

Major Port Authorities Bill to enhance efficiency of major ports

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The Minister of State for Shipping and Road Transport & Highways, Shri Mansukh L. Mandaviya informed in a written reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha today that the Government has approved the draft Major Port Authorities (MPAs) Bill, 2016 to replace the existing Major Port Trusts Act (MPTA), 1963 to empower the 12 major ports to perform with greater efficiency on account of full autonomy in decision making.

THE SALIENT FEATURES OF THE MAJOR PORT AUTHORITIES BILL, 2016 ARE AS FOLLOWS :

- (i) With the growth and development of private ports, the major ports are facing severe competition and difficulties in implementing the changes which may help them compete in the evolving market conditions. The regulation of tariff in the major ports by the Central Government are some of the critical factors hindering their growth and development. To provide greater autonomy, flexibility to the Major Ports and to professionalize their governance, it is proposed to repeal the Major Port Trusts Act, 1963 and to replace it with a new legislation, namely the Major Ports Authorities Bill, 2016.
- (ii) To constitute a Board of Port Authority for each major port in the place of the Board of Trustees.
- (iii) To enable the Board of Port Authority to use its property, assets and funds in such manner and for such purposes as it may deem fit for the benefit of the major ports
- (iv) To enter into and perform any contract necessary for the performance of its functions under the proposed legislation.
- (v) To make regulations for the purposes of operation, development and planning of the major ports.
- (vi) To frame the scales of rates for assets and services available at major ports.
- (vii) To claim lien on such goods and to seize and detain the same until such rates and rents are fully paid.
- (viii) To empower the Board of Port Authority to raise loans and issue securities for the purposes of the capital expenditure and working capital requirements of such port authority.
- (ix) To constitute an Adjudicatory Board for adjudication of disputes among major ports, Public Private Partnership concessionaries and captive users. This Adjudicatory Board shall consist of a Presiding Officer and such other Members not exceeding two, as may be appointed by the Central Government.
- (x) To make a provision for Corporate Social Responsibility measures within the port limits.
- (xi) To provide for regulation, operation and planning of major ports in India and to vest the administration, control and management of such ports upon the Boards of major ports authorities and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

An Adjudicatory Board has been proposed inter-alia for expeditious disposal of disputes between ports and PPP concessionaries and suggest measures for revival of such stressed to them. This will help boost private investment in port sector and enable faster dispute resolution.

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