

tionaries. May I know what was the decision taken at that conference and how it is being implemented?

Shri S. V. Ramaswamy: No decision seems to have been taken yet. We await information.

Shri Ajit Singh Sarhadi: May I know whether this delay in removal was due to the fault of the merchants or it was due to any act on the part of the Railway officers?

Shri S. V. Ramaswamy: Several reasons have contributed to this delay. First of all, the merchants do not seem to have a sufficient number of trucks to remove the load that is available every day. They have got a limited number of trucks. Every day about 74 wagons are placed at the sidings, and with the capacity at their disposal, they are able to clear only 64 wagons. Secondly, there is restriction in the movement of heavy wagons during certain hours in the Delhi area. Thirdly, the merchants also seem to take it somewhat easy, because the wharfage charges are very low, and they are only about Rs. 3 per wagon per day after the free period of 24 hours. Therefore, they find it quite easy to leave them there in the railway premises themselves.

Railway Bridge over Ram Ganga

*709. **Shri Ram Saran:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the great hardship the vehicular traffic has to experience in waiting for hours together while crossing the Ram Ganga Railway bridge near Moradabad;

(b) whether it is a fact that the bridge has become very old and needs renewal;

(c) whether the renewal or doubling of the bridge is included in the Third Five Year Plan; and

(d) what steps Government propose to take in the matter?

The Deputy Minister of Railways (Shri Shah nawas Khan): (a) Yes Sir. Due to heavy rail traffic over the Railway bridge, detentions to road traffic do occur, though not for hours at a time.

(b) Though the bridge is 68 years old, its condition is satisfactory.

(c) No.

(d) There is a proposal under consideration of the State Government to construct a pontoon road bridge 900 ft. upstream of the Railway Bridge.

श्री राम सरण : क्या मंत्री जी बतायेंगे कि जब तक पान्टून ब्रिज नहीं बन जाता तब तक इस ब्रिज पर ट्रैफिक को रेगुलेट करने की कोई व्यवस्था हो सकती है ?

श्री शाहनवाज खां : ट्रैफिक तो रेगुलेट होता ही है। लेकिन हमारी मुश्किल यह है कि इस पुल के ऊपर से रोजाना चालीस गाड़ियां घाती जाती हैं। तो जितनी जल्दी रोड ट्रैफिक इस पुल पर से जाना बन्द हो जाये, उतना अच्छा है।

Shri C. D. Pande: May I know whether Government are aware that this bridge is a part of the national highway, and it is closed to vehicular traffic even when there is no train? The system is that when a train leaves from Rampur, the bridge is closed. Actually, there should be some system by which the bridge should remain open till the train comes to that point; only then could the hardship be reduced. Otherwise, people have to stand for hours together. I have my personal experience.

Shri Shah nawas Khan: Yes, it is admitted that detentions to road traffic are heavy, but in the interest of

the safety of running trains, a certain procedure has to be followed, and we cannot make the trains run and at the same time keep the road traffic going. The only satisfactory solution would be to have another road bridge. The matter has been examined, and it has been accepted in principle, and the Government of U.P., for the time being, is putting up a pontoon bridge.

Recruitment of Seamen

*711. **Shri Assar:** Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have changed the policy about fresh recruitment of seamen in the Merchant Navy by the office of the Director-General of Shipping;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have received any complaints against this fresh recruitment; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto?

The Minister of Transport and Communications (Dr. P. Subbarayan): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d). Government have received a representation from one of the unrecognised Seamen's Union against a proposal to recruit fresh hands in Bombay for the Saloon Department. As there is a proved shortage of ratings in certain lower categories in this Department, Government have decided to call for applications from prospective candidates as has been the practice hitherto.

Shri Assar: May I know whether it is a fact that those who are not Indian nationals are also recruited by the Seamen's Employment Exchange, and if so, the reasons therefor?

Dr. P. Subbarayan: We have been representing to the various foreign ship-owners that they should continue the old practice of recruiting at the Indian ports, but we cannot compel them to do what they do not want to do.

Shri Muhammed Elias: May I know whether it is a fact that due to the lawlessness in the Shipping Office at Calcutta, the foreign ship-owners are removing the recruiting centre from Calcutta to Chittagong, as a result of which, India is losing employment opportunities for nearly eight to ten thousand seamen per year? Moreover, at the time of 'pay-on' and 'pay-off' of the season in the name of union subscriptions, a gang of hooligans forcibly takes the money from the seamen, and in spite of several representations, Government could not stop it. That is why the foreign ship-owners being disgusted are removing their recruiting from there to Chittagong.

Shri Raghunath Singh: But the name of the organisation has not been given. The hon. Member has only said that it was a gang of hooligans.

Shri Muhammad Elias: They are just a gang of hooligans; they do not belong to any organisation.

Mr. Speaker: Has it been brought to the notice of the hon. Minister?

Dr. P. Subbarayan: As I have explained, we are entirely in the hands of the foreign ship-owners for recruitment of these people, and as some of the seamen in India demand higher pay than they are able to obtain in other ports in other foreign countries, these people naturally go to the place where they can have cheaper labour.

Shri Braj Raj Singh: The hon. Minister has just now stated that some of the seamen in India demand higher pay than that demanded by other foreign seamen. I am told that the companies are recruiting seamen from Pakistan and Kuala Lumpur just to make our seamen unemployed,