

Shri Nambiar: What is the scope, and how many are likely to be employed?

Mr. Speaker: I do not think that arises.

Shri K. K. Basu: May we know what specific help such as allotment of iron, or financial help, is given to these British-owned factories who, just at the present moment, supply us with wagons?

Shri Alagesan: Help is given to meet their manufacturing requirements.

Shri H. N. Mukerjee: Last June the Railway Minister had told us that a United Kingdom firm had failed to deliver certain component parts which made us change the target of our production of wagons. Now, is that kind of hindrance in the way of our production of wagons continuing, and if so, what steps are taken to remove this sort of difficulty?

Mr. Speaker: This question is important, but I am afraid it does not arise out of this.

Shri H. N. Mukerjee: Sir, it does refer to the production of wagons.

Mr. Speaker: I am not inclined to hold that view.

RESTORATION OF DISMANTLED RAILWAY LINES IN SALEM

*768. **Shri S. V. Ramaswamy:** (a) Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state whether there has been a representation by various associations and by the Legislators of Salem district that the work of restoring the two dismantled Railway lines in the Salem district be started as a famine relief measure?

(b) Is it a fact that those two Railway lines were constructed as a famine relief measure in about 1900?

(c) What is the estimated cost of restoring the lines (i) Morappur to Hosur and (ii) Tiruppathur to Krishnagiri as metre gauge lines?

(d) Have Government come to a conclusion in the matter?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan): (a) and (b). Yes.

(c) The rough estimated expenditure on restoration of Morappur-Hosur Narrow Gauge line is Rs. 104 lakhs. The cost of restoration of Tiruppathur to Krishnagiri has not yet been worked out.

(d) No.

Shri S. V. Ramaswamy: What is the total length that has been dismantled?

Shri Alagesan: The Morappur-Hosur line is 73 miles; it is a narrow gauge line; and the Tiruppathur-Krishnagiri line is 25 miles.

Shri S. V. Ramaswamy: At the time the lines were dismantled, was a solemn undertaking given that they would be restored as soon as the war was over?

Shri Alagesan: I do not think such undertakings can be termed "solemn".

Mr. Speaker: Was any such undertaking given, solemn or not?

Shri Alagesan: I am afraid, no, Sir.

Shri C. R. Narasimhan: What is happening to the assets of these lines, and what are the arrangements for the maintenance of these assets?

Shri Alagesan: The assets are preserved.

Shri C. R. Narasimhan: What about their maintenance?

Mr. Speaker: The lines are removed. What is to be maintained?

Shri C. R. Narasimhan: But the building and other materials are there. Are they being maintained, or allowed to decay?

Shri Alagesan: I am afraid I am not at present ready with that information.

Shri Nambiar: May I know whether the restoration of the Shoranur-Nilambur Railway line is also considered along with that?

Shri Alagesan: I do not think it arises out of this.

Shri C. R. Narasimhan: Could the Minister give the proportion of these two dismantled lines to the total lines dismantled in India during the war?

Shri Alagesan: I am afraid I do not have the information at present.

COACH-BUILDING FACTORY, PERAMBUR

*769. **Shri S. V. Ramaswamy:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) when it is proposed to start the coach-building factory at Perambur and when will it go into production; and

(b) what is its capacity to produce finished coaches per annum?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan): (a) Work on the Perambur Coach Factory was started in the beginning of 1952.

Production is expected to begin in 1955.

(b) The Factory is designed to manufacture 350 unfurnished coaches a year when production is fully established.

Shri S. V. Ramaswamy: What is the estimated cost of each coach to be produced in this factory? I put that question once, before. How does it compare with the cost of the coaches produced in the Hindustan factory now?

Shri Alagesan: The estimated cost of the coaches may be a little more in the beginning, and when full production is established, the cost is bound to come down.

Shri S. V. Ramaswamy: I am sorry my question has not been answered. What is the cost of the coach now manufactured by the Hindustan factory, and what is going to be the cost of the coach manufactured by the Perambur factory?

Shri Alagesan: The cost of the Hindustan factory coach is about Rs. 1,30,000.

Mr. Speaker: What about the other coach?

Shri Alagesan: That I cannot give just now.

Shri Nambiar: May I know whether the Perambur coach manufacturing factory is going to be an assembling factory or production factory? Will it produce underframes also?

Shri Alagesan: There are no underframes. The whole thing is called "all steel all welded light weight integral type" coaches. That is the long name that has been given to it. There is no underframe going into the construction of these coaches. It will be a full production factory and not an assembling factory.

BRIDLE PATHS

***770. Shri Rishang Keishing:** (a) Will the Minister of Transport be pleased to state what is the total length of the bridle paths in the hills of Manipur?

(b) Is it a fact that the hill villagers living near the bridle paths are required to clear the same twice a year for which they receive Rs. 20/- only per mile and if they refuse to do so, they are liable to heavy punishment?

(c) Is it a fact that the hill people consider this action of Government as amounting to forced labour?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan): (a) About 1100 miles.

(b) These bridle paths are similar to village roads in other parts of India, which are looked after by village panchayats and local bodies. As there are no panchayats or local bodies in Manipur, portions of the bridle paths are allotted to the tribal villages according to the size of the villages for maintenance and repairs. The work consists mainly of clearing of jungle and weeds and removal of slips, if any, during the rainy season and occasionally construction and repair of small wooden bridges. The rate of payment for this work varies from Rs. 7/- to Rs. 25/- per mile according to the amount of work actually done. As the maintenance of the paths is for the benefit of the villagers themselves, they are expected to do the work. There has so far been no instance of defaulting villagers being punished. Sometimes some defaulters have been warned that they might be punished.

(c) Not so far as Government are aware, though they understand that there is complaint from some quarters against the arrangements mentioned.

Shri Rishang Keishing: What is the total amount spent annually for the maintenance of these bridle paths?

Shri Alagesan: I am afraid I should ask for notice.

Shri Rishang Keishing: In view of the fact that the tribal people are paid less than Rs. 1/8/- per furlong for cutting grasses and clearing slips and that they do the work for fear of getting punishment, may I know how long will this state of affairs continue and whether Government do contemplate to redress their grievances?

Shri Alagesan: Government are prepared to consider this and raise the rates if possible.

Shri Rishang Keishing: Is it not a fact that several complaints have been lodged with the authorities by the villagers?

Shri Alagesan: I think I have answered that already.

Mr. Speaker: He wants to know whether there are any complaints.

Shri Alagesan: No.