

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI MANU BHAI KOTADIA): (a) There is no proposal to set up Ship-building Yards at Tuticorin Port.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Starting speed-post service to Nagarcoil in Kanyakumari district

724. SHRI M. VINCENT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a great need for starting Speed-Post service to Nagarcoil, an important trade and business centre in Kanyakumari District; and

(b) if so, the steps taken to start this service as a priority basis?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS AND THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI JAI PARKASH): (a) No, Sir, there is no traffic potential at Nagarcoil for introduction speed post service in the city.

(b) Does not arise in view of reply to (a) above.

Trade amongst SAARC Countries

725. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH:

SHRI SHANKAR DAYAL SINGH:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the study conducted by the Research and Information System for the Non-Aligned and other Developing Countries (RIS), which appeared in 'Business and Political Observer' of 6th December, 1990, especially on the observation that expansion of trade among SAARC countries has more profound economic basis than achievement of regional self-reliance;

(b) whether it is a fact that unit values realised by SAARC countries in their exports to regional countries are higher than those to the rest of the World, especially for goods where freight cost is significant;

(c) if so, whether Government would consider the proposal of providing special measures for Intra-SAARC trade in consultation with other countries to substantially increase Intra-SAARC trade accounts from the present level of a mere 2.5 per cent of the total trade of these countries; and

(d) if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) This is one of the conclusions of the RIS study.

(c) The Government is prepared to consider any proposal for special measures for substantially expanding intra-SAARC trade.

(d) Does not arise.

Steps to maintain peace in the sub-continent

726. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister has expressed his willingness to adopt measures to change the present situation in the Sub-Continent and also to bring about confidence and trust in the region;

(b) whether the Prime Minister during his visit to Maitreya; had a talk with the Prime Ministers of Pakistan and Bangladesh;

(c) if so, the outcome of the talks; and

(d) what further steps are contemplated to maintain peace¹ in the region?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VIDYA CHARAN SHUKLA): (a) At the Opening Session of the SAARC Summit on 21 November