

LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Monday, December 7, 1998/Agrahayana 16,
1920 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at
Eleven of the Clock

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Port Operation Facilities

*101. DR. ASIM BALA : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to set up a Committee to streamline the port operation facilities in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the cargo handling facilities at various ports particularly at the Calcutta and Haldia ports would also be considered by the Committee or the Government; and

(e) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. M. THAMBI DURAI) : (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) Augmenting/upgradation of cargo handling facilities at major ports is a continuous process which is achieved through Public Investment as well as by attracting Private Investment.

(d) and (e) An outlay of Rs. 545 crores has been provided for Calcutta and Haldia Ports during the 9th Five Year Plan. The major schemes include: construction of an oil jetty, a jetty for handling chemicals and construction of three multi-purpose berths at Haldia.

MR. SPEAKER : This Question relates to ports. I will give a chance to those hon. Members who represent port cities, like Dr. T. Subbarmai Reddy and others.

SHRI A.C. JOS : Sir, I am from Cochin.

MR. SPEAKER : I will give chance to those Members who represent the port cities.

DR. ASIM BALA : Sir, we are very much concerned about the silt being deposited in the Bay of Bengal approaching Haldia and Calcutta and also about the silt being deposited on the river Ganga near Calcutta port. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government is planning to introduce a whole new system of dredging for more lasting effect so that both Calcutta and Haldia ports could be upgraded in all operational purposes and facilities like warehousing, trucking, excise clearance, transporting for stuffing and stuffing into containers, customs procedure, transport to railheads or ICD, movement from ICD to the port handling, transportation from ports to the yards, customs documentation in the port, liaison with shipping agents, transporting the containers to the shipping site, loading containers on the board, namely a full-fledged, up-to-date modernisation of the port facilities would be available.

DR. M. THAMBI DURAI : The Government is taking all the necessary steps to see that silt is removed by dredging. We are giving Rs. 90 crore annually for such dredging operation. Dredging is going on between Calcutta and Haldia Ports. Apart from this, we have an approved 9th Plan outlay of Rs. 295 crore for river-related schemes. The scheme is already there and we expect that PIB will accept it and the Planning Commission will approve it very soon. Based on that we are going to implement it.

Besides this, to develop the Calcutta Port, we have allocated Rs. 7.15 crore for the renovation of the vendoring system and Rs. 18 crore has been allocated for replacement of survey vessel with two sea-going launchers. We also have Rs. 8 crore as our approved Annual Plan outlay. These are major steps that we have taken with regard to Calcutta Port.

With regard to Haldia Port, we have taken up construction of third oil jetty. We have sanctioned Rs. 43 crore for that and the contract was awarded in April 1998. We have also sanctioned the construction of multi-purpose berth on 29.9.1998 at the cost of Rs. 43 crore and we hope that the tender will be invited on 9.1.99. We anticipate to complete the work by March 2000. We also have a project for the construction of chemical handling jetty. The proposal came to us in September 1998. The report is expected in the month of March. These are the steps which we have taken. Our Annual Plan outlay for the Haldia port is nearly Rs. 200 crore. We have already spent Rs. 21 crore in 1997-98. In the Annual Plan of 1998-99, we have allocated Rs. 22 crore for making improvement in the Port. We are also considering privatising the Haldia Port. The Ministry has approved in principle the construction of two multipurpose berths at Haldia, Berths No. 12 and 4(a) respectively.

DR. ASIM BALA : I had specifically asked as to how much amount has been sanctioned for dredging operation at Calcutta and Haldia Ports.

DR. M. THAMBI DURAI : We are giving Rs. 90 crore per year for dredging.

DR. ASIM BALA : Is it for Calcutta Port alone or for the whole of West Bengal?

DR. M. THAMBI DURAI : No, on the whole we are giving Rs. 90 crore for it.

MR. SPEAKER : He has already answered it.

DR. ASIM BALA : In West Bengal, near Calcutta, Rs. 925 crore have been allocated for Kulpi Project. This is a joint venture project. This proposal is pending for the last 4 years. This project is likely to be expanded by the Government. I would like to know from the Minister as to when this new Kulpi port project is going to come.

DR. M. THAMBI DURAI : The State Government of West Bengal has made a proposal to develop an all weather multipurpose port near Kulpi at an estimated cost of Rs. 1000 crore. This comes under the Calcutta Port. We are considering the proposal. We wanted to see how the construction of this port will affect the existing Calcutta port. We would like to consider it if the existing Calcutta Port is not affected in any way. The discussion is going on and we will consider it, based on its effect on the Calcutta Port.

DR. ASIM BALA : It is a joint venture project.

DR. M. THAMBI DURAI : I know that it is a joint venture project. We will have to see whether it will affect the existing Calcutta Port or not. We are already facing the labour problem in Calcutta. If Kulpi Port comes, what effect it will have on the existing Calcutta Port. If the State Government is ready to take up everything, we have no objection. We can consider it.

