

Assam Rail Link

*2122. **Shri Debendra Nath Sarma :** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No. 465 on 30th July, 1956 and state :

(a) whether the Assam Rail Link Stabilization Committee has completed its investigations; and

(b) if so, the main recommendations of the Committee ?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Shri Debendra Nath Sarma : May I know the probable date when this Committee would complete its investigations?

The Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri) : It is difficult to give any exact time. It is in the midst of its work, and it should be given enough time to complete its task.

Shri K. P. Tripathi : May I know if it is a fact that the West Bengal Government has made a suggestion that the railway should be taken southwards by crossing the Teesta, all the way below the river so that the river system is avoided? If so, is it under consideration?

Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri : A number of alternative suggestions have been made. They will be considered when this Committee has submitted its report. They will be considered by the Railway Board.

Shri Debendra Nath Sarma : May I know whether the Government of Assam has suggested the doubling of link line?

Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri : All that may have to be decided after this Committee has submitted its report, because it has to give its opinion whether the line should be stabilised.

Tour of 'Fashion Experts'

*2123. **Shri H. G. Vaishnav :** Will the Minister of Transport be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the tour of 'fashion experts' from Britain has been sponsored by the Government of India;

(b) if so, its object; and

(c) the places visited by this team in India and the amount spent over the tour?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan) : (a) Yes, by

Government of India and Air India International jointly.

(b) To gather material for a Special Supplement on India to be brought out by the Vogue Magazine in November this year.

(c) Bombay, Bangalore, Mysore, Madras, Mahabalipuram, Delhi, Sriragar, Agra, Jaipur, Ajanta and Ellora. Information regarding the exact amount spent over the tour has not yet been received from the various tourist offices through whom the expenditure was incurred. It is, however, expected to be about Rs. 8,000.

Shri H. G. Vaishnav : May I know whether these experts are going to submit any report to the Government?

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan : No, they are not expected to submit any report to the Government. They are representatives of a very famous fashion magazine in England. They are bringing out a 20-page supplement on places of tourist interest in India. We hope that by that the tourist trade in India would receive a fillip.

Shri H. G. Vaishnav : May I know whether these fashion experts would help in any way to encourage Indian fashions?

The Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri) : It has nothing to do with fashion, whether it is Indian fashion or foreign fashion, western fashion or eastern fashion. These people came here. They publish a high-class magazine with a large circulation, and perhaps they will come out with a number of articles on India and it will help our tourist traffic.

Shri G. S. Singh : May I know whether these fashion experts held some sort of exhibition in Delhi, and if so, whether it was boycotted by the Press of Delhi? If so, what are the reasons therefor?

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan : A reception was held at the Imperial Hotel in honour of this delegation, and it was sponsored by the Handicrafts Board. The Tourist Bureau of the Ministry of Transport participated and shared the expenses.

Shri G. S. Singh : Was it boycotted by the Press of Delhi, and if so, what are the reasons therefor?

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan : The Press is not invited to all the parties.

Shri G. S. Singh : It is supposed to be of tourist interest.

Shri Sadhan Gupta : The hon. Minister has stated that money is being spent on the tour of these fashion experts