

MR. SPEAKER : There is nothing more in this question.

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY : If the Government is not implementing them, who is responsible for it ?

SHRI S. M. BHATTAM : I have asked about the time-frame.

MR. SPEAKER : Time-frame cannot be done like that. It is to be just attempted.

Shrimati Kishori Sinha.

Merger of Shipping Companies

*777 SHRIMATI KISHORI SINHA†;
SHRI H. M. PATEL :

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

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal to merge shipping companies to make them more viable ;

(b) if so, whether Government have examined its implications ;

(c) if so, the extent of resources that the shipping companies could generate for development of shipping during the Seventh Plan ; and

(d) whether Government propose to provide funds to the Shipping Companies if these resources are not adequate ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI)

(a) Government has received various suggestions for restructuring of Shipping Industry including merger of shipping companies for making them more viable. No decision has been taken by Government in this regard.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

SHRIMATI KISHORI SINHA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from

the hon. Minister when did the Government receive suggestions for merger and I would also like to know how long would the Government take to come to a decision, and does the Government realise that delay in taking a decision is causing a great national loss ?

SHRI Z. R. ANSARI : Sir, actually the question of merger is a question on which the companies will have to take a decision ; whether two companies agree to merge with each other or not is for them to decide. No such proposal, except one of Surendra and Sagar where these two private shipping companies in the private sector want to merge with each other, is known to us. The Ministry of Company Affairs has cleared that proposal. As far as we are concerned, the question of merger between two companies does not come before us. It is a matter which is being looked into by the Department of Company Affairs and if two companies agree to merge with each other the proposal goes there and after the Department of Company Affairs clears it the merger takes place.

SHRIMATI KISHORI SINHA : I want to know whether the Government know that foreign buyers of Indian goods and suppliers of foreign goods to India insist on using their national carriers for trade and they succeed in doing so. If it is so, why should not Indian nationals exporting Indian goods use our own national carriers ?

SHRI Z. R. ANSARI : This question does not arise out of the present question because this Question relates to the merger of shipping companies. Therefore, I am afraid, that this question does not arise out of this question.

SHRI K. RAMAMURTHY : The slip building industry and shipping is now passing through a recession all over the world. It is a world wide phenomenon. But broadly, the merger of companies always used to take place in countries like Japan and other where the companies which are not viable are merged. Sometimes herealso some

companies merge with each other and become viable. I would like to know whether any steps are being taken by the Shipping Ministry to call for a meeting of companies and assess their viability, and help them in merging. That is what I want to ask the Minister for Shipping.

SHRI Z. R. ANSARI : As far as we are concerned, the question of merger has to be decided by the companies themselves.

SHRI R. RAMAMURTHY : It is the freedom of the companies to merge. I am not asking you to interfere into their freedom. At least the Ministry can advise them because in worldwide the companies are facing recession. They can be advised and sometimes you can even put pressure also to make them viable.

MR. SPEAKER : Uncalled for advice is seldom heeded.

SHRI Z. R. ANSARI : As far as we are concerned, how can we advise them for just managing their own companies? It is for them to decide whether it is viable.

SHRI E. AYYAPU REDDY : The hon. Minister has said in the statement that the decision is pending before the Government with regard to the merger. And in his subsequent answer he said that it was a voluntary act between two companies. What is the decision pending before the Government for merger?

SHRI Z. R. ANSARI : The question of merger as such is not before the Government. It is the broader question of re-structuring of these shipping companies which is being looked into by the Ministry including some of the general suggestions which have come for merging these shipping companies.

Loading of N-type Box Wagons to full capacity

*779. **SHRI DIGVIJAY SINH :** Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to State :

(a) whether N-type Box Wagons are made with a capacity of 54 tonnes or so :

(b) if so, whether on an average these wagons are not loaded with more than 48 to 50 tonnes of coal ; and

(c) if so, the reasons for not loading the wagons to their full capacity ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) : (a) BOX'N' Wagons are made with a marked carrying capacity of about 58.0 tonnes.

(b) No, Sir. Loading of coal is done by the collieries. In some collieries BOX'N' Wagons are being loaded upto the marked carrying capacity but in some others, loading is less than the marked carrying capacity.

(c) The reasons for certain collieries for sometimes not loading the BOX'N' Wagons to their full carrying capacity is that they face difficulties in loading when the coal is of a low density.

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINH : It is well known that there is a shortage of wagons and again there is a shortage of coal to the points where it is supplied. Therefore, I would like to know : what is the percentage of total wagons loaded at around 50 tonnes capacity instead of 58 tonnes capacity? For that does the consignee pay less freight and less for the coal because he is getting less supply?

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : There are four varieties of coalwashed coal, middling coal, slack coal and steam coal. The maximum quantity of coal moved is in the category of slack coal and steam coal. Because of the number of complaints received a number of joint loadability operations were carried out it has been decided that actually no wagons be charged at 58.0 tonnes which is the marked carrying capacity of BOX'N' wagons. The slack