

(b) whether Government will refer the dispute for adjudication under Section 10 since the notice is under section 22 of the Industrial Disputes Act;

(c) whether the representatives of the Federation have been asked to meet the Minister, and

(d) what steps have been taken for continuing the talks?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Transport and Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) A copy of the demands as contained in the strike notice is placed on the Table of Lok Sabha [See Appendix II, annexure No 84]

(b) to (d) The House is already aware of the full details of this matter and I have nothing further to add at this stage as all the issues relating to the strike would be fully covered during the course of the discussion on the P & T demand. The Minister and I would also touch upon this question in the course of our reply to the budget debate.

#### Anti-Locust Organisation

\*694. Shri M. B. Thakore: Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the Officers for anti-locust organisation cannot reach the remote villages in North Gujerat because of the lack of communications?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. P. Jain): No, Sir

#### Suratmanpur Railway Station

\*694-A { Shri Radhamohan Singh:  
Shri Raghunath Singh:

Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state

(a) whether there is an imminent danger of the railway line and the Station of Suratmanpur on the North Eastern Railway Chupra-Varanasi line being washed away by the floods of the river Ghaghra in Ballia District, U.P.; and

(b) whether any and if so, what immediate steps have been considered

necessary and taken to save the line from being washed away?

The Deputy Minister of Railways (Shri Shah Nawas Khan): (a) and (b). The danger to the railway bank between miles 19 and 20 near Suratmanpur station on Chupra-Varanasi section due to cutting action of the Ghaghra river suddenly aggravated and, therefore, all through communications have been suspended. Protection work using boulders, kankar blocks, bricks, etc., is being done.

#### Increase in Freight Rates

{ Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha:  
Shri Raghunath Singh:  
Shri Kashiwal:  
\*695 { Shri E. S. Lal:  
Shri Viswanatha Reddy:  
Shri Rajagopala Rao.

Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to state.

(a) whether it is a fact that Shipping Companies have decided to raise freight rates or impose a surcharge due to severe congestion at the ports of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras,

(b) how many cargo ships had to wait midstream before being berthed in these ports during the last six months,

(c) how many were diverted to other ports,

(d) the total amount of demurrage Government had to pay during the last six months due to congestion at these ports, and

(e) the steps Government propose to take in future so that they may not have to incur such a heavy financial liability?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Transport and Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) No, Sir

(b) During the 6 month period ending 31st July, 1957, the number of ships that had to wait for berths was