

**Dr. P. S. Deshmukh:** If we work on 100 per cent basis, it is clear that the I.C.A.R. would not be able to pay for it.

**Road Bridge on National Highway No. 31**

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\*184. { **Shri Barman:**  
**Shri S. C. Samanta:**  
**Shri Subodh Hasda:**

Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 1162 on the 3rd September, 1957 and state what steps have been taken so far to reconstruct the permanent bridge over the Siltorsa and Chartorsa rivers?

**The Minister of State in the Ministry of Transport and Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur):** The Government of West Bengal have been asked to carry out detailed surveys of the entire area and then to examine the flooding aspect of the river. A final decision on the construction and the designing of the bridge will be taken after the result of surveys is known.

**Shri Barman:** May I know whether the question of a bridge over the river Torsa had been taken up by the Poona Research Institute and if so, what is the outcome of that research?

**Shri Raj Bahadur:** So far as I know I do not think this matter was referred to the Poona Research Institute. This is a matter of local survey by the engineers and surveyors of the West Bengal Government.

**Shri Barman:** Has the Ministry of Transport and Communications taken note of the observation made by the Stabilisation Committee that if any bridge has to be built on the river Torsa, protection bunds on both sides of Torsa have to be built right up from the foot hills and if so whether this national highway alignment is still trying to cross over the Torsa without taking note of that recom-

mendation or is it going to have an alignment that will avoid Torsa and join it from Phalakatla to Cooch-Behar?

**Shri Raj Bahadur:** I believe that various opinions expressed by various experts have been taken due note of. But the intensive current, the volume of silt and sediment that it brings and the ever-changing course of Torsa make it an extremely difficult engineering problem so far as the planning of bridges is concerned. As far back as 1951, a plan was finalised on the basis of surveys for a single bridge five miles down the various branches of the river where they unite. But when everything was ready, and when we were going to start the work it was suddenly observed that year that the river had changed its course in 1953 and the entire plan had to be abandoned. So it is a difficult task that the surveyors, designers and the engineers have to face.

**Shri Barman:** Is it a fact that after this experience in 1951, the Railway Ministry is trying to survey the same area which was abandoned a few years ago? Will it now be advisable to expedite the task of bridging over this river or have the national highway avoiding the Torsa and joining the town of Cooch-Behar from Phalakatla?

**An Hon. Member:** For ten years this investigation is going on....

**Mr. Speaker:** The question seems to be longer than the length of the bridge itself.

**Shri Barman:** It follows from the reply.

**Shri P. G. Sen:** What about the bridge on National Highway No. 31 of Dingra Ghat across the Mahananda? The survey work was long being done. May I know whether it is being implemented now?

**Shri Raj Bahadur:** I require separate notice for a separate bridge.