

Panchayati Raj institutions and to suggest measures to strengthen them. That Committee has still to submit its report. Any recommendations made by the Committee to give more judicial powers to village panchayats will be examined on receipt of its report.

Conversion of Narrow-Gauge Lines into Broad-Gauge

*704. SHRI LAKSHMANA MAHA-PATRO:

SHRI BHAIKAB CHANDRA MAHANTI;

SHRI HAREKRUSHNA MAL-LICK;

SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR SAHU:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of narrow-gauge railway lines converted into broad-gauge during the last three years; and

(b) the present position of the proposal received from the Government of Orissa regarding conversion of Rupsa-Talbandh narrow-gauge line into broad gauge?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE): (a) and (b) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) No narrow-gauge line has been converted into broad gauge during the last three years. However, construction of a broad gauge line from Nadiad to Modasa (105 Kms.) involving conversion of Nadiad to Kapadvanj narrow gauge line (44.64 Kms.) in Gujarat into broad gauge has been approved in the Budget for 1978-79 and the construction work has since been taken up.

(b) A reconnaissance engineering-cum-traffic survey for the conversion of Rupsa-Talbandh narrow gauge line in Orissa into broad gauge and its extension up to Gorumahcisan/Chakulia

has been taken up during the current financial year.

Survey for Oil Exploration in Tapti River Basin

"705. SHRIMATI AZIZA IMAM: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to undertake high resolution seismic survey for oil exploration in the Tapti river basin and to assign the job to foreign firms; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA): (a) and (b). For the North Tapti structure, the ONGC have invited tenders from foreign contractors for a high resolution seismic survey in order to map the shallow and possibly hazardous gas pockets such as the one encountered while attempting to drill the first well on the structure some time ago.

Anomaly in seniority of the Delhi judicial offices and persons appointed from the Bar

*706. SHRIMATI PRATIMA BOSE:

SHRIMATI PRATIBHA SINGH:

Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Judicial Officer in Delhi who has worked as Sub-Judge or Magistrate for about 15 years and for about 10 years as officiating Additional District Judge ranks junior to a direct recruit from the Bar who has just put in 7 years' practice;

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken or propose to take to remove this anomaly;