

was himself appointed as Special Director of the State Transport. May I know whether this was in accord with any of the recommendations made by the Commission?

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan : It is the responsibility of the State Government. These questions may better be addressed to the State Government concerned.

Shri V. P. Nayar : I may point out for the information of my hon. friend that there is no State Government there now. I would like to have an answer to my question.

The Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri) : Will the hon. Member kindly repeat the question?

Shri V. P. Nayar : Soon after the submission of this report and before its publication, the person who conducted the enquiry and who functioned as the sole member of the Enquiry Commission was himself appointed as a Special Director of State Transport in Travancore-Cochin. I want to know whether this appointment was made in conformity with any of the recommendations made by the Commission.

Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri : How could that officer be appointed before he actually conducted the enquiry and submitted his report? He was appointed perhaps when the representative T-C Government was functioning now the Adviser is there. He has submitted the report, but it has not been published so far.

Shri A. M. Thomas : Can I know the recommendation of this particular Committee with regard to the question of nationalisation of the remaining routes and may I also enquire about the attitude of the Central Government *vis-a-vis* the proposal contained in the Commission's report with regard to that, in view of the general suggestions that have been made by the Planning Commission with regard to nationalisation of transport?

Mr. Speaker : The same question was put, I think.

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan) : We are not able to say anything till the report is published. The report is still a confidential document.

Shri Damodara Menon : May I know whether the Travancore-Cochin Government have taken any decision on the recommendation of this Commission?

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan : As I said before, the matter is under consideration. It has not yet been made public.

Shri V. P. Nayar : The hon. Minister was repeatedly saying that it is a confidential document. May I know when this

document was submitted to the Government, and what are the important points on which the Government consider that this report is to be deemed as a confidential report? In so far as we know, it related to matters of day-to-day functioning of the Transport Department.

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan : The report was submitted to the State Government in February, 1956. And since this Commission was appointed by the State Government, it is up to the State Government to make the report public.

Shri V. P. Nayar : Therefore, it is confidential!

Mr. Speaker : The State Government is responsible to this House.

Shri V. P. Nayar : The Government of India says it is a confidential document.

Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri : The State Government suggested that till they released the report to the public, the report of the Commission may be kept confidential. (Shri V. P. Nayar : May be). It is their advice, and therefore we do not think it proper to disclose the recommendations of the Commission at this stage.

Rope-way Scheme in Assam

*231. **Shri Amjad Ali :** Will the Minister of Transport be pleased to state :

(a) whether international tenders are being invited by the Government of India for construction of a rope-way connecting Shellabazar in Khasi and Jaintia Hills and Amingaon in Assam;

(b) the amount of money for the Scheme that has been estimated and sanctioned by the Government of India;

(c) the commodities that will chiefly be transhipped by this rope-way from Khasi and Jaintia Hills Districts of Assam; and

(d) whether the rope-way scheme was drawn up with the co-operation of Czech experts who surveyed the area recently?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan) : (a) It is presumed that the Hon'ble Member is referring to the rope-way scheme of the Government of Assam. The State Government propose to invite global tenders for the construction of the rope-way.

(b) Precise estimates of cost in respect of the scheme have not yet been worked out by the State Government.

(c) Coal, cement, potatoes, oranges, betelnuts, etc.

(d) Yes, Sir.

Shri Amjad Ali : What distance is likely to be covered from Shellabazar to Amingaon?

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan : The total length of the rope way from Shellabazar to Pandu is 78.1 miles.

श्री म० ला० द्विवेदी : क्या केन्द्रीय सरकार इस योजना में आसाम सरकार को आर्थिक सहायता देगी ? यदि हाँ, तो किस हद तक ?

रेलवे तथा परिवहन मंत्री (श्री लाल बहादुर शास्त्री) : अभी तो स्टेट का प्लान ही आखिरी रूप में नहीं बना है ।

Shri Amjad Ali : Can the hon. Minister give us an idea of the freight rates ?

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan : It is yet too early to say that.

Central Maternity Benefit Act

*232. **Shri N. B. Chowdhury** : Will the Minister of Labour be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No. 661 on the 10th March, 1955 and state the progress made with regard to proposed introduction of uniform rules for Maternity Benefit for all categories of women workers in all the States of India?

The Deputy Minister of Labour (Shri Abid Ali) : Model minimum standards for maternity benefit legislation have been finalised and forwarded to the State Governments for adoption. The matter is receiving their attention.

Shri N. B. Chowdhury : May I know whether in preparing this scheme the Government have taken into consideration the view expressed at the tripartite Labour Conference at Mysore?

Shri Abid Ali : Yes, Sir.

Shri N. B. Chowdhury : May I know how long it will take for the Government to finalise the matter and bring about uniformity?

Shri Abid Ali : It is left entirely to the State Governments.

Puri Railway Station

*233. **Shri D. C. Sharma** : Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state :

(a) the efforts being made to reconstruct the Puri Railway Station; and

(b) the details thereof?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan) : (a) Damages caused to the Puri Station have been repaired and provision for a new station building in replacement of the existing one has been made in the Second Five Year Plan.

(b) The work will consist of replacement of the existing station building with a new one and remodelling of approaches in front thereof.

Shri D. C. Sharma : May I know what was the total amount of loss incurred and what is the estimate for the reconstruction of the new Puri Station building?

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan : The reconstruction of the station building is going to cost approximately Rs. 2 lakhs.

Shri D. C. Sharma : May I know if the interests of the tourists, who visit Puri and who belong to all categories of the People of India, will be taken into account when this new building is going to be put up?

The Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri) : Most certainly.

Disciplinary Action against Officials

*234. **Shri Gidwani** : Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that a Deputy Director, Administration and Store, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, a Superintendent and an Assistant of the same Ministry, condemned some serviceable articles, and sold them among the Officers and men at very low prices:

(b) what was the value of the articles and for what amount they were sold; and

(c) what was the punishment awarded to them?

The Minister of Agriculture (Dr. P. S. Deshmukh) : (a) Yes.

(b) A statement showing the available information is placed on the Table of the Lok Sabha. [See Appendix II, annexure No. 28].

(c) The pay of each of the first two officers, was reduced by two stages and in the case of the third Officer, his annual increment was withheld for a period of two years so as to affect his future increments.