SHRI P.C. CHACKO : Since the Minister is giving a very detailed reply, I would like to ask a very specific question. The general question is about modernisation of cargo handling in the Indian Ports. Cochin is one of the major ports of the country. There is a proposal for setting up a container terminal in Vallar Padam, as an extension of the existing Cochin Port. This proposal is six or seven years' old. Many Ministers have come and gone. Shri Karunakaran, the former Chief Minister of Kerala who finalised this project six years back is sitting here. Containerisation of the port is going at snail's pace in India. This was a proposal of the Ministry itself and all the facilities were to be extended by Kerala Government. Will the Government give an assurance to the House that the work on setting up a container port at Vallar Padam

in Cochin will be taken up urgently? If containerisation is delayed, the turn around time of ships in the Indian ports is delayed. This is a very urgent matter. I would like to have a clear cut answer from the hon. Minister.

DR. M. THAMBI DURAI : Sir, the container traffic is growing in our country and I accept that we are lagging behind. But now, we are taking all the steps to see that container traffic can be handled properly so that we can raise more income. In that connection, we are taking all the steps to short-list the tenders. We are going to take up that and we are trying to implement that project.

SHRI P.C. CHACKO : It is your project, please give us an answer.

DR. M. THAMBI DURAI : We are taking it up. We are short listing and based on that we are going to implement that.

SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR : Sir, the main question is regarding the improvement of the operational facilities in ports. I come from Mangalore which is an all-weather major port. I consider while improving the operational facilities in the ports, the development of the hinterland also would play a major role. Unless, the hinterland is very well connected with the ports, the operational facilities cannot improve. It is an admitted fact today that the handling capacity in all the ports in our country is much below the world standards. We are nowhere comparable with the handling capacity available elsewhere in the world.

Sir, the Minister is not giving a concrete reply so far as setting up of a Committee to make a study is concerned. He is also not forthcoming with definite answers.

MR. SPEAKER : You have to put a concrete supplementary, then he can give a definite answer.

SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR : Sir, he can definitely make an assessment out of my suggestion.

Sir, he is not forthcoming with a definite suggestion about attracting investment. Now, we do not have funds. That is also an admitted fact. Are there any steps suggested by the Ministry to attract investments, at least from the private sector to improve the operational facilities in the major ports?

DR. M. THAMBI DURAI : Sir, the Ministry is also of the view, as is the hon. Member, that we are somewhat behind in comparison to international port handling facilities. For that, during the Ninth Plan, we have taken major steps to improve and modernise the existing ports. We have evolved a lot of schemes for that and have allocated an outlay of nearly Rs. 16,000 crore for the Ninth Plan Outlay.

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Minister, he is asking whether you are involving any private people or not.

DR. M. THAMBI DURAI : Sir, I am coming to that. We are spending nearly Rs. 7,215 crore for Port and berths through budget allocation, and we are expecting the remaining Rs. 8,000 crore from the private sector. We are taking all the steps for that. We are also thinking of having certain joint venture projects. I am going to bring a new Bill in this regard before the House.

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY : Hon. Speaker, Sir, I want to ask a question from the hon. Minister. He has said in his reply that an outlay of Rs. 545 crore has been provided for the Calcutta and Haldia Ports during Ninth Five Year Plan. The Calcutta Port covers a very big area where worse conditions are prevailing. I want to know whether the port operation facilities include proposals for beautification and development of Calcutta Port Trust area, particularly, from Central to North direction and if so, will it be a joint venture project?

DR. M. THAMBI DURAI : Sir, as regards beautification of ports is concerned, we are considering a project for this. As far as Calcutta port is concerned, there are some encroachments. We are trying to vacate them and are trying to improve that port. We are taking all these steps.

SHRI U.V. KRISHNAMRAJU : Sir, all round industrial development of port operations have become crucial for the infrastructure development. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the State Government of Andhra Pradesh has ever asked the Central Government to take over Kakinada Port for better operations. If so, why the Central Government did not proceed to take over the Kakinada Port for developing infrastructural facilities instead of privatizing it? It is because the Anchor Port workers would be affected badly if it is privatised. I would like to know whether the Committee which was set up to streamline the port operational facilities would also study the operation of Kakinada Port.

DR. M. THAMBI DURAI : Sir, we are dealing with the major ports. The Kakinada Port comes under minor ports. If the State Government comes forward to give any proposal in regard to joint venture we are ready to consider it. That way, we are ready to take up the minor ports also with the major ports.

SHRI U.V. KRISHNAMRAJU : Have they already asked for it?

DR. M. THAMBI DURAI : There is no proposal from them.

SHRI T.R. BAALU : As per the projection made by the Planning Commission by 2002, the capacity utilisation of our ports shall be of the order of 424

million metric tonnes. But as things stand, there will be a shortfall of 94 metric tonnes. What is the action plan with the Government in this regard?

Secondly, we have got 11 major ports. Out of these, how many ports are in general, are in conformity with the international standards, and the Chennai Port in particular?

