

**Title:** Request the government to give approval to the river regulatory measures for the dredging works to be undertaken for the riverine ports of Haldia.

SHRI LAKSHMAN SETH (TAMLUK): Sir, I want to raise an important issue. The Calcutta Port Trust had submitted a proposal for river regulatory measures. As you know, ports are the lifeline of the economy. Port is important infrastructure and very important for the industrial resurgence. The Calcutta Port and the Haldia Port are riverine ports. So, the shipping channel has to be dredged. For a long time, since 1991, no major dredging work has been undertaken for maintaining the navigability of the channel. That is why the big ships are facing impediments for entering into the shipping channel.

Sir, two years ago the Calcutta Port Trust had submitted a proposal for river regulatory measures. The Calcutta Port Trust engaged a German consultancy firm headed by Sundermann. According to its recommendations, this scheme for dredging was drawn up. But the Ministry of Surface Transport and the Ministry of Finance of the Government of India are not giving approval and as a consequence of that, Haldia Port and the Calcutta Port are going to be closed.

I request the hon. Minister of Surface Transport and also the Minister of Finance to give approval to the river regulatory measures so that the Haldia and Calcutta Ports can be saved for the interest of West Bengal and the whole of Eastern region.