

Indo-Pak border

*148. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY:
SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government have not ruled out the possibility of altering Indian's borders with Pakistan to resolve the Kashmir dispute;
- (b) if so, whether there is any departure from the past policy; and
- (c) if not, Government's views to get a solution on the Kashmir dispute?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (c) The Government have made their consistent and principled position abundantly clear that the State of Jammu & Kashmir is an integral part of India. Pakistan is in illegal and forcible occupation of a part of the State.

India is committed to a peaceful settlement of all bilateral issues with Pakistan.

Relations with Pakistan and Bangladesh

*149. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the extent of progress made in developing relations with Pakistan and Bangladesh in socio-economic and political fields;
- (b) whether the issue of trade and commerce from the North-Eastern region with Bangladesh and with other regions of our country across Bangladesh has been taken up so far; and
- (c) the achievements in this respect so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (c) Government is committed to the development of peaceful, friendly and cooperative relations with Pakistan. Several significant steps have been taken to normalise diplomatic and other links, and promote people to people contacts. In this context, there have been exchanges at the level of Parliamentarians, jurists, journalists, sportsmen, artistes, businessmen, etc. Prisoners and fishermen have been released on both sides, and the visits by pilgrim groups resumed. In addition, a ceasefire along the International Border, Line of Control and the Actual Ground Position Line (AGPL) in Jammu