

The Minister of Shipping in the Ministry of Transport (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) Yes.

(b) The site and the design of the proposed bridge have been settled in consultation with the Governments of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh but the question of the allocation of cost of the bridge among the Centre, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh Governments is under consideration. The construction of the bridge will be taken up as soon as the financial aspects are settled.

(c) About Rs. 25 lakhs.

Damage to Crops

143. { **Shri Bade:**
Shri Kachhavaiya:

Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) the approximate value of the damage to crops by insects, rodents and other animal pests during 1961-62 and 1962-63;

(b) the steps being taken to check such damage; and

(c) the amount spent on checking this damage during 1961-62 and 1962-63?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (Dr. Ram Subhag Singh): (a) No accurate assessments have been made but it is estimated that overall losses caused by insects, other animal pests and diseases of crops come to about twenty per cent of the value of the crops, which works out to approximately rupees 1,000 crores annually at the current prices. Separate figures for the years 1961-62 and 1962-63 are not available.

(b) Plant Protection is primarily the responsibility of State Governments. Plant Protection Organisations have been set up in all States for taking effective control measures against plant pest and diseases. The Central Government also help the State Governments wherever requir-

ed by way of technical advice and giving them aerial operation facilities. For the distribution of pesticides and manually operated sprayers/dusters the Central Government gives a subsidy of 25 per cent.

(c) The total expenditure incurred by the State Governments on the various plant protection measures during 1961-62 and 1962-63 is not available. It is estimated that pesticides worth Rs. 7 crores in 1961 and Rs. 7.5 crores in 1962 were formulated in India for use in the agricultural sector. Application equipment worth over a crore of rupees was manufactured and sold in the country for applying these pesticides each year. The figures for 1963 are not yet available.

Hindustan Shipyard

144. { **Shri Eswara Reddy:**
Shri Bade:

Will the Minister of Transport be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the construction of ships at the Hindustan Ship-building Yard, Vishakapatnam has been affected by the shortage of steel; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to improve the situation?

The Minister of Shipping in the Ministry of Transport (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) Yes.

(b) The steel requirements of the Hindustan Shipyard for ship construction are arranged by the Iron and Steel Controller, Calcutta on high priority basis to the extent possible from indigenous suppliers; and for the balance, import licences are issued.

Timely action is taken by the Hindustan Shipyard in placing incidents and keeping the Iron and Steel Controller/Producers informed from time to time about the Shipyard's requirements. The question of short supplies has been taken up with the Departments concerned and is engaging their attention.