

Committees for Shipping Improvement and Port Development.

*227. SHRI BHAGAT RAM MANHAR:

SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH:†

Will the Minister of TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of Committees have been set up by the Government to consider improvement in shipping sector and development of ports;

(b) if so, what are the names of such committees set up during the last three years and names of their members and detailed terms of reference; and

(c) what are the broad recommendations already made by these Committees and what action Government have taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT (SHRI BANSI LAL): (a) to (c) Five major Committees have been set up. A statement is laid on the table of the House. [See Appendix CXXXVI, Annexure No. 28].

SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH: As more comprehensive organisations have been set up such as International Airports Authority of India to look after various international airfields and also the National Airport Authority to manage and maintain various airports in the country, likewise may I know from the hon. Minister what are the main reasons for not constituting a National Ports Authority of India on the same pattern and on the same analogy and bring all major and minor ports under this Authority so that there would be better development of ports in India?

SHRI BANSI LAL: There is no necessity of any such Authority.

DR. SHANTI G. PATEL: As you are aware, ports play an important role in the national economy. In this connection I

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Bir Bhadra Pratap Singh.

am referring to the appointment of the major Ports Reforms Committee. Before any decisions are taken on the recommendations of this Committee, will the report be made available particularly to the Members of Parliament so that they could give their views before final decisions are taken by the Government.

Secondly, I find from the list of members—the list comprises of 13 members—that no representation has been given to labour. They also play an important role as far as ports operations are concerned. This is against the practice which was being followed so far. I invite Minister's attention that when Major Ports Commission was constituted, labour was given representation. Though late as it is, will he consider giving representation to labour also on the Committee?

SHRI BANSI LAL: I will consider it.

DR. SHANTI G. PATEL: What about the first part, about making the report available.

SHRI BANSI LAL: I will consider that also.

DR. SHANTI G. PATEL: I have not asked for consideration. He should make efforts.

SHRI BANSI LAL: I do not say 'yes'.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Normally you say 'no'.

SHRI M. KADHARSHA: I would like to know whether it is a fact that the foreign shipping companies have made a dent into Indian shipping industry by undercutting the freight rates.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Not relevant. Next question.

Survey of the Persons suffering from leprosy

*228. SHRIMATI MONIKA DAS: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently conducted a survey regarding the number of persons suffering from leprosy in the country;