

श्री गोविंदराज आदिक : ऐसा नहीं हुआ है।

श्री आर.सी. सिंह : सभापति महोदय, मैं अभी हाल में आंध्र प्रदेश गया था। वहां माइनिंग एरिया में मैंने देखा कि जो जल का स्रोत जाता है, डीप माइनिंग के चलते स्ट्रैटा के पंचर होने से वह जल का बहाव डायवर्ट हो रहा है और बहुत सा एरिया, जहां पहले स्ट्रैटा से पानी मिलता था, वह एरिया डेजर्ट होता जा रहा है। वहां पर पानी मिले, इसके लिए क्या व्यवस्था की जा रही है?

श्री प्रदीप जैन : माननीय सभापति महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से बताना चाहता हूँ कि आंध्र प्रदेश में 23 जिले हैं, जिनमें सबसे अच्छे ढंग से इस कार्यक्रम को चलाया जा रहा है। जो इसकी डिटेल्ड प्रोजेक्ट रिपोर्ट बनती है, उसको जब हम एग्जामिन करते हैं तो इससे जितने लाभ हो सकते हैं, उन लाभों को हम मॉनिटर करते हैं। अगर किसी पार्टिकुलर क्षेत्र में इस तरह की कोई बात है तो उसके क्रियान्वयन की हम लोग जांच करेंगे।

Modernisation of Dhubri Port

*344. SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY : Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is a demand for modernization of Dhubri Port; and
- (b) if so, what is being done for the said port's modernization?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI G.K. VASAN) : (a) and (b) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A temporary terminal with a steel pontoon and bamboo approach jetty already exists at Dhubri which is being maintained for berthing of vessels and unloading and loading of cargo. For developing a permanent terminal with shore facilities, a study was conducted by IIT, Guwahati for selecting a suitable location at Dhubri. Based on the said study, location for the permanent terminal has been identified. Land acquisition process at the selected location is underway through the Government of Assam.

SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY : Sir, before coming to my supplementary question, I would like to make a submission. I put my question in four points. Out of these, first two points had been struck off. I do not know the cause behind it. It pertains to the Brahmaputra waterways and modernization of the Dhubri Port. I don't know why first two parts were struck off. This is my submission to you, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Because the question on the other two points had already been answered.

SHRI TARINI KANT ROY : Okay, Sir.

Sir, my first supplementary in this. The Dhubri Port is a very important port because it is situated before the Brahmaputra enters Bangladesh. My question was about the steps to be taken by the Government for modernization of the port. But in the answer, they have only told that the location for the permanent terminal has been identified. I want to know about the modernization of the Dhubri Port.

SHRI G.K. VASAN : Sir, I would like to tell the hon. Member, through you, that the Dhubri Port is one of the identified locations for setting up the IWT terminal where cargo like jute products, coal, etc., are expected to be handled. Vessels have to be berthed at the Dhubri Port for customs clearance and completing necessary formalities. Presently, a temporary terminal with a steel pontoon and bamboo approach jetty is being maintained by the authorities at the Dhubri Port. For developing a permanent terminal with shore facilities, as the hon. Member has mentioned, a study was conducted by the IIT, Guwahati, for selecting a suitable location and Panchughat was selected for that purpose. It is being developed. Since the Dhubri Port is connected with the Kolkata and the Haldia Ports, I am sure Sir, the Government of Assam has issued a notification for acquisition of land. And it being a very important destination, this would be done at the earliest.

SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY : Sir, my second supplementary is this. In its first part I want to know this. Do you have any timeframe for modernization of the Dhubri Port? What steps have been taken by the Government to upgrade the Brahmaputra waterways? It can serve not only the North-Eastern States of India and the northern part of Bengal, but it can also serve our neighbouring countries, namely, Myanmar, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, etc. These waterways should be of international standard. What steps have been taken by the Government so far?

SHRI G. K. VASAN : Sir, regarding development of the Brahmaputra waterways, there is already an existing IWT protocol on inland water transit and trade between India and Bangladesh for passage of goods between two places. Sir, from time to time, by protocol, the validity is being maintained. I would also like to inform the Member that because of the international waters, there are four ports of call in each country, Bangladesh and India. And recently, Sir, we have given a call to the Bangladesh Government that two ports, one from India and one from Bangladesh should be taken as port of call.

