

the Centre. The question is whether sufficient amounts have been made available to the Andhra State to attend to the schemes already sanctioned.

Shri Hathi: As I said, schemes costing Rs. 21 lakhs have been proposed. This amount is being provided.

Passenger Traffic to and from Kerala

*119. **Shri Matthen:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) the extra cost by way of fare the passengers from Kerala have to incur by the diversion of Express, Mail and other trains going up and down from Kerala to Madras and other places through Coimbatore Station instead of running straight through Podanur; and

(b) the approximate total amount the Kerala passengers are losing annually on account of this diversion?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan): (a) The extra fare varies from 3 to 5 annas for III class, 5 to 9 annas for II class and 8 annas to Re. 1 for I class.

(b) Approximately Rs. 1,11,000 per annum.

Shri Matthen: May I know if this unnecessary cost to the average passenger cannot be saved if the trains run straight from Podanur without diversion to Coimbatore? There are other trains to Madras, such as the Mattuppalayam Mail going through Coimbatore. What justification is there for running these trains via Coimbatore when most of the passengers do not care to go there?

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan: These trains were diverted via Coimbatore only at the request of the public of that area. This was done only in deference to the wishes of the people of that area.

Shri Matthen: This is the request by the public now, not to divert. Will the hon. Minister consider that?

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan: Certainly, we will consider every reasonable request.

Shri Nambar: May I know whether the local passenger trains which run between Erode and Shoranur will not be affected by the changes that may come in after the request now made?

Mr. Speaker: Both are hypothetical questions. Next question.

Ex-Saurashtra Railway Corruption Cases

*120. **Shri T. B. Vittal Rao:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No. 70 on the 15th November, 1956 and state:

(a) whether the Railway Board have since received any advice from the Union Public Service Commission regarding the action to be taken against the three officers of ex-Saurashtra Railway involved in the embezzlement of Rs. 13 lakhs; and

(b) if so, further action proposed to be taken by the Railway Board in the matter?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan): (a) No; but the Commission have recently advised the Board that they are endeavouring to make available their advice as early as possible.

(b) Does not arise.

Train Accident

*121. **Shri Barman:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether a train accident occurred between Hasimara and Madarihat of North Eastern Railway towards the end of December, 1956; and

(b) if so, the cause of the accident and the extent of loss involved?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan): (a) At about 02:35 hours on 25-12-1956, while No. 304 Down Link Express train was running between Hasimara and Madarihat stations on the Alipur Duar-Siliguri Section of the North Eastern Railway, the tender