

# Multifarious problems at truck stands

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By Muhammad Asghar

LAHORE, April 23: The General Truck Stands on the Ravi Link Road has no metalled roads and sewerage system and its parking and service road have been encroached completely.

Roads in the two truck stands, situated adjacent to each other, were built when they were developed in 1969 and again in 1976. The Metropolitan Corporation of Lahore never bothered to repair or rebuild the roads afterwards despite repeated demands and protests by the transporters. They now find the goings hard because the roads have disappeared completely and the thoroughfares are full of big depressions.

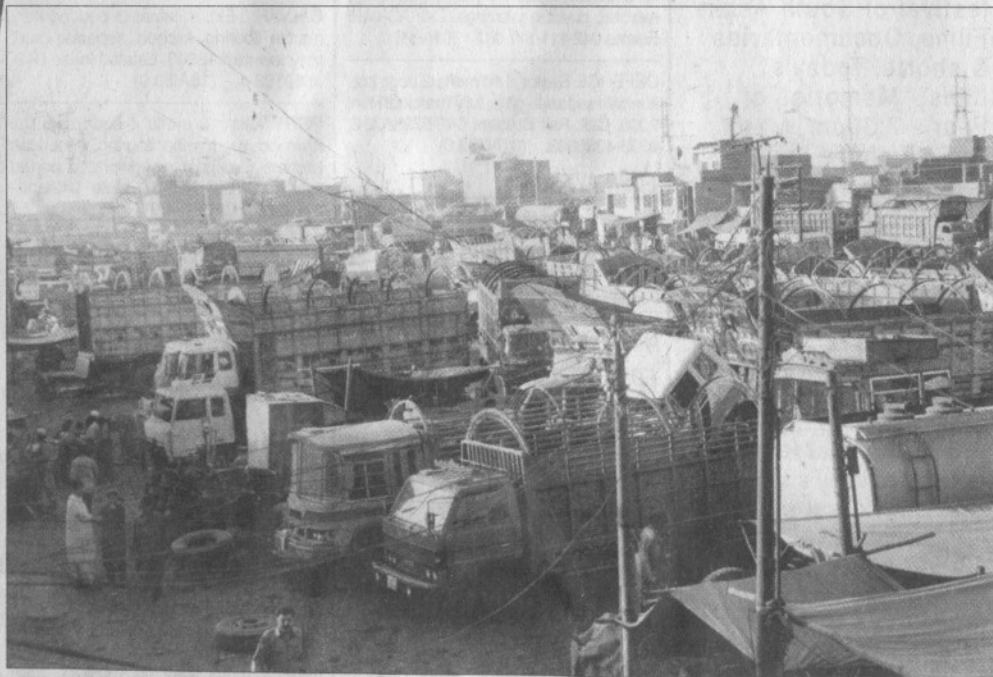
The truck stands have not

only been deprived of its roads but the parking space as well. The entire parking area has been encroached upon and the service road running parallel to the Ravi Link Road has been rendered unserviceable due to parking of trucks awaiting repairs or picking cargo from the goods forwarding agents godowns.

The stands were developed for shifting of the goods forwarding business outside the city but the business is still in the city despite allotment of 53 two-kanal plots to goods forwarding agents on the Ravi Link Road at the rate of Rs90,000 per kanal in 1969, another 23 one-kanal plots adja-

cent to the first in 1981-82. Another 120 12-marla plots were given at the rate of Rs40,000 per marla in 1986 at the Sabzazar Scheme. The plots are too small for long vehicles.

Goods Transporters Association president Aslam Dar told *Dawn* that even fodder merchants had been allotted plots at the Sabzazar truck stand because of the defective allotment policy while some genuine operators working outside Sheranwala Gate since 1969 had not been allotted plots. Previously only a licenced goods forwarding agent owning five trucks and having another 25 attached was considered eligible for the allotment of



TRUCKS blocking the service road outside the General Truck Stand on the Ravi Link Road.—Dawn



INSIDE view of the truck stand where roads have disappeared completely.—Dawn

a plot. People owning two trucks and having another 15 attached to their business were considered eligible for allotment of plots at Sabzazar Scheme even if they did not possess a goods forwarding licence.

He said 20,000 to 25,000 trucks were owned and attached to the goods transport business in the provincial metropolis. An average 3,000 to 4,000 trucks operate from the stand daily. The goods forwarding agents had their godowns on the Circular Road, outside Shah Alam, Serai Sultan, Serai Rattan Chand, Bund Road, Multan Road, Urdu Bazaar and under the Data Nagar Bridge.

Mr Dar said the trucks were

allowed to enter the city limits for loading or unloading at night. The trucks found in the city during the day were prosecuted by the traffic police. Previously the trucks could enter the city between 8pm and 7am but the timings had now been changed to 11pm to 6am to facilitate extortion of bribe. He said the old timings should be restored as it was not possible for drivers to come and leave after unloading or loading the goods within seven hours.

He said medium-sized Mazda trucks were being allowed to operate in the city whereas the entry timings for larger trucks had been reduced from 11 hours

to seven hours.

Mr Dar said the goods forwarding agents were not only harassed by the traffic police but were also worried about the security of the goods. Robbers often unloaded goods from the moving trucks on Faisalabad and Gujranwala roads but the police refused to register cases. Armed men also seized goods from the trucks. The robberies stopped for a few months after the transporters strike in March last year. The robbers gradually became active afterwards and 8 to 10 theft or robbery cases were being reported to the association daily these days.