

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5610
ANSWERED ON:29.08.2001
VOTING RIGHTS TO INDIAN CITIZENS
AMAR ROY PRADHAN

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

to reply given to Unstarred Question no.480 dated 15.7.1996 and state:

- (a) whether the proposal in respect of grant of voting rights to Indian citizens living in Indian Enclaves in Bangladesh is pending with the Government since long;
- (b) if so, since when;
- (c) whether the Government propose to give this right to these Indian citizens in the near future; and
- (d) if so, by when, and if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH)

(a) to (d) Government is aware of the issue of voting rights for Indian citizens living in Indian enclaves in Bangladesh. India has no administrative control or access to the Indian enclaves in Bangladesh. They are to be exchanged as per the India - Bangladesh Land Boundary Agreement, 1974. The exchange of enclaves is directly linked to the completion of joint demarcation of the boundary between India and Bangladesh. The joint demarcation of about 6.5 kms of the India-Bangladesh land boundary is yet to be completed. The Government of India is keen on an early settlement of all boundary-related matters with Bangladesh and the two Governments have set up two Joint Boundary Working Groups to address the pending issues including completion of demarcation and exchange of enclaves and territories in adverse possession in a focused and systematic manner. The first meeting of these Groups was held in Dhaka in July 2001.