

MR. CHAIRMAN : Next Question  
Shri Scato Swu.

**Extension work on Silchar Jiribam line**

\*122. SHRI SCATO SWU† :

SHRI I. T. SINGH :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Survey work on the extension of Railway line from Silchar to Jiribam, Manipur has been completed: and

(b) if so, by when the actual work will be started by when Manipur is likely to be connected by rail with the rest of the country?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SARDAR BUTA SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) It has been revealed by the Preliminary Engineering-cum-Traffic Surveys, carried out recently, that the line would be highly unremunerative yielding a negative return (—) 1.24 per cent even in the 16th year of opening. However, a decision would be taken, after the reports are examined from all angles.

SHRI I. T. SINGH: Sir, as you are aware of the fact, in the north-eastern region, there are four States and out of these States, Manipur, Mizoram and Arunachal are having no railway station of their own. At the moment, we are having a common railway station in Nagaland. This is Dimapur and it is known as Manipur Road and the distance covered by motor to Dimapur is 215 kms. As the hon. Minister stated if at all this line comes up, then also we will have to cover 215 kms. from the capital of Manipur State to Jiribam. And the distance to cover is the same as for Dimapur. The only difference is . . .

† The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Scato Swu.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please be specific.

SHRI I. T. SINGH: Sir, the hon. Minister said that a survey was carried out. May I know from the hon. Minister as to what money is involved and the time to be taken if this railway line is taken up? And is there any scope for a survey to be done from Dimapur to Imphal so that the capital of Manipur is brought nearer to a railway station?

SARDAR BUTA SINGH: Sir, as I have stated earlier, the report of the engineering-cum-traffic survey is still under consideration, and it will not be possible at this moment to give the exact cost. It will be only after the report has been taken into consideration that we will be able to let the House know the costs and the other things involved.

SHRI HAMID ALI SCHAMNAD: Sir, it has been reported in the press when Mr. T. A. Pai was the Railway Minister that a survey had been conducted to connect Mangalore and Bombay as Konkan Railway. . . . (Interruptions) I am coming to the question. Now it has been reported in the press that it is slowed down . . .

SARDAR BUTA SINGH: Sir, this does not concern the main question.

SHRI NABIN CHANDRA BURAGOHAIN: Sir, non-development of railway line in north-eastern region is one of the main causes of backwardness of north-eastern region. To remove the bottleneck, under the Five-Year Plan, this conversion from Bongaigaon to Gauhati was taken up, and also an amount of Rs. 36 crores was earmarked for the work. Under the Annual Plan, Rs. 2 crores were allotted for the work, but now this amount of Rs. 2 crores has been reduced to Rs. 50 lakhs. So, Sir, may I ask the hon'ble Railway Minister to take steps to increase this reduced amount of Rs. 50 lakhs to the original allocation of Rs. 2 crores, so that this bottleneck of north-eastern region may be removed as early as possible?

SHRI L. N. MISHRA. So far as this north-eastern part is concerned, transport

and communication is a real problem. We had a meeting with the Chief Ministers and the Governor concerned—Shri L. P. Singh was the Governor—and we discussed the matter. Our proposal is to set up a special authority for the development of transport in that region. It is a very big problem. At places we have to cross hills up to 5,000 ft. in height. Therefore, it is not that easy that we can do it overnight; it will take time. But some proposals are there as in Dimapur. The 50-kilometer proposal is there and we are going to spend about Rs. 3 crores shortly. About Gauhati-Bongaigaon, it has been announced by the Prime Minister and we are following it up and we are going to take it up. This project will not suffer for want of funds. Whether it requires Rs. 2 crores or Rs. 3 crores, the conversion of line from Bongaigaon to Gauhati will be taken up.

**श्री मोहम्मद प्रकाश त्यागी :** महापति महोदय, मैं मंत्री महोदय से यह जानना चाहूंगा कि जैसा अभी उन्होंने उत्तर दिया कि गिरिलिम और मनीपुर तक रेलवे लाइन बनाने के संबंध में जो रिपोर्ट है वह आ चुकी है और उसके देखने के के पश्चात् ही यह निर्णय किया जायेगा कि उसकी स्टार्ट करें या न करें? मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि वह क्षेत्र जो है, वह एक सीमा प्रान्तीय क्षेत्र है और रक्षा की दृष्टि से एक महत्वपूर्ण क्षेत्र है। इसके साथ ही साथ यह क्षेत्र पिछड़ा हुआ भी है, इस दृष्टि से भी इस क्षेत्र का डेवलप करना बहुत आवश्यक है। तो मैं मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि सर्वे रिपोर्ट आने के पश्चात्, क्या वहाँ पर रेलवे लाइन का बनाना लागत के आधार पर निर्णय किया जायेगा या फिर इस बात का भी ध्यान रखा जायेगा कि यह जो क्षेत्र है वह सीमा प्रान्तीय क्षेत्र है और पिछड़ा हुआ है इस क्षेत्र का डेवलप करना सरकार का एक कर्त्तव्य है, तो इस आधार की प्राथमिकता दी जायेगी या नहीं?

