

**New Railway lines in Backward and Hilly areas in West Bengal**

3259. SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any scheme to construct new lines in the backward regions, particularly in the hill areas;

(b) whether there is any proposal to set up new lines in the Northern part of West Bengal where there are virtually no railway facilities; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE): (a) The Public Accounts Committee had recommended in their 191st Report for 1975-76 that a comprehensive long-term and clear cut policy for construction of new railway lines on a systematic basis should be spelt out before Parliament. This recommendation has been accepted by the Government and the matter is under active consideration of the Ministry of Railways. The policy, when finalised in consultation with other concerned Ministries, will be placed before the Parliament for their consideration.

(b) and (c): A Preliminary Engineering-cum-Traffic survey for construction of a broad gauge line from Eklakhi to Balurghat has been carried out. A preliminary Engineering-cum-Traffic survey for construction of a new broad gauge line from Məynaguri to Sitai is in progress. No decision has been taken so far regarding the construction of these lines.

**Conspiracy to Rig Elections in West Bengal**

3260. SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a statement made

by Shri P. C. Sen erstwhile Chief Minister, West Bengal, that two senior-most officials conspired to rig elections in West Bengal;

(b) if so, whether Government has identified both these officials; and

(c) if so, what action, if any, has been taken against them?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI SHANTI BHUSHAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

**Allotment of Gas Agencies**

3261. SHRI NAWAB SINGH CHAUHAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the rules in regard to allotment of gas agencies and categories of persons who are allotted gas agencies on priority basis;

(b) whether Government propose to allot gas agencies to the co-operatives;

(c) the districts in Uttar Pradesh where gas agencies has been allotted so far;

(d) whether Government propose to make arrangements to make gas cylinders available to the people of those districts immediately; and

(e) if so, by what time?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA): (a) and (b). While the other oil companies, which were until recently in the private sector, have been awarding domestic gas agencies on commercial considerations, 25 per cent of the agencies awarded by Indian Oil Corporation are reserved for Scheduled Castes/Tribes candidates with