

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

*776. **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.