

Cost of Sethusamudram project

914. SHRI T.K. RANGARAJAN: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

- (a) what is the total cost of Sethusamudram project;
- (b) how much amount has been spent on this project, so far;
- (c) whether Government contemplates any realignment of the project;
- (d) if so, the cost of realigned project;
- (e) what is the time-frame within which the project is expected to be completed; and
- (f) whether Government has finalized the contractors for implementing the scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI RADHAKRISHNAN P.): (a) Total project cost of Sethusamudram Ship Channel Project (SSCP) approved in the year 2005 is ₹2427.40 crores.

(b) Total expenditure on the Project till October, 2014 is ₹836.35 crores.

(c) and (d) Government of India is exploring the possibility of alternate route for SSCP through Pamban Pass by avoiding the Ram Sethu/Adam's Bridge area and M/s RITES was entrusted with the work of undertaking prefeasibility study on that area.

(e) The implementation of the Project has been stayed by the Supreme Court of India. Since the matter is *sub-judice* before the Supreme Court, no time frame can be fixed at this stage.

(f) Does not arise.

Removal of customs duty on marine fuel

915. SHRI A. W. RABI BERNARD: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Ministry has approached the Ministry of Finance to remove customs duty on marine fuel for vessels carrying cargo for trans-shipment;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the move would increase in export-import cargo handling operations and accrue direct and indirect benefits of more than ₹700 crore and removing the 25-30 per cent customs duty may attract big container ships to domestic shores; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?