

Development of Ports in Andhra Pradesh

611. SHRI T. G. VENKATESH: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has decided to develop two ports in the State of Andhra Pradesh and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the Ramayapatnam Port in Nellore District is also included in the proposals, the details thereof;

(c) the status of the proposal as of now, the reasons for the delay; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government for early implementation of the proposals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI MANSUKH MANDAVIYA): (a) to (d) The development of a new major Port at Duggirajupatnam Port in Andhra Pradesh is included in Schedule XIII of the AP Reorganisation Act, 2014. The development of new Major Port at Duggirajupatnam was examined by NITI Aayog in consultation with Ministry of Shipping, Ministry of Finance and Government of Andhra Pradesh and it has been concluded that the project will not be viable due to strong competition from nearby Ports of Krishnapatnam, Ennore and Chennai which are 40, 80 and 80 kms. away respectively from the proposed Port. Ministry of Shipping has requested Government of Andhra Pradesh to furnish comments on the recommendations of NITI Aayog along with suggestions for alternate site(s) for development of a Major Port. The response from Government of Andhra Pradesh is still awaited. Ministry of Shipping, in the meanwhile, has constituted an Expert Committee to examine the issue and recommend further course of action.

Cargo carrying capacity of Indian fleet

612. SHRI JOSE K. MANI: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Shipping Industry has made investments on the back of a decade-old Right of First Refusal (RoFR) benefit granted to local fleet owners to carry export-import oil and bulk cargo for State-run firms;

(b) whether the cargo carrying capacity of Indian fleet grew 22 per cent between January, 2015 and June, 2018 from 7.87 dwt. to 9.8 dwt. with the addition of 15 crude, product and gas carriers; and

(c) whether Government is set to scrap the RoFR benefit to the detriment of local shipping industry and if so, the rationale behind the move?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI MANSUKH MANDAVIYA): (a) There were 616 Indian flag ships of 6.18 Million Tons when policy of Right of First Refusal (RoFR) was issued in November, 2002. As on 30.06.2018, the number of ships under Indian flag is 1389 consisting of 12.69 Million Tons. In order to make the shipping industry more attractive and competitive, the Government has taken several measures including RoFR.

(b) Yes, Sir. The total number of crude, product and gas carriers as on 1st January, 2015 were 137 vessels of 8.31 dwt. As on 30th June, 2018, the total number of crude, product and gas carriers is 173 of 12.14 dwt. This indicates that there is an increase of 36 vessels and 23.32 % increase in dwt. in the said period.

(c) No, Sir. There is no such proposal to scrap RoFR benefits.

Cultivation of non-approved Bt cotton

613. SHRI T.G. VENKATESH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that non-approved 3rd kind Bt cotton is being cultivated in some parts of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has conducted any investigation on availability of such non-permitted Bt cotton seeds in the country, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government to avoid such illegal cultivation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) and (b) As per the available information, there is no third kind of Bt cotton in the country. However, there were reports on cultivation of unapproved herbicide tolerant (HT) cotton in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Maharashtra and Gujarat.

(c) and (d) The Government had constituted a Field Inspection and Scientific Evaluation Committee (FISEC) in the Department of Biotechnology to assess the veracity of spread of unapproved HT cotton in the country. FISEC has conducted investigation on the availability and cultivation of illegal, unapproved HT cotton in cotton growing States, and submitted its report in July, 2018 with recommendations and action points for short-term, long-term and immediate strategies and measures to be implemented by various Ministries/Departments of Central and State Governments and relevant agencies to prevent illegal cultivation of HT cotton.