

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND: We will never fail in our efforts to persuade the State Governments to open new Sub-Centres.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Facilities for Loading of Bulk Carriers in Paradip and Haldia Ports

*576. **DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI:** Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that international iron ore trade necessitates loading of bulk carriers of minimum one lakh DWT capacity; and

(b) if so, what action has been taken by his Ministry to equip Paradip and Haldia Ports to handle one lakh DWT carriers for export of Iron Ore?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT AND TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI A. P. SHARMA): (a) Government are aware that in the international trade in iron ore, transportation by ships of bigger sizes has an advantage.

(b) Paradip Port is at present handling ore carriers of about 60,000 DWT i.e. with draught of 39'. Increase in the draught to cater to vessels of 1,00,000 to 1,20,000 DWT involve construction of a new berth, large scale modifications and improvements to the existing mechanical ore handling plant and extension of the breakwaters, etc. Considering the demand for the ore in the International market and the situation in our country with surplus capacities for handling iron ore, there are no new proposals for any large scale investments in expansion of iron ore export facilities. However, some investments are being made for optimising the available facilities. At Paradip, the mechanical ore handling plant is being improved at a cost of Rs. 8.08 crores.

Haldia Port was planned for servicing approximately 80,000 DWT vessels with 40 draught. Due to the beha-

viour of the estuary, despite continuous dredging, the draughts at present are of the order of 32' or below. Further investigations are being carried out to find out ways and means of improving the draughts, in the first stage upto 35'. In view of the above, there is no possibility of improving the draught at Haldia to cater to 1 lakh DWT carriers.

Indians under Detention in Pakistan

*579. **SHRI D. P. JADEJA:** Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of persons who are held up in different jails of Pakistan;

(b) the names of the persons held up in Mekran Sub-State jail;

(c) since when they are in Pakistan and on what charges; and

(d) whether Government propose to negotiate with Pakistan for their early release?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO): (a) According to our present information, 347 Indian nationals are believed to be detained in various jails in Pakistan.

(b) According to information made available to us, while there are some Indian nationals being detained in various jails in Pakistan, we do not have information regarding any Indian nationals in Mekran jail.

(c) The precise details are not available.

(d) Government have been taking up the question of their release and repatriation to India with the Government of Pakistan both through diplomatic channels and in the course of various high-level bilateral discussion. Government's efforts in this regard continue. On 14th July,