

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3051  
ANSWERED ON:13.08.2003  
OPENING OF JAMMU-RAWALPINDI ROAD  
CHINTAMAN NAVSHA WANAGA

**Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:**

- (a) Whether the Union Government have any proposal to open the Jammu-Rawalpindi Road link;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

**Answer**

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

(a) to (c) Government have always supported greater people to people contacts between India and Pakistan. On July 9, 2001, the Government had indicated willingness to consider several proposals for easing travel between the two countries, including through additional check-posts on Rajasthan- Sindh border and at designated points along the International Border and the LoC in Jammu and Kashmir.

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 normalise diplomatic and other links between the two countries. Prime Minister had, in his speech in Parliament on May 2, 2003, emphasised inter alia the importance of people to people contacts, which would create an environment in which difficult issues between India and Pakistan could be addressed.

Following Prime Minister's initiative both countries have appointed High Commissioners; the Delhi-Lahore bus service has been resumed with effect from July 11; technical level talks for resumption of civil aviation on reciprocal basis are scheduled to be held on August 27-28, 2003; both sides have released prisoners; and there have been important exchanges in the context of business, cultural and people-to-people contacts.

Government intends to proceed with present approach of step-by-step normalization of diplomatic and other links. Further steps would be considered based on the progress made, and confidence generated.