

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND: This is a suggestion for action.

SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY: The Minister has stated in his reply that 1/5 of the population of lepers is living in India whereas our population when compared to the entire world is 1/7, which is, of course, on the very high side. I want to know whether the Minister has got any plan to reduce it at least to the level of 1/7. I also want to know—during the last three years, this has gone up very much—how he is going to combat this disease?

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND: Perhaps the hon. Member wants to know whether the government is trying to propose some action in the matter to reduce this percentage. A major drive is to be launched during 1980 in order to break the traditional cycle of leprosy infection. This would involve a multidrug treatment regimen with Rifampicin, Clofazimine and DDS.

SHRI XAVIER ARAKAL: The hon. Minister has in his reply said that a majority of lepers are living in rural and backward areas. I want to know whether they are now moving from the rural areas to the urban areas. Not only that. When they come to the urban areas, they tend to colonise in certain areas, of the cities. What are the steps taken by the government to prevent them from coming to urban areas from rural areas and what are the steps taken to decolonise these people within the city area?

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND: The question primarily relates to the problem of detection. Patients are not detected; patients do not come forward for any treatment. It is difficult unless we come to know; isolation becomes difficult.

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER: I should like to know whether the government has identified leprosy prone areas of different states and if so the name of that area and the states? You know in my state Durga-

pur and Purulia districts are leprosy prone areas. Has the government any central programme for such leprosy prone areas, programme of giving assistance to the states and if so the breakup of that assistance.

MR. SPEAKER: I think it is too far fetched; he will not be able to give it off-hand, like this. Next question.

Decision to increase freight rates by India-Pakistan-Bangladesh Shippers Conference

*226. **SHRI SHIV KUMAR SINGH THAKUR:** Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the India-Pakistan-Bangladesh Shippers' Conference has recently decided to increase freight from 1st May, 1980.

(b) if so, whether this decision was taken unilaterally without the approval of Indian Shippers;

(c) whether Government propose to intervene in the matter; and

(d) the extra foreign exchange burden which will be involved for India due to the proposed increased freight rates?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI A. P. SHARMA): (a) The India-Pakistan-Bangladesh-UK/Continent Conference has decided to introduce such an increase.

(b) The Conference announced its decision to increase the freight after consultations with the shippers Councils in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Europe though the All India Shippers Council has not accepted the freight increase announced by the Conference.

(c) The Government have no statutory power to intervene in the matter; it can only persuade and assist the Conference authorities and the shippers' bodies to arrive at mutually acceptable decisions. The Standing Consultative Committee on Freight and

Shipping Services constituted by the Government under the Chairmanship of the Director General of Shipping, have urged the shippers and the Indian member lines of the Conference to resume discussions/negotiations with a view to arriving at mutually satisfactory agreement. The Secretary of the Conference has been requested to convey the strong feelings of the Indian shippers to the Conference headquarters in London. The Committee will continue to help the two sides in their discussions.

(d) The extra burden that the Indian exporters will have to bear as a consequence of the proposed increase will depend upon the quantum of trade that will move from the Indian coasts from the 1 May, 1980 onwards, through this conference.

श्री शिव कुमार सिंह ठाकुर: अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहता हूँ, जैसा उन्होंने कहा कि स्टैट्यूटरी पावर्स नहीं हैं इन्टरफीयर करने के लिए परन्तु इसके कारण हिन्दुस्तान के जो एक्सपोर्टर्स हैं उनपर 20 परसेंट फ्रेट बढ़ जायेगा इसलिए क्या शमन एक्सपोर्टर्स को कोई अनुदान के लिए सोच रहा है क्योंकि अगर अनुदान नहीं देंगे तो इन्टरनेशनल मार्केट में हमारे देश में बनी हुई चीजों की कास्ट ज्यादा बढ़ जायेगी तथा क्वापिटीशन नहीं हो पायेगा। इसलिए मैं आपके माध्यम से मंत्री महोदय से पूछना चाहता हूँ कि क्या सरकार इन बढ़े हुए रेट के कारण हमारे भारतीय एक्सपोर्टर्स को अनुदान देने पर विचार कर रही है?

श्री ए. पी. शर्मा: नहीं, एसा कोई विचार नहीं है।

श्री शिव कुमार सिंह ठाकुर: माननीय अध्यक्ष महोदय, इससे हमारी हिन्दुस्तान की जो शिपिंग कम्पनीज हैं, उनको तो लाभ पहुँचेगा, लेकिन इन्टरनेशनल मार्केट में हमारी वस्तुओं की कीमत अधिक होने से हम टिक नहीं पा रहे हैं। यह एक बहुत ही महत्वपूर्ण प्रश्न है, इसलिए मैं आपके माध्यम से मंत्री महोदय से पूछना चाहता हूँ कि वे इस संबंध में क्या कदम उठा रहे हैं?

श्री ए. पी. शर्मा: अध्यक्ष महोदय, कान्फ्रेंसिस नान-आफिशियल इन्टरनेशनल आर्गनजेशन होती है और तीन नेशनल शिपिंग लाइन्स इस कान्फ्रेंसिस के सदस्य हैं। शिपर्स एसोसिएशन से बातचीत करने के बाद, ये किराया बढ़ाने का फैसला करते हैं। इन्होंने फैसला किया है, लेकिन शिपर्स एसोसिएशन को यह मान्य नहीं है। इस संबंध में हमारे डी. जी. शिपिंग और चोयरमैन कन्सल्टेंटिव कमेटी बातचीत कर रहे हैं और शिपर्स एसोसिएशन का जो विरोध है, उसको उन्होंने कान्फ्रेंस के रीजनल आफिस को जो बम्बई में है कन्वे किया है और यह कहा है कि अपने लंदन आफिस को यह बता दें। अभी हमें मालूम नहीं है कि उनकी प्रतिक्रिया क्या है।

Inter-Port/Inter-Dock transfers of Class I Officers

*227 SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

- whether all Class I officers except the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of each Port Trust and Dock Labour Board are permanent employees of each Port Trust and Dock Labour Board; and
- if so, whether there is a proposal under consideration of the Government to introduce inter-port/inter-dock labour Board transfers of Class I Officers?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI A. P. SHARMA). (a) The Class I Officers of the Port Trusts and Dock Labour Boards are permanent employees of the concerned Port Trust and Dock Labour Board except those who have been appointed on temporary basis or on probation or have been, in a few cases, taken on deputation from other organisations.

(b) No, Sir.