

में नहीं जाता बाकी मायकी प्राज्ञानुसार बँडे जाता ह ।

Safe Port Facilities

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*240. Shri Hem Barua:

Shri P. E. Chakraverti:

Shri P. C. Borooah:

Will the Minister of Transport be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that due to the present conflict with Pakistan, Government are contemplating to have some surplus and comparatively safe port facilities; and

(b) if so, whether the port facilities available at present are proposed to be improved or new facilities are proposed to be created?

The Minister of Transport (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) Government's policy is to develop adequate port capacity all along the coastline of India, so that our ports can cope with the foreseeable expansion of India's seaborne trade and also with the stress and strain of any kind of emergency.

(b) Government's programme of development envisages both improvement of the existing ports and development of new major ports.

Shri Hem Barua: I hope by "safe port facilities" Government also mean safety of the ports from the defence point of view. If they mean that, may I know what steps Government have taken to ensure the safety of the existing ports from possible enemy attacks, particularly air attacks?

Shri Raj Bahadur: That essentially impinges upon the functions of the defence forces. I am sure they have taken adequate care about the safety and security of our ports.

Shri Hem Barua: As the Minister responsible for ports he should know the steps taken for the safety of ports.

Mr. Speaker: What is his next question?

Shri Hem Barua: As the Calcutta port is facing gradual extinction, may I know what steps Government have taken to rejuvenate it?

Shri Raj Bahadur: We have been taking steps.....

Mr. Speaker: Rejuvenating the Government or the member?

Shri Hem Barua: The port, the Calcutta port.

Shri Raj Bahadur: In that sense, Calcutta is an old port.

Shri Hem Barua: Both the Minister and myself are rejuvenated people.

Mr. Speaker: I am very happy.

Shri Raj Bahadur: We are trying to improve the facilities in the port of Calcutta. We are trying to keep the channel open by extensive and intensive dredging. We have also taken steps to develop the satellite port of Haldia.

Shri P. E. Chakraverti: In view of the fact that the Government is already committed to the development of Haldia Port as a substitute port near Calcutta, may I know whether in the context of this emergency it will be given top priority?

Shri Raj Bahadur: I must make it clear that Haldia is not being developed as a substitute port, it is being developed as a satellite port. There is a lot of difference between the two and I would like to remove the misunderstanding, if there is any, because it has complications. We are taking all possible steps to expedite the development of Haldia Port.

Shri P. C. Borooah: What is the total port capacity proposed to be created under the contemplated scheme and will it be completed during the Fourth Plan?

Shri Raj Bahadur: By the end of the Third Plan, we hope to create a capacity of ports of an order of 60-7 million tonnes. It might go up to 80

million tonnes or 85 million tonnes by the end of the Fourth Plan.

Shri Tridib Kumar Chaudhuri: With regard to Haldia Port may I know whether Government have obtained final assurances from the World Bank as to the aid that we propose that they should give for the Haldia Port; or, is it still hanging fire?

Shri Raj Bahadur: The World Bank requires certain technical information from technical experts. Now they have that information and a report has been sent to them. Presently, an appraisal team of the World Bank is right here in the capital and we are holding discussions with them.

Shri P. Venkatasubbalah: May I know whether Government has drawn up any programme to develop certain subsidiary ports, which are as strategic as some of the major ports, like Kakinada in Andhra Pradesh; if so, what measures is Government contemplating to take?

Shri Raj Bahadur: It is our endeavour to develop as many ports—major, intermediate and minor—as possible and Kakinada happens to be falling in one of the latter two categories.

Dr. Ranen Sen: While developing Haldia and Paradip ports there was a controversy as to whether iron ore or manganese ore will be exported abroad through Haldia or Paradip Port. Has the Government come to any final decision in regard to this?

Shri Raj Bahadur: We do not attach much importance to that controversy; in fact, Haldia Port will have to cater to many a demand for handling bulk commodities including, to some extent, iron ore traffic also. So far as Paradip is concerned, essentially it will be meant for iron ore but it also will handle general cargo and other bulk commodities. There are not any fixed rules about it. We will have to go by the standard or measure of the immediate cost involved to the export commodity or to the import commodity.

Shri Basumatari: In view of the conflict between Pakistan and India is the Government of India contemplating to establish two ports at Jogighopa and Niamatighat; if so, what are the financial implications and progress thereof?

Shri Raj Bahadur: Sir, we are travelling from sea ports to river ports.

Steamer Service to Assam

*241. **Shri P. C. Borooah:**
Shri Hem Barua:
Shrimati Benuka Barkataki:

Will the Minister of Transport be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that most of the crew of the steamers plying between West Bengal and Assam are Pakistani nationals;

(b) whether in view of the present Indo-Pakistan conflict any special measures have been taken to ensure that this life-line of communications to Assam does not break down; and

(c) if so, the measures taken?

The Minister of Transport (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) Yes.

(b) and (c). The services on the river route from Calcutta to Assam stand suspended since the outbreak of hostilities. The question of restoration of this route will be taken up at the appropriate time. Alternative coordinated transport arrangements to Assam have been made to meet the requirements.

Shri P. C. Borooah: May I know if the present dislocation of services and impounding of the vessels will not result in greater losses to this company which has been taken over by the Government presently? This company is sustaining losses to the extent of Rs. 90 lakhs a year. What steps have been proposed to be taken by the Government to keep the services plying in the event of this company having to be wound up?