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to suit the requirements of BG and preparation of land acquisition plan and papers is being taken up. In the portions where no change in alignment is necessary, the work would be taken up shortly. An outlay of Rs. 34 crs. has been provided in 97-98.

New Jalpaiguri-Siliguri-New Bongaigon	1997-98	380	NIL	20	This is a new work in the budget, 97-98 and will be taken up after the necessary clearances have been obtained.
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#### NEW WORKS INCLUDED IN SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET, 97-98

Gauge conversion of Katakhal-Bairabhi as first phase of extension of BG line to Sairang.					Work will be taken up after the necessary clearances have been obtained.
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Gauge conversion of Katihar-Jogbani					Work will be taken up after the necessary clearances have been obtained.
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#### RAILWAY ELECTRIFICATION

#### WEST BENGAL

*The electrification work is in progress on the following sections falling in the State of West Bengal*

Project	RKM in WB	RKM ENER GISED	BALANCE RKM	PROPORTIONATE ANTICIPATED COST (Rs. in Crs.)	Target
Tiruldih-Ilu (Part of Chandli-Muri-Barkakana)	24	-	24	9.08	March'98
Pundang-Muri & Purlia-Kotshilla (Part of Bokaro-Barsuan)	72	-	72	35.59	Dec'98
Kharagpur-Danton (Part of Kharagpur-Bhubneswar)	54	-	54	31.01	March'2002
Adra-Midnapur	155	-	155		March'99
Ranaghat-Gede	44	-	44	30.60	Not fixed.
Ranaghat-Bangaon	33	-	33	18.33	Not fixed.
<b>Total</b>	<b>382</b>		<b>382</b>		

With the completion of above electrification works total electrified RKM in the State of West Bengal would be 1378 + 382 = 1716 i.e 56.90% of the BG tracks

Survey for electrification :

Cost-cum-feasibility survey for electrification of the following sections are in progress :

1.	Krishnanagar-Lalgola	127 RKM
2.	Barsat-Hasnabad	52 RKM
3.	Katwa-Azimganj	78 RKM

ASSAM : There is no RE project in Assam.

[Translation]

#### Central Telegraph Office, Purnea

2515. SHRI RAJESH RANJAN ALIAS PAPPU YADAV: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Purnea Central Telegraph Office is presently running from a rented accommodation;

(b) if so, whether due to this revenue earning is low;

(c) if so, whether the Government contemplated the construction of building for Telegraph Offices;

(d) if so, the time by which it is likely to be constructed; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) No, Sir. There is no plan to construct a separate building for the Central Telegraph Office, Purnea.

(d) Question does not arise.

(e) There is a plan to shift the Central Telegraph Office, Purnea to the Departmental Exchange Building.

#### **Palace on Wheels**

2516. SHRI TARACHAND BHAGORA :  
SHRI PARASRAM MEGHWAL :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the 'Palace on Wheels' train being run on the narrow-gauge line in Gujarat have been incurring losses;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether there is any proposal to run it again in Rajasthan; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) No narrow gauge tourist train is running in Gujarat Sector by the name of 'Palace on Wheels'.

(b) Does not arise

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

[English]

#### **Construction of Over-Bridge**

2517. SHRI KESHAB MAHANTA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to construct a Railway Over-bridge at Agthuri between Changsari and Guwahati; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the time by which the work is likely to be started?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A Road Over Bridge in lieu of level crossing No. SK/2 at km. 8/0-1 between Agthuri and Changsari has been sanctioned during the Works programme of 1996-97 the Plan and Estimate for which are being prepared. The work will be taken up after the state Govt. starts work on approaches.

[Translation]

#### **Research Work in Steel Industry**

2518. SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI :  
SHRI NITISH KUMAR :

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have made the provision of an expenditure of Rs. 150 crore for undertaking research work in Steel Industry during the current year;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the technology used in steel production in the Country needs much improvement;

(d) if so, the technologies used in China, America, Russia and Japan along with the production cost of steel under the technologies separately; and

(e) the extent to which the production cost will be less when the production is undertaken through these technologies in comparison to the technology already being used in India?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The technologies used in the steel production in India need upgradation in many areas. The technology upgradation is a continuous process and the extent of improvement required depends upon the status of technologies in different companies.

As far as Steel Authority of India Ltd. (SAIL) is concerned, the company is constantly pursuing various modernisation programmes to suitably upgrade the level of technology in different SAIL plants.

In RINL/VSP, upgradation of technology is required in some of the areas like utilisation of waste energy in sinter plant for energy conservation, incorporation of expert system and computerisation at blast furnace for improving the productivity, incorporation of pulverised Coal Dust Injection and oxygen enrichment to improve the productivity and to reduce the production cost, automation and modernisation of continuous casting machines and introduction of facilities like oil water mist cooling and electro-magnetic stirring for improving the productivity and