**सरदार बूटा सिंह :** माननीय सदस्य ने मेरी बात को अच्छी तरह से नहीं सुना। मैंने यह नहीं कहा कि रिपोर्ट नहीं आई है, बल्कि मैंने कहा कि रिपोर्ट हमारे पास आ चुकी है। यह

जो प्रश्न है कि यह क्षेत्र एक सीमा प्रान्तीय क्षेत्र है और इसका डेवलप करना आवश्यक है, हम इस बात का अवश्य खयाल रखेंगे और यह नहीं देखा जायेगा कि इस लाइन से प्राफिट होता है या नहीं।

**SHRI N. R. CHOUDHURY :** Sir, I am very sorry to hear the reply of the Deputy Minister.

**MR. CHAIRMAN :** You put the question.

**SHRI N. R. CHOUDHURY :** Yes, I am putting the question, Sir, for quite a long period, the people in the north-eastern region have been agitating for extension of railway lines in their areas linking the State capital by railways. Whereas in other parts of the country there are questions of linking State capitals with broad-gauge line, electrification of railways, these people have no railway lines. Sir, now the Minister says that the survey work has been done and the report says it will not be economically feasible. My point is that several times even on the floor of this House Ministers have assured us that extension of railway lines from Dharmanagar to Kumarghat, from Silchar to Jiribam and also from Gauhati to somewhere in Banihat in Meghalaya will be taken up, but today he says it is not economically feasible. Sir, I want to know from the Minister whether the taking up of extension work in the north-eastern region will be considered on the basis of economic feasibility or development prospect of the area. That is what I specifically want to know from the Minister.

**SHRI L. N. MISHRA :** Perhaps, the honorable Member has forgotten the announcement we made at the time of the presentation of the Budget, both the Supplementary Budget and the original Budget in March. We categorically said that development of the area or laying of the new railway lines will not depend only on economic viability. If there is demand for transport, we shall have it. So far as North East India is concerned, it must get topmost priority and it will get priority.

**श्री हर्षदेव मालवीय :** मान्यवर, इसी क्षेत्र में गैलिकी और लकवा-नाजीरा के पास हमारे दो आयल फील्ड्स हैं, जहाँ पर काफी तेल पैदा हो रहा है और उसके निकट भी खुदाई हो रही है और आशा है कि वहाँ तेल बहुत होगा। वहाँ हम गए थे लेकिन उस तेल को रिफाइनरीज के पास भेजने की समस्या है। वहाँ रेल की बहुत दिक्कत है, उनके पास काफी तेल के टैंकर नहीं हैं। इस संबंध में माननीय मंत्री जी क्या यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि उनकी सूचना में यह बात है कि लकवा और गैलिकी आयल फील्ड्स के तेल को भेजने में दिक्कत है और क्या इस-लिए वे वहाँ पर और आयल टैंकर्स का प्रावधान करने का विचार रखते हैं अथवा नहीं रखते हैं।

**सरदार बूटा सिंह :** जी हाँ, यह सूचना हमको प्राप्त है और क्या फायदे होने वाले हैं, वे हमें मालूम हैं। जैसा हमारे मंत्री जी ने बताया है, हम इस पर बड़े गौर से विचार कर रहे हैं। यह जो सुझाव आपने दिया है इसको ध्यान में रखा जाएगा।

**SHRI SARDAR AMJAD ALI :** I am happy that the honourable Railway Minister said today that in extending the Railway lines, not only the economic considerations but economic viability will be given effect to. May I know from the hon. Minister as to whether any policy has been fixed up in the Railway Ministry with regard to the extension of Railway lines and laying of new Railway lines to the effect that priority should be given to the backward areas with the understanding that infrastructure will be built up and from that point of view whether the whole process of work in the matter of extension and laying of new Railway lines is done? In this connection, Sir, may I know whether the statement which you made today, namely, that only economic viability is not considered, tallies with regard to the position about

the extension of the proposed Railway line from Dharamnagar to Agartala which has been hanging fire for about 7 years?

**SHRI L. N. MISHRA:** We have discussed the proposal about Dharamnagar--Agartala with the Chief Minister and we have discussed it amongst ourselves also. It is under active consideration. I will not say we have already decided about it but there is 90 to 95 per cent chance that this proposal will be taken up. As the hon. Member himself knows there have been a number of proposals that have been taken up in the course of last 10 to 12 months in the North Eastern region, and also Bengal area, Bihar area, Eastern U.P. area and Konkan line to which the hon. Members referred. These are mostly the backward areas and in order to develop backward areas, the whole policy has undergone a change and that change will be followed up.

**SHRI SARDAR AMJAD ALI:** I wanted to know whether while you follow this policy of extending Railway lines and also to build up new lines, do you give any priority. That is my question.

**SHRI L. N. MISHRA:** I said that is the main consideration.

**बिजली की रेल गाड़ियों का चलाया जाना**

\* 123 श्री प्रकाशवीर शास्त्री : क्या रेल मंत्री यह बनाने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या सरकार दिल्ली पर आबादी का बोझ कम करने के लिये दिल्ली में उत्तर प्रदेश, हरियाणा और राजस्थान के विभिन्न नगरों तक तीव्र गति में चलने वाली बिजली की रेल-गाड़ियाँ चलाने की किसी योजना पर विचार कर रही है, और

(ख) यदि हाँ, तो इस योजना के कब तक प्रारम्भ किये जाने की संभावना है?