

[8 May, 2003]

RAJYA SABHA

Harassment of Indian lady

5051. SHRIVUAY J DARDA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of a harrowing tale of racial abuse perpetrated in US when an Indian-born female Canadian was harassed at Chicago Airport, was forced back to India in Kuwaiti Airlines after her passport was mutilated by INS officials, and ultimately she had to get emergency passport at Kuwait after three days, thereby causing avoidable mental torture: and

(b) if so, what steps Government propose to take with the US Government to avoid recurrence of such incidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) Government is aware that a Canadian lady of Indian origin was subjected to harassment at Chicago Airport by officials of the Immigration and naturalization Service of the United States Government. The reason for the alleged harassment was, according to her, because of the fact that she looked Indian but held a Canadian passport and bore a Spanish name.

(b) Since the victim is a Canadian national, under international law, it is the primary responsibility of the Government of Canada to seek redressal from the Government of USA. It is learnt that the victim herself has petitioned the Canadian Prime Minister in this regard.

Foreign Policy to bring peace

5052. SHRI VUAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the most important issue for the 21st century is to bridge the misunderstandings between the West and the Islamic countries so as to avert a warlike situation as is developing in Iraq and move towards peaceful environment;

(b) if so, how far our foreign policy and diplomacy is oriented toward achieving that end in various world forums like UNO, NAM and similar other organisations: and

(c) what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) to (c) Some scholars have propounded the theory of "Clash of Civilisations" as the root cause of various regional conflicts. India