

[22 March, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

with the United States, to strengthen mutual understanding on security issues.

Pakistan's stand on India's cease-fire

2927. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Pakistan had denounced India's extension of the Kashmir cease-fire by three months;

(b) if so, whether Government are also aware that Pakistan has stated that it was 'yet another attempt to mislead the world opinion';

(c) if so, whether Pakistan had urged India to realise the futility of its efforts to impose a military solution on Kashmir; and

(d) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI KRISHNAMRAJU): (a) to (d) The State of Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of the Indian Union, a part of the territory of the State is under the forcible and illegal occupation of Pakistan. It is obvious that Pakistan has no role whatsoever to play in matters pertaining to the internal affairs of India.

On 22nd February 2001, for the third time, Government announced the extension of the period of non-initiation of combat operations against militants in Jammu and Kashmir. Government have also indicated their willingness to talk to all those who abjure violence. It has been made amply clear that this initiative is only for those who wish to benefit from it. Security forces have been given clear instructions to act decisively against any one who wishes to sabotage the prospects of peace in the State, or seeks to injure any of our citizens. The people of Jammu and Kashmir have continued to warmly welcome Government's unilateral initiatives, which serve to strengthen the constituency of peace in the State.

Government are aware that Pakistan continues to make efforts to sabotage the prospects of peace in Jammu and Kashmir through

stepped up violence in the State and other parts of the country. Government are firm in their resolve to take all necessary measures to defeat Pakistan's sponsorship of cross border terrorism and preserve the security and territorial integrity of the country.

Threat from Jehadi Groups

2928. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government believe that Jehadi Groups fix a common threat to India, Russia, China and also United States of America;
- (b) whether Government are in touch with some of these countries to meet this threat; and
- (c) if so, their response thereto and whether any joint strategy has been considered?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI KRIS HN AM RAJ U): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Terrorism is a serious threat to the security of nation states, as well as to regional and international security. Many terrorist groups are based in Pakistan, and have close links with Pakistan's official agencies. These groups, and Pakistan, project cross border terrorism as Jihad. This is self-serving and perverse.

Government have been appropriately and effectively bringing to the attention of the international community facts pertaining to Pakistan's sponsorship of cross border terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir and other parts of India. Members of the international community now openly acknowledge Pakistan's sponsorship of cross border terrorism.

During the visit of President of the Russian Federation, H.E. Vladimir Putin, to India in October 2000 the subject of international terrorism was discussed at length. India and the Russian Federation signed a Declaration on Strategic Partnership which refers to cooperation between the two countries in the fight against international terrorism, separatism, organized crime and illegal