

to be sold to Gur and Khandsari manufacturing units. The number of these units is also decreasing continuously. Therefore, the owners of these units are buying sugarcane from farmers at the rate of 16 to 18 rupees a quintal while the mill rate is Rs. 27.

The farmers of Uttar Pradesh produce only sugarcane on most of their agricultural land and their living depends upon this crop. I would like to draw the attention of the Government to the fact that the sugar mills get these bonds filled only from 20 to 25% of farmers and lift only 40 to 45% of their sugarcane. This problem is not confined to my constituency Kairana alone but it exists in entire of Uttar Pradesh and North India.

I, therefore, request the Government to take necessary steps to set up new sugar mills in all such areas.

[English]

(vi) Demand for increasing the pension of retired Army Officers of the former Indian State Forces.

SHRI JUJHAR SINGH (Jhalawar) : Thousands of Officers and Jawans had been recruited during and before the Second World War (1939-45) in the Indian State Forces and most of them had participated in war efforts inside the country and outside on the battle-fields of middle East, Burma, and Far East. A big percentage of these Officers and Jawans had to be prematurely retired on the Indian-State Rates of Pension Rules (which differed from State to State) although these soldiers were getting the Indian Army rate of salaries for number of years that they were in service during war period and upto the date of their compulsory retirement from the Armed Forces in early 50s.

12.11 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

The cause of retirement of these Officers and Jawans was that all of them could not have been absorbed in the Indian Army Service after the merger of Indian State Forces into the Indian Army after independence,

The pension paid to such Officer on State Rules is so low that it is not only inadequate to make their two ends meet but it also affects their status as former Army Officers. Revisions of Pension Rules from time to time have not taken care of this neglected section of Ex-soldiers.

In view of these facts, I urge upon the Ministry of Defence to raise the rates of pension of these retired Army Officers of the Former Indian State Forces equal to the Indian Army Officers retired during that period of service.

(vii) Demand for early clearance to the projects submitted by West Bengal Government.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : Sir, the fate of three major projects of West Bengal viz., Haldia Petrochemical Complex, Bakreswar Thermal Project Plant and Teesta Barrage project has been uncertain for periods ranging from 3 to 10 years. These Projects have potential of transforming West Bengal into one of the most advanced States of the Union and open new horizons for agricultural development in the State. But sanction to Haldia and Bakreswar projects has been delayed and financial assistance to the ongoing Teesta Project refused. The letter of intent for the Haldia Petrochemical Complex was issued in November 1977. The State Government submitted a detailed project report to the Centre in May 1980 for a joint-sector venture with the Centre but after a period of more than three years, the Centre decided in July 1984 not to participate in the project. The State Government in May 1985 decided on a joint-sector venture. Since then, after various revisions the I.D.B.I. and other agencies have given their technical and financial viability clearance to the project. But Union Government has not cleared so far the proposal which has the potential to transform the south-western part of rural Bengal into another industrial complex, like Durgapur-Asansol.

The Bakreswar Thermal Power Project, already cleared by the Central Electricity Authority in May 1985, was opted for a joint venture between the State Government and a foreign collaborator by the State

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