

[Shri Virdhi Chander Jain]

hol on Doordarshan, radio and in newspapers and other Government media. These advertisements are unaesthetic, provocative and also hurt public feelings.

(vi) Construction of a bridge on Yamuna near Shergarh

SHRI MANVENDRA SINGH (Mathura) : For the last 30 years, residents of Mathura and Aligarh districts have been demanding a bridge on the Yamuna near Shergarh in Mathura district. Special importance is attached to the construction of this bridge as it will provide a direct link between Mathura and Aligarh districts. This will reduce the existing distance by 150 kilometres. At the same time, the proposed bridge will cut down the distance between Mathura and Chhata and Mathura and Moth (two tehsils of this district) by about 100 kilometres. This bridge would prove to be a boon to development in the area. The most important benefit will be a relief from the increasing pressure of heavy vehicles and other transport on the route connecting Meerut, Ghaziabad and Aligarh with Bombay and Calcutta. The distance to be covered would also be reduced to a large extent. Similarly traffic moving from Bombay, Calcutta, Kanpur and Agra towards Aligarh, Ghaziabad and Meerut will be greatly benefitted. The increasing pressure of heavy vehicles and other traffic, moving to and from Mathura, Delhi, Ghaziabad and Aligarh, will also ease off.

Nearly 8,000 vehicles moving to and from the Mathura Oil Refinery everyday, will also have to cover less distance. Increasing traffic on both National Highways will greatly benefit.

Considering the increasing pressure of traffic on National Highways and the long-standing demand of the public, I request the Government to construct a bridge on the Yamuna near Shergarh without further delay.

[English]

(vii) Need to charge concessional fare from Haj pilgrims and to provide them other facilities

SHRI SYED SHAHABUDDIN (Kishanganj) : The annual Haj pilgrimage takes

regularly 27,000 pilgrims to Saudi Arabia. The pilgrimage logistics are organised by the Haj Committee with the support of the Government. That includes arrangements for transportation of pilgrims from India to Saudi Arabia and back, by air and by sea, and their accommodation and welfare while in Saudi Arabia. The Haj Committee Act is out of date, as the selection of pilgrims from various States has been decentralised. I urge the Government that the Haj Committee Act should be amended at the earliest possible. A policy decision should be taken soon about the availability of ships for transportation of Haj pilgrims in 1989, and on the question of transferring the subsidy so far available only to pilgrims travelling by sea, to pilgrims travelling by air, to bridge the gap between the sea and air fares, as also on the method for determination of the Haj air fare.

Air India must look upon Haj service as a national responsibility, and not as a commercial venture, and Haj air fare should be fixed at 2/3 of the normal IATA return fare, and all economy class pilgrims should receive a subsidy of 1/6 of IATA fare. It may be added that the royalty payable under Saudi Arabian regulations to the Saudi Arabian Airlines in case the latter decides not to exercise the option of transportation of pilgrims one way. Air India should absorb the royalty.

The uncertainty and last-minute rise in fare level be avoided. The programme of flights of Haj must be published at least two months before the commencement of flights

I would urge the formation of a Standing Committee at the Central level, with representation of Ministries of External Affairs, Finance, Civil Aviation and Surface Transport to take quick decisions whenever matters are referred by the Haj Committee for approval of Government.

The Haj Committee, whose term has expired, must be reconstituted immediately.

(viii) Demand for inclusion of Telugu films in film festivals.

SHRI K. RAMACHANDRA REDDY (Hindupur) : A great injustice was done