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Title: Need to set up Haldia Port Trust Authority.

SHRI SUVENDU ADHIKARI (TAMILUK): I would like to bring it to the kind attention of Hon'ble Union Minister of Shipping that Haldia Port at Haldia, Purba Medinipur, West Bengal has emerged out as one of the biggest riverine ports in the world with its commercial viability and feasibility. With its excellent location and modern port facilities, it has paved the way for many more industries including foreign ones to thrive. Due to some of its important facilities like facilities in cargo handling capability, facilities in export of iron ore, facilities for savings in logistics cost, some other industries are in the pipeline to be established for an inclusive economic growth of the State as well as India.

On the other hand, it is also a fact that the port is now under a serious threat of closure merely because of its gradual decline in draft. Someone may point out that M/S Dredging Corporation of India Ltd. is there for continuous dredging. But I must say that there is a go-slow attitude in dredging and the most important is that dredging is not the permanent solution to this grave problem. Again, I must emphasise that though Kolkata Port Trust has been assigned to maintain commercial health of the port, Kolkata Port Trust is a bit indifferent to implement River Regulatory Scheme effectively. River Regulatory Scheme includes Capital dredging works over Balari Passage, construction of dykes for disposal of dredged material on shore, river training works by construction groyne in the Rangafala Channel etc.

If there is closure of the Port in near future, Indian economy will suffer a great loss in terms of commercial viability. Not only the State of West Bengal but also the Central Government will have to face a huge revenue loss. So, I think we have to take a benchmark decision for the sustenance of the Port.

I would, therefore, like to request the Union Minister of Shipping to please consider the proposal of setting up Haldia Port Trust Authority, separate from Kolkata Port Trust (KoPT) to look after the Port and take decision for its revival.