

[Shri D. S. A. Sivaprakasam] ance. It is to be welcomed that the work on Tirunelveli-Kanyakumari rail link has been speeded up. At this juncture, the Railway Administration has created an environment leading to agitation and demonstration by the railway workers of this area. It is not only the railway workers but the public also is greatly agitated. The reason for this unhappy situation is the reported decision of including Tirunelveli-Kanyakumari rail link in the Trivandrum Division. It is beyond any shadow of doubt that if this is done, naturally the railway workers under Madurai Division and also the public service by Madurai Division will be upset very much. The employment opportunities in this area will get diminished. The trade and business will have to go to Trivandrum for getting their wagon requirements fulfilled. On account of the language problem the prospects of promotion for the employees working in Madurai Division will become dim. The hon. Minister has written to me that in a Railway Division both the metre-gauge and broad-gauge should not be there. I do not think that this argument is sound. In Olavakkod and Tiruchirappalli Division both the gauges are there. The workers and employees are resenting this proposition from 1977 onwards. Now they have resorted to hunger strike. Whatever may be the administrative and technical problems the Tirunelveli-Kanyakumari rail link should not be included in the Trivandrum Division and it should be in Madurai Division.

12.31 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

- (ii) NEED TO REGULATE PRICE AND SUPPLY OF VISCOSE FILAMENT YARN FOR THE BENEFIT OF SMALL SCALE TEXTILE UNITS IN PUNJAB.

SHRI R. L. BHATIA (Amritsar): The Chief Minister, Punjab, stated

that Punjab Government has approached the Centre either to fix the price of viscose filament yarn or to regulate its supply in such a way that small-scale textile units using this as raw material did not suffer.

I will urge upon the Government to take early action in the matter and save the Punjab industry from closure due to very high prices of the above mentioned yarn.

- (iii) NEED FOR ADEQUATE NUMBER OF RAILWAY WAGONS FOR TRANSPORT OF SALT FROM VEDARANYAM IN TAMIL NADU.

SHRI S. SINGARAVADIVEL (Thanjavur): Vedaranyam, which has a prominent place in the Freedom Movement, is in Thanjavur District, Tamil Nadu, on the seashore of the Bay of Bengal. The important industry in that place is salt production and many are engaged in it. The producers and the labourers engaged in the said industry depend upon it for their livelihood. They produce large quantities of salt and market them in other States also. They used to send them by railway wagons. Now it is reported that they are unable to transport the salt produced to other places for sale, for want of adequate supply of railway wagons, that there is stagnation in the business and, as a result, the salt does not get a fair price, and that the industry is very much affected. The industry is to be saved now. Unless they are supplied with adequate number of railway wagons for the transport of salt to other places, they cannot market it in other places and get a reasonable price, and they will be put to irreparable loss and hardship.

Therefore, to save the persons engaged in the salt industry in Vedaranyam in Thanjavur District, Tamil Nadu, from the peril, the Hon. Minister of Railways may be pleased to take necessary action and direct the authorities to provide the salt pro-