

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) There is no party car on Neelachal Express but adequate arrangements have been made for the service of refreshments and meals to the passengers travelling by this train from static catering establishments on route. Stoppages of adequate duration have been provided at suitable stations for this purpose.

Adequate arrangements for the supply of drinking water exist at the stations where the train stops en route. Water for toilets and wash basins is filled in tanks at originating stations and replenished as and when required at Tundla, Kanpur, Allahabad, Varanasi, Mughal Sarai, Gaya, Gomoh, Bokaro, Tata, Kharagpur, Balasore and Cuttack.

(b) A decision has been taken to introduce pantry car on this train; further action is being taken by the railway administration in this regard.

Goods Traffic in Kerala Region

479. SHRI A. A. RAHIM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Railway Stations in Kerala which are to be strengthened with regard to additional platform, goods sheds and sidings, especially industrial towns; and

(b) the steps taken to improve the goods traffic in the Kerala region, where most of Railway Stations lack in goods platform/sidings?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) and (b). Four stations namely Palghat, Calicut, Badagara and Kottarkara in Kerala are in need of additional/improved goods shed facilities. These will be provided on a programmed basis in the future. The existing facilities for goods shed/siding at other stations in Kerala are

considered to be adequate to deal with the quantum of goods traffic offering at present.

Conversion of Samastipur-Darbhanga Line

480. SHRI HARINATH MISRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to convert the Samastipur-Darbhanga and Darbhanga-Jayanagar meter-gauge line into broad-gauge line;

(b) the total length of the railway track; and

(c) the estimated expenditure for the conversion and the work done, so far?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) The work regarding conversion of Samastipur-Darbhanga is an approved work. A survey estimate for conversion of Darbhanga-Jayanagar MG section has been sanctioned by the Ministry of Railways on 18-8-1980.

(b) The length from Samastipur to Darbhanga is 37 kms. and from Darbhanga to Jayanagar is 68 kms.

(c) On a rough assessment the conversion project Samastipur-Darbhanga-Jayanagar is expected to cost Rs. 13.5 crores. A provision of Rs. 10 lakhs has been made in the Budget for 1980-81 for conversion of Samastipur-Darbhanga section which is already an approved work. Darbhanga-Jayanagar section will be considered after receipt of the project report from N.E. Railway.

Sick Wagons

481. SHRI R. P. GAEKWAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that over 14,000 wagons are stated to be sick;