

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI BIPINPAL DAS): (a) The upgrading of relations between India and China to the Ambassadorial level and the resumption of diplomatic relations between India and Pakistan have been generally received and commented upon in favourable terms around the world.

(b) and (c). These developments are entirely in line with India's consistent policy of improving and strengthening bilateral relations with her neighbours with the object of furthering the cause of peace and stability in the Asian region including the cause of making the Indian Ocean region a zone of peace.

Chicken-pox in Punjab

316. SHRI AJIT KUMAR SAHA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the spreading of chicken-pox epidemic in Punjab; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken to eradicate this epidemic?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING (SHRI A. K. M. ISHAQUE): (a) Yes.

(b) Chicken-pox is a mild infectious disease and except for the isolation of the patient, there are no other steps, which can be taken to control/eradicate the disease.

The Government of Punjab have promulgated temporary regulations under the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897, to deal with the chicken-pox epidemic. The disease has been declared as notifiable and the inspecting officers have been empowered to enquire, inspect, examine and isolate any person suspected to be suffering from chicken-pox.

Economic Summit Conference in Puerto-Rico

317. SARDAR SWARAN SINGH SOKHI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India was invited by U.S.A. to attend the Economic Summit Conference in Puerto-Rico held in June, 1976; and

(b) the reaction of Government thereto?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI BIPINPAL DAS): (a) and (b). No, Sir. The Economic Summit Conference in Puerto-Rico was called by the United States in June, 1976 and several of industrialised countries of West Europe, Japan and Canada were invited. No developing country was invited to participate.

Prime Minister's Visit to G.D.R.

318. SHRIMATI ROZA DESHPANDE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) how far the Prime Minister's visit to G.D.R. has strengthened ties of friendship between the two countries; and

(b) the main features of the joint declaration at the end of the visit?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI BIPINPAL DAS): (a) The Prime Minister's visit to G.D.R. has made a significant contribution to the strengthening of the ties of friendship, understanding and cooperation between the two countries.

(b) The notable feature of the Joint Communiqué issued at the end of the visit is the identity or closeness of approach of the two countries on important international problems and their desire to further develop and expand bilateral relations and cooperation.