

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRIES OF RAILWAYS, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) and (b). The requisite information is being obtained from the Board of Control for Cricket in India and the same, along with the reactions of the Government thereon, will be laid on the Table of the Sabha as soon as possible.

Maintenance of G.T. Road between Nigsa to Kulti in West Bengal

1241. SHRI DIPENDRABHUSAN GHOSH: Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the alarmingly bad condition of the National Highway, G.T. Road between Nigsa to Kulti in West Bengal resulting in total collapse of transport system in this vital coal belt area; and

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI BUTA SINGH): (a) and (b) Due to very heavy traffic plying, the portion of the road from the old Barakar bridge to the take off point of the approach to the new Barakar bridge needs repairs from time to time. This is being attended to maintain it in traffic worthy condition. It is not correct that bad condition has resulted in total collapse of the transport system. The existing bridge over river Barakar being old, narrow and weak, a new bridge has been recently opened to traffic providing further relief to traffic and cutting out delays.

Unemployment allowance to Indian Seamen

1242. SHRI ARABINDA GHOSH: Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state the steps taken for providing unemployment allowance to Indian Seamen from 'Sign-Off' to 'Sign-On' period?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI VEERENDRA PATIL): Seafarer's Welfare Fund Society was operating a scheme for the grant of financial assistance to needy seamen at Rs. 10 per day during periods of involuntary unemployment after the expiry of initial off-entitlement period calculated at ten days for every month of articulated service. Assistance was admissible initially for a maximum of 90 days which was later reduced to 60 days. The scheme was operated by the Society out of voluntary contributions from Shipowners at Rs. 35 per job per month made to the Society from 1-4-78. The scheme was discontinued by the Society with effect from 1-9-1980 at the instance of National Maritime Board, a bilateral body of Seafarers Unions and Shipowners, as they contemplate operating a modified scheme for unemployment relief to seamen themselves bilaterally which may provide for better and higher benefits.

Unemployment among the registered Seamen

1243. SHRI ARABINDA GHOSH: Will the Minister of SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT be pleased to state the number of unemployed persons among the registered seamen in India, Port wise?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI VEERENDRA PATIL): Seamen are registered only at Bombay and Calcutta. They are normally employed on board Ships on the basis of each voyage through a roster system. There is, thus, necessarily a waiting period involved