

(b) (i) **Chhitauni—Bagaha**

This is an approved work and is already under progress. The work regarding construction of bridge over river Gandak is expected to be completed by end of Sixth Plan.

(ii) **Nirmali—Tharbhaha**

The N.E. Railway carried out two surveys for restoration of a rail link between Nirmali and Sarai-garh including construction of a bridge over river Kosi and submitted a project report for the latest survey to the Ministry of Railways during 1977. They proposed three possible alternatives for crossing the river Kosi. All these alternatives were found to be financially unremunerative. Therefore the project has been shelved. There was a proposal of Bihar Govt. to construct a barrage at Dagmara about 20 km. upstream of Nirmali which has not yet been taken up. The construction of the Railway bridge can be considered alongwith the barrage.

(c) Sanction to the revised survey estimate for updating and re-appraisal of Engineering-cum-Traffic survey for conversion of Muzaffarpur-Raxul via Sagauli from MG to BG has been communicated to N.E. Railway during August 1980. The survey work is expected to be completed by 31-3-1981. The cost of conversion will be known on receipt of report from N.E. Railway. The proposal regarding conversion of Darbhanga-Raxaul is not under consideration at present.

(d) and (e). The Eastern Railway were asked to carry out a reconnaissance preliminary Engineering-cum-traffic survey for connecting Ranchi Road with Giridih via Hazaribagh Town and Koderma. The Eastern Railway has submitted the report recently which is under examination.

Reconnaissance surveys for the following new lines had been made in 1975 :

1. Manderhill to Dumka
2. Dumka to Sainthia
3. Dumka to Baidyanath Dham
4. Dumka to Rampurhat
5. Dumka to Madhepur

The survey report revealed that these projects were found to be unremunerative. Therefore these projects were not pursued.

Replacement of Railway Machinery

1495. **SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY:** Will the Minister of RAILWAY be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that 70 per cent of the machinery and plants of the Indian Railways are overaged and needs replacement ; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken to replace the machinery.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN) : (a) Yes.

(b) The main constraint in timely replacement of overaged Machinery and Plant has been the limited availability of funds. An outlay of Rs. 290 crores has now been proposed during the Sixth Plan Period — 1980-85 to meet the replacement requirement of Machinery and Plant. A Railway Modernisation and Maintenance Project being financed by World Bank Credit has also been launched. A major component of this Project is Workshop Modernisation which includes an element of Rs. 62 crores in the first phase for need-based procurement of Machinery and Plant. The procurement of this Machinery and Plant as well as some of the Railways' other requirements has been entrusted to the Central Organisation for the Modernisation of Workshops.

Kovalam—Vizhinjam Line

1496. **SHRI A. NEELALOHITHA-DASAN:** Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have received any representation requesting to construct a Railway line connecting Kovalam and Vizhinjam with the Trivandrum Railway Junction ;

(b) if so, the main points thereof; and

(c) what action has been taken by Government thereon ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN) : (a) Yes.

(b) The line has been asked for mainly to cater to tourist traffic and also to be linked with Vizhinjam harbour.

(c) In view of the constraint of funds, there is no proposal at present to take up this project.