

an>

Title: Need to provide railway halts of express trains at Tiruvannamalai railway station.

*SHRIMATI R. VANAROJA (TIRUVANNAMALAI): Hon'ble Chairman Sir, I wish to raise an important issue in this House. In my Tiruvannamalai Constituency before broad gauge conversion, there was rail connectivity between Chennai and Tiruvannamalai. After the broad gauge conversion all the train services were stopped. Tiruvannamalai is a district headquarters and a temple town. It is a spiritual centre. To visit Annamalaiyar temple of Tiruvannamalai and for circumambulation during full-moon days, Tamil New year, English New year and festival days like Karthigai Deepam, lakhs of pilgrims from Chennai and other parts of the State come to Tiruvannamalai. There is heavy vehicular traffic during these occasions and it becomes difficult to control the traffic. There should be adequate rail services to Tiruvannamalai. Howrah Express between Puducherry and Howrah does not stop at Tiruvannamalai. This train should stop at least for 5 minutes at Tiruvannamalai railway station. Pilgrims and passengers would be benefitted by this. Ticket booking is done only during morning hours. I urge that it should be extended in the evening hours also. A parcel office should function at Tiruvannamalai railway station. Basic amenities like drinking water facilities, rest rooms, latrine facilities, etc. in the railway station should be improved. Chennai-Tirupaththur train service has been in operation for so many years. This train departs from Tirupaththur at 4.30 am and reaches Chennai and on the other side reaches Tirupaththur at 10 pm. But for the last four months this train halts at Jolarpet, Therefore the rail link between Jolarpet and Tirupaththur is lost. People of this area have to depend on other modes of transport for onward journey to Tirupaththur. I therefore urge the Hon Railway Minister through this august House that the train service must be resumed up to Tirupaththur as it was before. I also urge for starting a new railway line from Tiruvannamalai to Jolarpet via Chengam.