

Essentially, the demand is as follows: if the railway sidings leading from the Labytnangi station to the mechanized docks of the river port are not repaired by July 1 of this year and are not turned over to the Ministry of Railroads, this port will be closed to cargo carried jointly by rail and water transport. What this means is that the work of the entire fleet of the Ob-Irtysh Steamship Line will come to a halt, and workers in the Far North will not be receiving nearly 700,000 tons of essential freight.

What's going on here? Why has the dispute around this northern trans-shipping point suddenly heated up? This is, as they say, a well-worn issue. Six years ago, in March 1984, authorities adopted a decision requiring three union ministries - Mingazprom (Ministry of the Natural Gas Industry), Minneftegazstroi (Ministry of Oil and Gas Construction) and MIntransstroi (Ministry of Transport Construction) to complete in 1984 the construction of rail sidings from the Labytnangi station to the mechanized docks of the port and to transfer them to the USSR Ministry of Railroads. However, these decisions have still not been implemented. As before, this northern transshipping point has many bosses but no order.

The longest section of sidings - 3 kilometers 700 meters in length - as well as the Rechnaya (River) station with its reserve sidings is owned by the state concern "Gazprom" (the former Mingazprom). The gas industry people have left much undone in the way of station equipment. In addition, work on automatic pneumatic cleaning of switches and on the electrical power supply has not been completed, and the sidings belonging to the geologists of the USSR Ministry of Geology and oil workers of USSR Minneftegazstroi are in an extremely unsatisfactory state. Ties and rails need to be replaced, and technical service lines are in the need of repair.