

Autonomy for Port Boards

With a view to providing more autonomy and flexibility to Major Ports and to professionalize their governance, the Government has introduced the Major Port Authorities Bill in Parliament to replace the existing Major Port Trusts Act, 1963. Salient features of the Bill are given below:-

- (i) The Bill has been made compact by reducing its number of sections from the existing 134 to 65.
- (ii) Number of Board Members has been reduced to 11-13 from the existing 19-21.
- (iii) Appointment of Independent Members for professional and better decision making.
- (iv) Ports would now be required to take Central Government approval only in 8 occasions instead of existing 32.
- (v) Major Ports would be empowered to make its own master plan for areas within the port limits to the exclusion of any State or local regulations.
- (vi) Port authority would be empowered to fix tariff for its assets and services.
- (vii) For Public Private Partnership Projects (PPP), operators will be free to fix tariff based on market conditions.
- (viii) Power to raise loans / additional capital from Indian & Foreign lenders.

In all future Public Private Partnership projects, concessionaire shall fix the tariff based on market conditions and on such other conditions as may be notified.

Under the proposed Bill all Major Ports will be empowered to make their own master plan for areas within their port limit to the exclusion of any State or local regulations. The manner of any contract or arrangement by the Port Board for lease of land or immovable property for port related use and non port related use shall be in such a manner as may be prescribed by rules/regulations.

Shri Mansukh L Mandavia, Minister of State for Shipping gave this information in a written reply to a question in Rajya Sabha today.
