

Forbesganj Railway station with Siliguri Railway Station;

(b) if so, whether any survey was made for its economic and commercial viability; if so, the result of such survey together with the proposed expenditure involved in laying the railway line; and

(c) if so, whether Government propose to expedite the construction of the above line ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) No.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

Conversion of Barauni—Katihar M.G. Line

1561. SHRI D. L. BAITHA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the work of conversion of Railway track from metre gauge to broad gauge from Barauni to Katihar is in progress; if so, what time it would take to complete the proposed conversion;

(b) whether it is a fact that Katihar to Jogbani line of North Frontier Railway is a metre gauge line and from Katihar to Calcutta and also from Katihar to Siliguri are broad gauge lines of North Frontier Railway and only Katihar—Jogbani section is left as metre gauge line of North Frontier Railway;

(c) whether it is also a fact that people of the area made several representations and led delegations to the Railway authorities to consider the proposal of conversion of this small section with a distance of only 70 km from metre gauge to broad gauge particularly in view of the fact that Government have taken up conversion of metre gauge to broad gauge from Barauni to Katihar;

(d) if so, the reaction of Government thereto; and

(e) whether Government would also consider taking up the conversion work of Jogbani—Katihar section of North Frontier Railway also; and if not, why ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) The work is in progress and is expected to be completed by December, 1981.

(b) It is factually correct that Katihar to Jogbani line is a metre gauge line and

from Katihar to Calcutta and also from Katihar to Siliguri are broad gauge. Adequate transshipment facilities exist at Katihar for movement of jute and other agricultural produce of the area to Calcutta market.

(c) to (e). Since adequate capacity exists on the Katihar—Jogbani line to deal with the present volume of traffic no investigations have been carried out so far for the conversion of this line into Broad Gauge. However the conversion of Katihar—Jogbani will be given due consideration after completion of the work of conversion of Barauni—Katihar which is already in progress.

Chief Commercial Superintendent of Eastern Railway

1562. SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether vigilance enquiry has been instituted against a Senior Railway Officer, who was till very recently the Chief Commercial Superintendent of Eastern Railway, on charges of paying railway money against fake demurrage claims particularly on account of carriage of sugar, etc.

(b) if so, the details thereof and the present position of the case;

(c) whether one Shri Agarwala, a claims agent, is also involved in the case; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) A vigilance investigation has been made in regard to an information alleging irregularities in waiver of wharfage and demurrage by the office of Chief Commercial Superintendent, Eastern Railway.

(b) to (d). The investigation report has been sent to Central Vigilance Commission to seek their advice as per rules. Since the case has not yet been finalised, it will not be in the public interest to disclose the details at this stage.