

Completion of Cochin Super Tanker Berth Project

571. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Cochin Super Tanker Berth project is the only project among them which has been considerably delayed and neglected and all other main port projects taken up during the Fourth Plan will be completed in a year or two; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the steps taken by Government to give immediate expenditure sanction to this project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI H. M. TRIVEDI):

(a) and (b). The Project for locating a Super Tanker Oil Terminal in Ernakulam Channel was approved in April, 1970 and on the basis of a Project Report prepared by the Consultants, certain preliminary works were also started. But on representations from local interests, it was decided to shift the location of the Terminal to Bolghatty Channel and consequently a new detailed Project Report had to be prepared. This Report is now under active consideration in consultation with the concerned authorities.

There were delays in respect of other Fourth Plan projects also as in the sanctioning of Nhava-Sheva and in the completion of major port projects like, Managlore, Tuticorin, Haldia and the Outer Harbours at Madras and Vishakhapatnam.

Proposal for a meeting of Indian Ocean Nations

572. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been increasing activity of foreign naval forces in the Indian Ocean and more and more

countries are sending their Navies to this part;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government of India to this state of affairs; and

(c) whether Government propose to convene a meeting of the Indian Ocean Nations to discuss the potential threat to their existence and take necessary action?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI BIPINPAL DAS): (a) From time to time, there is increasing activity of foreign naval forces in the Indian Ocean.

(b) Government continue to be opposed to the intensification of Great Power military presence and rivalry in the Indian Ocean as this militates against the concept of the preservation of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace.

(c) Government continues to maintain regular contact with littoral states of the Indian Ocean with a view to determining the most effective course of action to secure the objective of maintaining the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace.

Reported U.S. Threat to Capture Oil Fields in Arab

573. SHRI C. K. CHANDRAPPA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the reported threat made by the highest executives of the US administration about their intention to capture the oil fields in Arab countries in case of further acceleration of oil crisis;

(b) whether our Prime Minister has expressed her concern about this development; and

(c) the positive steps Government had taken so far to avert this crisis?