

Government. The project is now being delayed on the plea that the project should be a central project and the State Government would receive only 25 per cent of the power to be generated at the plant which would not be sufficient for the State. Things have stopped moving at the Centre even though the Prime Minister gave assurance to clear the project, in its original form in September 1986, in two months.

During the past four years, the State Government has spent over Rs. 245 crores on the Teesta project while the Centre's contribution was only Rs. 5 crores. Despite repeated requests the Centre has not provided any special assistance to the irrigation project.

I, therefore, request the Prime Minister to give clearance to these projects without delay.

(viii) Need to ensure free movement of vehicles on National Highway No. 31A connecting Darjeeling with Sikkim.

SHRIMATI D.K. BHANDARI (Sikkim) : The disturbed conditions in Darjeeling have had serious effect on Sikkim. Sikkim's only link with the rest of the country is National Highway No. 31A which passes through Darjeeling District of West Bengal. This link has been disrupted and Sikkim has virtually remained cut off. During the last few days, between Rangpo the border town in Sikkim and Siliguri in Darjeeling District, Sikkim Government vehicles carrying essential supplies on this National Highway have been attacked by unknown miscreants. Some of the occupants in the vehicles received bullet injuries. Very recently one petrol tanker was set on fire and another heavily damaged. Occupants of these vehicles were severely beaten. Some are reported missing. A few days ago Sikkim Government vehicles carrying food supplies to Sikkim were stopped at Kalimpong and drivers were manhandled and beaten by some members of the para-military forces. Some of the seriously injured had to be hospitalised. The Chief Minister of Sikkim has apprised the Prime Minister and the Union Home Minister about these incidents. Because of non-availability of essential items prices have risen in Sikkim. The State's economy is

under severe strain. This being the situation, the Union Government is requested to intervene immediately and keep the Highway open under Military protection so that traffic could move unhindered.

12.14 hrs.

**RAILWAYS BUDGET, 1988-89 --
GENERAL DISCUSSION—(Contd.)**

[*English*]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Now, we take up further discussion on the Budget (Railways).

[*Translation*]

SHRIMATI MADHUREE SINGH (Purnea) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am very much grateful to you for providing me an opportunity to speak on the Railway Budget.

In the face of so many odds, a lot of improvement has been effected in the Indian Railways Service and I congratulate the hon. Minister of Railways for putting the Railways Service on a proper track. But, I also have certain complaints against the Ministry of Railways and it is my duty to refer to those complaints at this occasion.

My birth place as well as my constituency is in North Bihar. North Bihar is a big part of Bihar state and the population of this area is more than that of several states such as Orissa, Kerala, Punjab and Haryana. The population of North Bihar has become just double in the last four decades but no attention has been given towards the extension in Railway Services for this area. I am really sorry to find that even today no attention is being given to this area. The main line of North-Eastern Railway which goes upto North-East areas via North Bihar, was converted from narrow gauge to broad gauge a few years ago. All of us had thought that the introduction of the broad gauge line would result in the industrial and economic development of North Bihar speedily. But, the results are quite