

(c) if not, the reasons thereof ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS. (SHRI MALLIKARJUN) : (a) to (c) Research Scholars are allowed Rail Travel Concession when travelling in connection with Research work.

SHRI SUSHIL BHATTACHARYA : Regarding rail concession to students, there is no age-limit for the students of professional courses. But, this category of professional courses students does not include B. Litt that is Library Sciences, B. Ed., D. Phil and M. Phil students even though these students have no stipend or scholarship or deputation facility and they study on their own. I would like to know whether the Government will consider to remove the restriction of age bar for these students.

SHRI MALLIKARJUN : It is the universities or the colleges who admit the students. We are not concerned about the age. Age-limit is not our concern. It is the concern of the universities and the educational institutions.

SHRI SUSHIL BHATTACHARYA : My second supplementary is about the educational tours for students. You see there are different interpretations in different railways. The South-Eastern Railway grants such concessions in parts, that is from one station to another station. But in Eastern Railway they sanction or they allow between the two terminals. So, there is anomaly. I would like to know from the Minister whether he will instruct the railways so that the students can avail this educational tour at par throughout India.

SHRI MALLIKARJUN : Initially, we discovered a difficulty while granting the concessions to the students. When the students from

the originating stations requested concession for their return from one zone to the other, there was some difficulty. The request was not some times entertained by the other zone. We have now issued clear guidelines to remove this difficulty.

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER : May I know from the Minister whether these concessions will be given to the students of agricultural universities ?

MR. SPEAKER : Why do you differentiate between students ?

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : Sir, agriculture is more important.

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER : I am not differentiating. I only want to know how many times in a year you allow this rail concession to a student to go to the library ?

SHRI MALLIKARJUN : Students, whether of agriculture or of medical or of engineering or of Humanities are generally allowed to avail this concession during their vacations.

This concession can be availed any number of times by the students.

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Mallikarjun, what happens to a student of Parliamentary affairs ? Next question.

Conversion of New Bongaigaon-Gauhati Line

*337. **SHRI CHIRANJI LAL SHARMA :** Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state the progress made so far in conversion of metre gauge section of New Bongaigaon and Gauhati into broad gauge ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN) : The overall physical progress achieved upto end of Jan., 1981 on extension of parallel broad gauge line from New Bongaigaon to Gauhati is 44%.

SHRI CHIRANJI LAL SHARMA : My question was about conversion of the metre gauge into broad gauge, and the reply that has been given is :

"The overall physical progress achieved up to end of January, 1981 on extension of parallel broad gauge line from New Bongaigaon to Gauhati is 44%.

I would like to know as to what is the need for having a parallel broad gauge line when the same line can be converted because in the reply it is said, "extension of parallel broad gauge line". Why not remove the metre gauge and replace it by broad gauge ?

SHRI MALLIKARJUN : From New Bogaigaon to Rangiya, a meter gauge line is there. Technically we felt that it was not wise enough to convert it at the moment. So, we have taken up the parallel line from New Bongaigaon to Rangiya and from Rangiya to Gauhati. After a certain period, this meter gauge line will also be taken up because of the linkage pattern which is essentially existing at the moment.

SHRI CHIRANJI LAL SHARMA : I would like to know the total length of this line and secondly, the difference in the cost per kilometre between metre gauge and broad gauge and also the difference in speed in the two lines.

SHRI MALLIKARJUN : The total length of the line from New Bongaigaon to Gauhati is 163 kms.

MR. SPEAKER : Mr Santosh Mohan Dev.

SHRI CHIRANJI LAL SHARMA : Sir, he has not answered the second part of my question. I wanted to know the total cost of construction of meter gauge line and broad gauge line per kilometre and the difference in speed in the two lines.

SHRI MALLIKARJUN : The construction of a new broad gauge line per kilometre now costs more than Rs. 22 lakhs and subject to the condition of escalation of prices also ; for conversion, it costs about Rs. 16 to 17 lakhs for one kilometre.

SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV. : I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether it is a fact that the target date for the completion of this line was 1981 and what is the present target date because I understand that because of the Assam trouble, the progress was not very satisfactory. In view of that, what is the present target date for the completion of this line ?

SHRI MALLIKARJUN : By December, 1981 100kms between New Bongaigan and Rangiya will be completed and by the middle of 1982 the rest of the things will be completed.

MR. SPEAKER : Next Question. Mr. Ashok Gehlot. Not here. Next Question. Mr. K.P. Singh Deo.....

SHRI K. P. SINGH DEV : Qn. No. 339.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Sir, are you clubbing Q. 346 also ?

MR. SPEAKER : we club it. . .

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. SHIVSHANKAR) : Yes, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER : Okay ; it is clubbed.