

[Shri Arjun Sethi]

is said, on this road generally 6 to 8 tonnes truck load are allowed to ply. But each truck normally carries 12 to 15 tonnes of chrome ore on the road. As a result, its condition deteriorated progressively day by day. Although more chrome ores are being mined, it is not being transported to the port due to the miserable condition of the above-mentioned road. No truck owner is willing to carry the chrome ore due to the loss they incur in the transit in the shape of incidental charges.

13.00 hours

Hence, in the national interest, it is the duty of the Government at the Centre to prevail upon the State Government so that they can allot enough funds for its overhauling and repairing. Or else, the Centre can allot funds separately on its own for its improvement, so that the road can be repaired and maintained for more haulage of chrome ore, thereby helping to earn foreign exchange for the nation.

(v) NEED FOR THE IMPROVEMENT IN THE WORKING OF AIR INDIA OFFICE AT KUWAIT.

\*\*SHRI V. S. VIJAYARAGHAVAN (Palghat): For some time past certain very irresponsible activities are going on in the Kuwait Office of Air India. This functions in such a way that it besmirches the fair name of our country. Lack of punctuality which is quite unbecoming of an airline service, has become a regular feature. This helps the big hoteliers. It appears that this office does not bother about the inconvenience caused to the passengers. If one seeks some information from the Kuwait Office of Air India about the arrival or departure of planes, one would not get any clear information. Apart from that, complaints have been made that the officials do not care what the passengers

ask for and they behave very arrogantly with them. The order of priority on booking of tickets is not being observed as the officials come under the influence of travel agencies and many other interested parties, so much so that even the tickets 'okayed' earlier are not entertained. There are instances where the passengers who came to the airport for emplaning have been harassed on the ground that they have come late.

There is a heavy rush in front of the Air India counter in Kuwait. Nobody observes queue system. As a result of this people have started calling these "street vendors counter". It is alleged that rank favouritism is being indulged in the matter of passengers' luggage. In the case of friends or relatives of the employees, there is no restriction or control exercised on handling the luggage. Some of these instances have been reported in a local paper through letters to the editor. Besides, a large number of people living in Kuwait have jointly written a letter to me in which these cases have been mentioned.

Therefore, I request the Government to enquire into these matters and ensure discipline, punctuality and a sense of responsibility among the officials in the Air India Office in Kuwait. Steps should also be taken to solve the problems of the passengers thereby refurbish the image of Air India and this country.

(vi) SHORTAGE OF WAGONS FOR TRANSPORTATION OF COCONUTS FROM SALEM TO NORTHERN STATES.

SHRI K. ARJUNAN (Dharmapuri): Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Government to the problem of supply of wagons for transportation of coconuts from Salem Railway Station to Northern States. Sir, there are several coconut growers and merchants in Salem District (Tamilnadu) whose business is terribly affected by

the shortage of wagons to transport coconuts in proper time. These are usually booked from Salem Station. Coconut is a perishable commodity. So, the growers will have to take the coconuts within a particular time and transport it in time. This is the season for the growers and the merchants who are engaged in coconut business. If they do not get the wagons to transport coconuts in this busy time, their business will definitely be affected greatly. Several thousands of acres in Salem, Coimbatore, Tiruchi and Dharmapuri districts are under production of coconuts. The growers of coconuts are not able to get fair prices due to the shortage and stoppage of supply of wagons. To redress these difficulties the Railway Minister may instruct the Southern Railway to restore the supply of wagons to transport coconuts in proper time.

(vii) RESTORATION OF PASSENGER/GOODS TRAINS SERVICES ON NIDAMANGALAM-MANNARGUDI RAILWAY LINES.

SHRI S. SINGARAVADIVEL (Thunjavur): The Nidamangalam Railway Junction in the Southern Railway system, is on the Thanjavur-Nagore Railway Line in my parliamentary constituency of Thanjavur. From Nidamangalam junction to Mannargudi, an important town in the Thanjavur District, there is a Branch Railway line for the last several decades covering a distance of about 12 KM and on the said lines passengers and goods trains were operated. It is the only Railway line from Mannargudi and it has no other Rail link. While so the passengers and goods trains which catered to the needs of the public for a long period on the said lines have been suspended and the public who used the services are put to great inconvenience and hardship. Travelling people from and to Mannargudi have been deprived of the rail services and they are unable to avail of the Thanjavur Nagore Railway services also.

Mannargudi, a Municipal town, is the headquarter of a taluk and has

several educational institutions including an Arts College, a Govt. inpatient hospital, several temples attracting pilgrims from other places, several important Govt. offices, courts, banks, a fertiliser plant called the Pamini Fertiliser and Central Warehousing godowns among others. Number of people visit Mannargudi daily from other places and vice-versa. Because of the suspension of the passengers and goods services on the said line, public suffer a lot and they have to resort to roadways for their journey and transport of goods. Pamini Fertiliser and the central warehousing godowns also have to take to the road transport incurring heavy expenses. The loadmen who were engaged in loading and unloading at Mannargudi are without employment and their families suffer a lot. Only the immediate restoration of the passengers and goods trains on the Nidamangalam-Mannargudi Railway lines will solve the pressing problems of the public.

Hence, the hon. Railway Minister may be pleased to take steps for the restoration of the train service and restore the goods as well as the passengers trains on Nidamangalam-Mannargudi Railway lines immediately.

13.09 hrs.

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (GENERAL), 1980-81—contd.

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTRY OF RURAL RECONSTRUCTION—contd.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now, we shall take up further discussion and voting on the Demands for Grants under the control of the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Rural Reconstruction.

श्री मलिक एम० एम० ए० खाँ (एटा) :  
उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, हम आज ऐसे महत्वपूर्ण विषय पर चर्चा कर रहे हैं जिससे कि हमारे देश के देहातों में, गांवों में बसने वाली 75 फीसदी आबादी का ताल्लुक है, जिसके जीवन का दारोमदार इसी खेती पर है, काश्तकारी पर है। चाहे वह हल चलाने