

loans should not be levied for this period. It is also suggested that out of the drought relief funds, some portion may be earmarked for the industries so that they survive.

(x) **Conversion and construction of railway lines and provision of trains in Mithila region of Bihar**

SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA (Madhubani) : Sir, the Mithila region of North Bihar is such which has got its facilities and opportunities with regard to the railways reduced as compared to the past.

Direct Darbhanga-Sapoul Line got disrupted by river Kosi. Even for going to their sub-divisional Headquarters of Supoul at a distance of about seven miles the people of Nirmali and Marauna Blocks have to travel a circuitous route of about three hundred kilometres. Constant demand for a railway bridge over river Kosi has gone unheeded.

Previously, there were three direct express trains running between Samastipur and Howrah and one between Samastipur and New Delhi. Now there is none.

Darbhanga is the only junction in the North from where four lines touch and terminate at the northern border. Conversion of this line approved in 1973 has not yet been undertaken. In 1980-81, Rs. 18 lakhs and in 1981-82 Rs. 60 lakhs had been provided for this conversion. In February, 1982 conversion of Samastipur-Darbhanga line was formally inaugurated by the then Railway Minister. But after the formal inauguration, tenders were cancelled, materials from Laharia Sarai brought back and the conversion was postponed. This has added insult to the injury. Conversion of Darbhanga-Sitamarhi-Raxaul line surveyed in 1973 has been given up. Field survey for conversion of Darbhanga-Jay Nagar line is being repeatedly delayed for the last several years. Construction of Sakri-Hasanpur new line inaugurated in 1973-74 has not yet begun. Even some suggestions for Jay Nagar-Allahabad Express Train and train timings etc. are not being responded to.

All this neglect and discrimination are

compelling people of that part to lose their patience. Above fourteen hundreds have been arrested.

I do urge upon the Railway Minister to immediately give personal attention to the above demands for conversion and construction of railway lines and new trains and mollify the growing discontent of the people in the area.

(xi) **Need for setting up an electric loco POH Shop at Kharagpur Railway Workshop**

SHRI SATYAGOPAL MISRA (Tamluk) : Sir, The Railway workmen have successfully staged a Mass 'Dharna' on 16.2.1983 at the main gate of Kharagpur railway workshop demanding the immediate setting up of an electric P.O.H. shop at Kharagpur workshop.

The Kharagpur complex has got the biggest railway workshop. Nowadays, steam locomotives are getting increasingly redundant due to the technological changes and replacement by diesel and electric locomotives. There is a sharp decline in the number of steam engines offered for periodical overhaul (POH). The Railway administration is planning to render 1600 men in the Loco Shop as surplus.

The existing infra-structural facilities, and the said manpower may be gainfully utilized by setting up an electric loco POH Shop at Kharagpur railway workshop. The country is also in need of such a workshop, because a huge number of electric trains are running in different Railways.

I urge upon the Government of India and request the Minister of Railways to come forward with an immediate decision to set up an electric Loco POH shop at Kharagpur Railway Workshop.