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA : Sir, I would to tell the hon. Minister that India is having a very long coastline and very many rivers. There have been ports which were used before. It's not only that you are going to upgrade the new ports or make new ports. But, what about the old ports?

For example, we can take the Ratnagiri port which was very useful and active during Shivaji's time. Due to siltation, it is not being used now. For export purpose also, these ports can be used. Is there any comprehensive programme with the Government to improve our minor and major ports?

SHRI G. K. VASAN : Sir, as I mentioned in the earlier question, both the major ports and the non-major ports in the country play a very vital role. As I told you, 78 per cent of the traffic goes through major ports and 22 per cent through minor ports. In the same manner, 515 tonnes are handled by major ports and around 200-odd tonnes are handled by minor ports in the country. The respected Member has posed a question about ports which should be used. As I mentioned earlier, functioning of the non-major ports rests with the State Governments. But, the Ministry of Shipping will take active interest in the ports which have not been used and we will try to see that those ports become active in future.

SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA : Sir, Dhubri is one of the strategically important river ports in the North-Eastern Region. In fact, river route is the only route or channel of development for the North-Eastern Region. In the pre-Independence days, there was no rail or road on air route. So, Dhubri port is very important. Earlier, we had the Chhittagong connection and we used that seaport. But, now, we have only the Kolkata port which can be connected by river route through Brahmaputra. Now, the modernization of Dhubri port has been taken up and I congratulate the Government. This was a long standing demand now, the basic thing for modernization and setting up of the port is, acquisition of land. Whether acquisition of land for the terminal of Dhubri has been done or not. Sir, we want to know what is the approximate cost of modernization and what is the time frame commissioning the port. These are three minor questions.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please ask one questions.

SHRI G.K. VASAN : Sir, the process for acquisition of land measuring about two acres in this location through the Government of Assam has been started. The Government of Assam, as I mentioned in the previous question, has issued notification for acquisition of land. Sir, I would also say that on demand of the State Government, an amount of around Rs. 2.80 crore has been deposited with the State Government for acquisition of terminal land measuring 1.79 hectares in September 2009. The process of handing over of land to IWA for development activities is yet to be completed. though the project report for setting up this terminal is yet to be made, the approximate cost of this terminal shall be of the order of Rs. 30 crore to Rs. 35 crores. Sir, regarding the time

frame, which Shri Tarini Kanta Roy mentioned and now, Shri Kalita has also mentioned, I would like to tell both the Members that it shall take about three years for construction of the terminal from the date of sanction of the project and the award of the work to the contractor.

SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA : Sir, this is very good thing that the Government has taken up modernization of Dubri port and as suggested by IIT Guwahati, they have identified new location for the new terminal building in Dhubri. But the Government of India has already sanctioned a few crores of rupees a few years back, but not a single penny has been utilized till today. This is very important. Although we are speaking about the modernization of port, and the Government of India has sanctioned the money, but not a single paisa was utilized till today. Sir, the National Waterways can play an important and vital role for the cargo transport in our country. What type of cargo can be transported in the National Waterways and what are the steps being taken by the Government of India to increase cargo transportation in the Indian Waterways and whether the Government is going to provide the same facilities to the North-Eastern region in respect of the Dhubri port?

SHRI G.K. VASAN : Sir, transportation of bulk materials such as coal, cement, foodgrains, tea containers is as usual. I would also like to inform the hon. Member that when it is difficult to move the cargo by rail or road, it is transported on the Waterways regularly. Several steps have been taken by the Government to increase the cargo transportation in the National Waterways. One or two which I could mention now include a provision of assured fairway with two meter depth, day navigational route for round the year operations, night navigational facilities in the phased manner, specially, floating of permanent terminal facilities at various locations. Thank you.

Replacement of expatriate pilots

*345. SHRI B.S. GNANADESIKAN : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the DGCA has asked all the airlines to replace foreign pilots by 31st July, 2010 as the slowdown in the sector had rendered several domestic pilot jobless;

(b) whether Air India and other private flight operators have asked the aviation regulator, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), to extend the deadline for replacing expatriate pilots and they want at least two more years to carry out the change; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the stance of Government in this regard?