

le: Regarding Public Transport System between Kochi to Lakshwadeep via sea-route.

**SHRI MOHAMMED FAIZAL P.P. (LAKSHADWEEP):** I would like to raise a very important issue, pertaining to my constituency, regarding public transport system.

Sir, public transport to Lakshadweep is only through ship. We had seven ships operating from Kochi to Lakshadweep. For the last one year, only three ships are being operated. When seven ships were operating, about 2,300 passengers used to travel from Kochi to various islands of Lakshadweep. When the number was reduced to one ship, in the last six months only 400 passengers could travel from Kochi to Lakshadweep or *vice versa*.

You can understand the agony and hardship that people are facing due to the shortage of passenger ships. The shortage of passenger ships can be attributed to a number of reasons. Initially, the administration did not sanction any fund for the maintenance of ships. Later, when the fund was sanctioned, there was an issue with regard to docking. Till now, we are left with only three ships which connect our island with the mainland. Students, who have to travel for their studies, or patients, who have to travel for getting treatment, are all in great distress.

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, this is not my point exactly. Considering the aspect of transportation and cargo movement, the Ministry of Shipping, Shipping Corporation of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, and Lakshadweep Administration combinedly made a prospective plan for fifteen years, that is, a futuristic plan, including the tourism demand also. Accordingly, six new passenger ships and six new cargo ships in

place of the old ones, were proposed. If that goes well, by 2022, we should have, in place, 500 capacity passenger ships which were tendered by the Shipping Corporation of India.

But now, this is the situation. After the new Administrator has joined in, the prospective plan, which was formed by the entire committee, was thrown away. He has not followed the prospective plan. By then, ships which were proposed to come to Lakshadweep, are now on a halt. I do not know what is the present status of the prospective plan.

Therefore, I would like to know from the Government, especially from the Ministry of Home Affairs, what is the present status of the prospective plan from 2015 to 2030. Thank you so much.