

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1410
ANSWERED ON:30.07.2003
RAIL SERVICE LINK WITH PAKISTAN
SRIKANTA DATTA NARASIMHARAJA WADIYAR

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) Whether the Government have a proposal to resume rail services between India and Pakistan;
- (b) if so, the time by which it is likely to be resumed; and
- (c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken in the matter?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH)

(a) to (c) Prime Minister had, on April 18, 2003 extended the hand of friendship once again to Pakistan. Subsequently, India has taken the initiative to move in a step-by-step manner to normalize diplomatic and other links between the two countries. Both countries have appointed High Commissioners and the Delhi-Lahore bus service has been resumed with effect from July 11. Pakistan has indicated willingness to host technical level discussions for resumption of civil aviation, although proposals for specific dates are still awaited. Both sides have released prisoners. There have also been important exchanges in the context of business, cultural and people-to-people contacts.

Pakistan, on July 24, 2003 formally suggested meeting between railway authorities of the two countries to discuss modalities to resume railway service.

India would move ahead in a step-by-step manner, building on the successes achieved and the confidence generated.