

been informed that it was not possible to allow the construction of said Gryone within the territorial waters of VPT.

(c) The above Gryone, however, causes no obstruction to the smooth running of ships and boats in the territorial waters of VPT.

Indian Port Act

878. SHRI AVINASH RAI KHANNA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is planning to bring Indian Port Act, if so, the status thereof;

(b) whether it is a fact that the employees of the Kochi Port, are having resentment about their pay or other service benefits, if so, by when Government would remove the disparity;

(c) whether all the ports have these R and D Department; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor and if so, the details and the results thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI G.K. VASAN): (a) Yes, Sir. The Government is planning to bring a comprehensive Indian Port Act after merging the provisions of the Indian Port Act, 1908 and the Major Port Trusts Act, 1963. The proposal is under discussion/formulation.

(b) The pay and other service benefits of all Officers and Employees of all Major Ports including Kochi Port have been revised in 2010. The pension of retired officers/employees has also been revised. As such there is no reason for resentment among Kochi Port Employees.

(c) and (d) As Port Trusts are basically service oriented organizations, only some of the ports like Kolkata Port, Kochi Port and Visakhapatnam Port have R and D Department.

Membership to International Association of Classification Societies

879. SHRI A. ELAVARASAN: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the country's shipping tonnage has crossed 10 million GT mark and Indian Registrar of Shipping (IRS) is getting membership to International Association of Classification Societies (IACS);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the creditable performance of Indian Tonnage crossing the 10 million and getting the coveted status is turning point for the country's maritime industry

and the Shipping Directorate has also launched 24x7 telecounseling facility to seafarers recently; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI G.K. VASAN): (a) and (b) The Indian tonnage for the first time has crossed 10 million GT mark and as on 31.01.2011 the Indian fleet stands at 10.38 million GT. Indian Registrar of Shipping (IRS) has achieved the status of full membership of the International Association of Classification Societies (IACS) on 22.06.2010. IRS is the 11th Ship Classification Society in the World to become a member of IACS and has joined the ranks of Lloyd's Register, American Bureau of Shipping (ABS) and Bureau Veritas (BV). This development is considered a step forward for India in becoming a leading country in ship classification.

(c) and (d) The Indian fleet crossing 10 million GT marks India's entry into the list of select countries in the World who have managed this feat. The Directorate General of Shipping has launched a 24x7 tele-counseling facility for Indian seafarers from 02.10.2010 for any stressed Indian Seafarers who can call on dedicated telephone number. The call will be transferred immediately to professional counselors according to the nature of call and the seafarer will be able to get immediate counseling.

Wages issue of Indian seafarers

880. DR. K.P. RAMALINGAM: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government received any representation for setting up of a tribunal to resolve the wage issue of Indian seafarers;

(b) if so, the details thereof and reaction of Government in this regard; and

(c) the follow up actions taken by Government to resolve the wage issue of Indian seafarers?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI G.K. VASAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In accordance with the judgment passed by Hon'ble High Court at Calcutta in W.P No. 1276 of 2010 filed by National Union Seafarers of India V/s. Lt. Governor & Others, the Central Government is constituting a Tribunal for referring the dispute of non receipt of victualling allowances between Crew members of M.V. Nancowry, Swaraj Deep and Principal Director of Shipping Services, Andaman & Nicobar Administration, Port Blair to the tribunal. The tribunal will consist of the following members:

(i) Director General of Shipping, Mumbai.