

RAJYA SABHA

Thursday, the 11th August, 1966/the 20th
Shravana, 1888 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock, MR.
CHAIRMAN in the chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

CONVERSION AND CONSTRUCTION OF RAIL- WAY LINES IN MAHARASHTRA

*385. SHRI S. K. VAISHAMPAYEN : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state the schemes for conversion of metre gauge into broad gauge and those for construction of new Railway lines in Maharashtra for inclusion in the Fourth Five Year Plan ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SHAM
NATH) : The Fourth Plan proposals for new
lines and conversion have not yet been
finalised.

SHRI S. K. VAISHAMPAYEN : May I
know whether the Railway Ministry has
received proposals for railway lines from the
State Government and, if so, will the Minister
state the criteria on which these proposals will
be finalised ?

SHRI SHAM NATH : Sir, the Maharashtra
Government has sent us some proposals about
(a) providing new lines and (b) converting
narrow gauge lines into broad ones. We have
examined some of them while some others
are still under examination but because the
resources at our disposal for constructing new
lines are very small, I fear that it would not be
possible to take up more than one or two of
these lines.

SHRI S. K. VAISHAMPAYEN: Sir,
besides defence considerations, the present
criteria of the Railway Ministry are of a
commercial nature related only to big
industries; they do not take note of the big
agro-industrial development that is taking
place in different regions. In view of this, will
the Minister consider including a rich agro-
industrial tract as a criterion for laying a
railway line there ? L72RS/66 -1

SHRI SHAM NATH : Sir, it is not true that
only defence and strategic considerations are
taken into account; other factors are also taken
into consideration. For instance, if any project
is necessary for the industrial development of
any area, then that project is also considered.

SHRI S. K. VAISHAMPAYEN : Sir, since
1951 the people of Marathwada in
Maharashtra have made two demands for
railway lines in the region and they are being
informed that these proposals will be
considered in the next Plan. Three Plans are
now over. In view of the fact that the region is
a potentially rich agro-industrial tract and in
view of the bottleneck of change of gauge at
Manmad, will the Minister consider the
demand from this region at least during the
Fourth Plan ?

SHRI SHAM NATH: Sir, whatever
proposals are under examination, we will try
to do whatever best is possible in respect of
them, keeping in view the resources available.
As regards the First, Second and Third Plans,
I have no information how many lines were
taken up or constructed in Maharashtra, but
we do not take any project in hand on the
basis of any regional considerations.

SHRI A. D. MANI : May I ask the
Minister whether any estimates have been
worked out about the approximate cost of the
implementation of the proposals of the
Government of Maharashtra because, when
the Minister said that the resources do not
warrant the acceptance of the scheme, we
should like to know how much the scheme
would have cost ? May I also ask the Minister
to give us information about the immediate
feasibility of acceptance of these proposals,
because some hope was given to the people in
that region who feel that these conversions
from metre gauge to broad gauge should be
taken up immediately ?

SHRI SHAM NATH : Sir, as regards the
three proposals for converting narrow gauge
lines into broad gauge ones, I do not think it
would be possible to take up any of them. As
regards new lines, as I said before, some
proposals are still under consideration.
Regarding the estimates, one or two proposals
have been examined and their estimates
prepared.

SHRI A. D. MANI : I want the figures, iir.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Dharia.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA : Is it a fact that the hon. Minister of State for Railways visited Kolhapur and Sangli areas recently and in view of the pressing need the Railway Board has decided to convert the Kolhapur-Miraj metre gauge line into a broad gauge line ?

DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH : I did pay a visit to that area and the demand was made there but no decision has yet been taken. But we do realise the difficulty of the people who travel by that railway and in fact the most predominant demand was that the Kolhapur-Miraj conversion should be taken up with Poona-Miraj section and not with Miraj-Londa section, and that is under examination and very soon a decision will be taken.

श्री निरंजन वर्मा : रेलवे मिनिस्टर ने पंढरपुर में पब्लिकली एक मीटिंग में कहा था कि मिरज और पंढरपुर लाइन इस प्लान में ली जायगी ब्राड गेज करने के लिए। साथ साथ जब उन के दस्त महाराष्ट्र में आए तो उस वक्त उन्होंने औरंगाबाद में आपिन आश्वासन दिया था ? क्या यह आश्वासन इस प्लान में किसी तरह पूरा होगा ?

डा० राम सुभग सिंह : वह तो चल रहा है। पूना-मिरज लाइन का कन्वर्शन चल रहा है।

श्री निरंजन वर्मा : मैं मिरज पंढरपुर का पूछ रहा हूँ।

डा० राम सुभग सिंह : मिरज और पंढरपुर से लाटूर तक चले जाइए, नेरो गेज है। नेरो गेज के बारे में हमारे साथीने बताया।

SHRI D. THENGARJ : While formulating plans for extension or development, what is accepted as the unit, Railway zone or State ? If State is accepted as the unit, is the Government aware that it will lead to endless scrambles because each State will desire to have a separate zone ?

SHRI SHAM NATH : As regards the projects which are considered for being taken up, the main criterion, as I stated before, is the defence needs and the needs of industrial growth, etc. There are no other considerations which are taken into account.

SHRI B. D. KHOBARAGADE : May I know whether the hon. Minister is aware that Vidharbha also forms part of the Maharashtra State and Vidharbha is comparatively backward ? In view of its backwardness, may I know whether any schemes are being formulated for the Fourth Five Year Plan ?

SHRI SHAM NATH : Sir, as I stated, a small amount of Rs. 161 crores has been provided for constructing new lines and out of this amount Rs. 103 crores will be required for completing the projects already in hand. So, we will have only a balance of about Rs. 58 crores which we can spend on constructing new lines. As you will kindly observe, Sir, this is a very small amount.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Next question.

♦386. [The questioner (Shri Ram Singh) was absent. For answer, vide col. 2254 infra.]

*387. [The questioner (Shri I. K. Gujral) was absent. For answer, vide cols. 2254-55 infra.]

HOLDING UP OF TRAIN BY FORMER GOVERNOR

*388. SHRI A. D. MANI :

SHRI V. M. CHORDIA :

SHRIMATI TARA

RAMCHANDRA SATHB:

DR. M. M. S. SIDDHU :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether on the 6th June, 1966 a former Governor held up the Howrah-Delhi Express at Kanpur for 2 hours; and

(b) if so, what were the circumstances of the case ?

r the question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri A. D. Mani.