they have been in close contact with community leaders, advising them to generate more security consciousness among Indian expatriates. Members of the Indian community have also been encouraged to use the media to educate the general public about Sikhism and increase their social interaction with the communities around them to better integrate themselves in the local society.