

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI BIPINPAL DAS): (a) India has taken various initiatives to improve relations with Bangladesh but, unfortunately, the response has not been satisfactory.

(b) Among the major outstanding issue, settled by agreement between India and Bangladesh is the one concerning the demarcation of the land boundary, signed by the Prime Ministers of the two countries on 16th May 1974.

Surplus Labour at Calcutta Port

1687. **SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA:** Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Calcutta Dock Labour Board has taken steps to bring down surplus labour at Calcutta port;

(b) if so, the outlines thereof; and

(c) Government's reaction thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI H. M. TRIVEDI):

(a) and (b). With a view to making Calcutta Port operationally efficient and economically viable, the Calcutta Dock Labour Board, which is a tripartite body, resolved unanimously at a meeting held on 29-7-1976 that it had become absolutely necessary to reorganize the work-force of the Board in accordance with the present trends of traffic to be handled. The Chairman of the Board was authorised to make an assessment to determine the number of registered workers required in each category and take action to retire the surplus after paying them suitable compensation.

(c) Government is awaiting a concrete proposal following this meeting.

Decline in Birth Rate to Planned Level

1688. **SHRI M. KATHAMUTHU:** Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the birth rate is expected to decline to the planned level by the end of the Sixth Plan; and

(b) if so, the facts thereof?

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

(b) During the year 1975-76, the birth-rate is estimated to have come down to about 35 per thousand population from 41 in 1961. It is expected that with the realisation of the targets fixed for the remaining period of the Fifth-Plan, the birth-rate will decline to 30.7 by the end of fifth plan. The programme envisages a further reduction in birth-rate to the level of 25 per 1000 population by the end of sixth plan.

Realisation of Loans from Shipping Companies

1689. **SHRI M. KATHAMUTHU:**
SHRI K. M. MADHUKAR:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the loans to the tune of Rupees twenty lakhs are yet to be realised from five leading shipping companies;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) whether Government have taken any measures to realise this amount, and

(d) if so, the results thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI H. M. TRIVEDI):

(a) Loans given by the shipping Development Fund Committee to shipping companies are repayable by the latter