

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN): (a) Yes; by the Government Inspector of Railway Bombay.

(b) His *provisional* finding is that the derailment was due to the failure of the permanent way on the curve lead of Points No. 4.

*80. [The questioner (Dr. Raghbir Singh) was absent. For answer, vide col. 326 infra.]

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INCREASE IN EARNINGS DUE TO INCREASE IN FARE AND FREIGHT RATES

*82. SHRI H. C. MATHUR: Will the Minister for COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the estimated increase in income during the current year as a result of increase in fare and freight by air services; and

(b) what were the reasons for this increase in fare and freight?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAJ BAHADUR): (a) Rs. 12.75 lakhs (for the period 15-7-1955 to 31-3-1956).

(b) Prior to the 1st August 1953, the air services were being operated by 8 different air companies and, as was to be expected the fares and the freight rates for the various routes were diverse. On taking over the air services, Indian Airlines Corporation felt that the fare and freight structure for the all-India network required to be reorganised and rationalised, having regard to certain basic standards. The recent revision of the fares and freight rates was the outcome of the first stage of this rationalisation.

SHRI H. C. MATHUR: May I know whether this increase was only to bring about uniformity and consistency or for any other purpose?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: Prior to nationalisation, the freight and fare structure was determined or regulated on instructions from the Air Transport Licensing Board which fixed the minima and the maxima in respect of freights and fares. Between these the fares and freights used to vary with the result that even for the same sector there were different fares. It was with a view to eliminating all these anomalies that this was done.

SHRI H. C. MATHUR: May I know whether it is a fact that since nationalisation both the passenger traffic as well as the freight carried has deteriorated very considerably?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: It is not a fact.

SHRI H. C. MATHUR: Has the attention of the hon. Minister been drawn to a publication of the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta, giving very disturbing figures? I will read out the figures given: Passengers carried in 1952 were 4,34,000 whereas they were only 4,00,000 in 1953. May I know whether this is a fact or not?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: The figures are unauthentic and inaccurate, both.

SHRI H. C. MATHUR: May I know what the actual state of affairs is whether the passenger and freight traffic has improved or deteriorated since nationalisation?

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: It is not possible for me to give the exact figures for the passenger and freight traffic, but we have kept up, not only kept up, but in certain cases the traffic has improved.