

efforts to acquire nuclear weapons capability have been a matter of concern for the Government of India as this would work against peace and stability. Government of India; have taken up this matter with the Government of Pakistan at the highest levels. The Government of Pakistan have given an assurance that their nuclear programme is solely directed towards peaceful purposes and has no non-peaceful dimensions. It is hoped that the Government of Pakistan would abide by this assurance.

(b) Yes, Sir. According to the report, Pakistan accounted for 28 per cent of the major arms imports into the region during the MCS.

Foreign policy of Nepal Government

1000. SHRI NARSINGH NARAIN PANDEY; With the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news item appearing in the Times of India of July 8, 1980 under the heading 'Nepal engaged in foreign policy review and seeking new directions with regard to its neighbour'; and

(b) whether it is a fact that in the garb of this "New Directions" the Nepal Government is striving for regional cooperation with countries like Bhutan, Pakistan and Bangladesh; if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In 1977 at the Colombo Plan Consultative Conference held at Kathmandu, His Majesty the King of Nepal called for regional cooperation in the field of water resources development between Nepal, India, China, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. During his visits to neighbouring countries, namely, Sri

Lanka, Bangladesh and India, in early 1980, H. M. the King of Nepal discussed and expressed his country's interest in promoting regional co-operation, a policy which he subsequently reiterated in his address to the Rashtriya Panchayat on June 22, 1980. Nepal has formally supported the Bangladesh Presidents proposal for a South Asian summit Conference. The Nepalese Foreign Secretary recently visited Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan and India to hold "regional consultations and discuss this idea. Nepal's call for regional cooperation is thus not a new phenomenon.

Nepal has repeatedly assured us that her policy of regional cooperation does not in any way preclude bilateral cooperation with India in mutually agreed projects*

Operational efficiency of Shipping Organisation

1001. SHRI KHURSHED ALAM KHAN:
SHRI IBRAHIM KALANIYA:
SHRI BHAGWAN DIN: SHRI
ROSHAN LAL:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in spite of a well-established shipping organisation in the country which is the second largest in Asia, the operational and financial results are depressing; and

(b) if so, what steps Government are taking to ensure better financial results in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI BUTA SINGH): (a) and (b) Indian Shipping Companies along with Shipping Industry all over the world were passing through a period of severe recession from 1975 mainly due to hike in oil prices. The position now is showing