DR. M. THAMBI DURAI : Sir, as far as the matter regarding improving the ports according to the demand in the coming years is concerned, it is correct that we require an estimated capacity of about 424 million tonnes in the current year. For that we have taken a capacity yield from the Eighth Plan of 31 million tonnes. We are working it out.

We are also taking up a scheme in the Ninth Plan to create more facilities to raise a capacity of 124 million tonnes. So, we are having this scheme in the Ninth Plan. We are also expecting the development of minor ports and increase in productivity of the major ports to the tune of 50 million tonnes.

As far as Chennai Port is concerned, we are already trying to privatise certain berths to see that the handling of the cargoes can be increased. Ennore is also a part of the present Chennai Port. We are thinking to make Ennore a separate corporate entity. Like that, we are trying to increase the capacity to meet the demand.

SHRI T.R. BAALU : Sir, he has not answered how many ports are of international standard.

DR. M. THAMBI DURAI : All our major ports are of the international standard. We are trying to improve them.

SHRI A.C. JOS : Sir, the hon. Minister has been kind enough to answer Shri Chacko's question. Cochin is a major port and NLG is going to be a the state-of-the-art raw material for the production of electricity. It is the opinion of the experts that the Cochin Port is the apt and ideal port for importing NLG. The Cochin Port has submitted certain plan and mechanism to import NLG and has allotted a specific berth for that.

Sir, the hon. Minister has not answered specifically about the Vallar Padam transhipment container terminal. A transhipment container port of international standard is necessary. The Cochin Port has submitted a plan for setting such a port at Vallar Padam. I want to know what happened to the Vallar Padam project and what is your proposal with regard to import of NLG at Cochin.

DR. M. THAMBI DURAI : Sir, as regards the development of Vallar Padam Port, we have already called many tenders. Many parties have approached

us. We are shortlisting them. We are going to implement that scheme and we are not denying that.

As far as exports are concerned, the Cochin Port is doing very well.

MR. SPEAKER : You have already answered that.

DR. M. THAMBI DURAI : There is a problem on the import side. We are making all efforts to see that we can develop imports more by connecting Bangalore and other sectors so that we can transmit all the goods to that side. We are making all efforts in this regard.

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU : Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have got big sea coasts of nearly 6,100 kilometres. We have only 11 major ports. Has the Government of India conducted any survey to find out the feasibility of other ports, if so, what are those areas?

The second part of the question is that though our ports are called international ports yet they are not of International standards. If you see Singapore and Hong Kong which have very thin population, they have got ports of international standards. I would like to know whether the Government of India is having any policy like the EXIM policy for the improvement of ports. Has the Government of India announced any such policy so far?

DR. M. THAMBI DURAI : As far as the question of conducting a survey for the development of other ports in the area is concerned, we are making all efforts.

Regarding improving the existing ports, we are already having many schemes. We have allocated Rs. 16,000 crore for the development of ports. We are making all efforts in this regard, so that they can be compared with other international ports.

SHRI PRABHAT KUMAR SAMANTARAY : Sir, the hon. Minister has replied that they have made an allotment of Rs. 549 crore in the Ninth Five Plan for the development of Calcutta and Haldia ports. The capacity utilisation in all the 11 major ports has been over-stretched for the last ten years. I would like to know from the hon. Minister specially as to what is the plan outlay for all other ten major ports. What capacity is he going to add to the existing capacity of the major ports by providing that much, as is available today?

DR. M. THAMBI DURAI : We are having a Master Plan for the Ninth Five Year Plan to develop all the 11 major ports. If the hon. Member wants the details of each port, I am ready to furnish the details for each port. We have allocated Rs. 7,215 crore for the port side from the Budget resources and also Rs. 785 crore for other training programme. The total comes to Rs. 8,000 crore that we have allotted from the Government's side. If the hon. Member wants the

details of each port as to how much we have allotted, I can supply him the details.

MR. SPEAKER : You can send these to the hon. Member.

UNDP Report on HRD

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*102. SHRI MOHAN SINGH :
PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA :

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether according to the recent report of UNDP on Human Development, India ranks lowest among the nations of the world in the Human Development Index;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the strategy being contemplated by the Government to bring the country at the world level in the Human Development Index?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) :

(a) and (b) No, Sir. According to the Human Development Report, 1998 of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), India stands at 139th rank in terms of Human Development Index Out of 174 countries in the world. However, there has been improvement over the years in all the three indicators of Human Development Index, viz., Longevity, Educational Attainment and Standard of Living. This needs to be accelerated.

(c) As per the Approach paper to the Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2000), the objectives of the plan, *inter-alia*, include accelerating the growth rate of the economy, providing basic minimum services of safe drinking water, primary health care facilities, universal primary education, shelter and connectivity to all in a time bound manner.

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, in fact that question is not concerned with the Minister concerned only because so far as the question of human resource development is concerned, the per-capita income, the national economic growth in the country and the share of the common man in that economic growth, all these points are important to which the hon. Minister can not clarify alone.

The hon. Minister may or may not feel ashamed but I feel ashamed that the country which is number three from the point of security, the second number from the point of population and a wonderful country from the point of the entire resources stands at 139th