

Collision of trains at Gadadharpur Station

*501. **Shri Vishwa Nath Pandey:**
Shri Ram Harkh Yadav:

Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Rampurhat-Howrah passenger train collided with a stationary goods train at Gadadharpur Station on the Eastern Railway on the 2nd November, 1965;

(b) if so, the number of passengers injured in the accident; and

(c) the causes of the accident?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways (Dr. Ram Subhag Singh): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Thirty-nine persons were injured of whom 4 sustained grievous injuries.

(c) The cause of the accident is under investigation by the Additional Commissioner of Railway Safety, Calcutta.

M/s. Jessop & Company

*502. **Shri P. C. Borooah:** Will the Minister of Industry and Supply be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to acquire permanent controlling share in M/s. Jessop and Company Ltd., Calcutta; and

(b) if so, the terms of the envisaged settlement?

The Minister of Heavy Engineering and Industry in the Ministry of Industry and Supply (Shri T. N. Singh): (a) and (b). An agreement has been signed on 18th August, 1965 between the President of India and M/s. Sahu Jain Ltd., and their associates for the purchase by Government of 11,23,300 shares held by them in Jessop & Co., Ltd., which represent about 55 per cent of the total number of equity shares of the Company. In terms of a Sup-

plemental Agreement signed on 19th August, 1965 an 'on account' payment at the rate of Rs. 25 per share has been made to the share holders and the shares have been transferred in favour of the President. This gives Government a controlling interest. The question of determination of the price of the shares has been referred to arbitration. Copies of the two agreements have been placed in the Parliament Library.

Poona-Miraj Metre Gauge System

*503. **Shri Madhu Limaye:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 468 on the 12th November, 1965 and state:

(a) the reasons which prompted the Railway Administration to change the alignment of the Railway track by moving it closer to Satara Town;

(b) whether this scheme was given preference over the more important scheme of converting Miraj-Kolhapur metre-gauge section into broad-gauge; and

(c) what will be the annual additional cost to the passengers travelling on the Miraj-Poona route as a result of the above diversion?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Railways (Shri Sham Nath): (a) The decision to bring the Poona-Miraj B.G. line closer to Satara Town which is a district headquarters, was taken in accordance with the very strong public opinion, pressing for this diversion, which was supported by the Maharashtra State Government, as well.

(b) This decision is independent of the proposal for conversion of the Miraj-Kolhapur section to broad gauge, which is also under consideration of the Railway Board and for which the necessary surveys have only recently been completed. The Poona-Miraj conversion is a sanctioned work, already in progress, and, therefore, decision regarding the alignment in a