

(e) whether any disciplinary action was taken against the employees who participated in the strike ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI L. N. MISHRA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) 5 to 9 days.

(c) and (d) There was no settlement as such.

(e) Yes.

Improvement of Katakhal-Lalaghat Section

*455. SHRI N. R. CHOUDHURY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that the people of Hailakandi have been agitating for a long period for the improvement of Katakhal-Lalaghat section under North East Frontier Railway; and

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken for the improvement of this section ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Renewal of existing track by heavier rails to permit heavier locomotives at increased speed is proposed to be undertaken, after the company owning the Light Railway deposits their share of cost.

Spurt in Drugs Prices

*456. SHRI N. G. GORAY :

SHRIMATI PRATIBHA SINGH :

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been a spurt in the price of essential drugs;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the prices registered a sudden rise during the period from January to March, 1973;

(c) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(d) what steps have been taken by Government to hold the price line of essential drugs ?

THE MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI D. K. BOROOAH) : (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Fertilizer factory at Kakinada

♦457. SHRI PAPI REDDY : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to set up a fertilizer factory at Kakinada;

(b) If so, who are the collaborators and what would be the cost of the project; and

(c) when is it likely to start functioning ?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI D. K. BAROOAH) : (a) to (c) Two proposals have been received for setting up a fertilizer plant at Kakinada in the private sector. No decision has yet been taken on these proposals.

Construction of Railway Lines In North Bihar

*458. SHRI GUNANAND THAKUR : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that surveys have been undertaken for the construction of railway lines from Jhanjharpur to Laukahabazar and from Hasanpur to Sakri on the North Eastern Railway; and

(b) if so, by when the construction work will start in these two backward sectors of north Bihar ?