

Shri Nambiar: May I know, Sir, since when coaches are carrying loads of coal?

JOINING AMRAVATI WITH THE MAIN RAILWAY LINE

***246. Dr. P. S. Deshmukh:** (a) Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state the cost of joining Amravati with the main railway line from Nagpur to Bombay?

(b) What is the position of this proposal?

(c) Have Government received any representation in this matter?

(d) If so, have Government taken any decision on it?

The Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri L. B. Shastri): (a) The cost of bringing Amravati on the main Railway line was estimated in 1946 at Rs. 37-33 lakhs.

(b) The question of diverting the main line between Bombay and Nagpur via Amravati was investigated in 1946 but in view of the poor financial prospects revealed by the Traffic Survey Report, the project was dropped.

(c) Yes.

(d) As already stated in reply to part (b), it was decided to drop the project and Government do not see any reason to revise the decision.

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Is it not a fact that the branch line between Nagpur and Amravati is the most costly line in the whole of India?

Mr. Speaker: He is entering into an argument. We may proceed to the next question.

ACCIDENT IN RAJKUMARI CHOWK ROAD, AMRAVATI

***247. Dr. P. S. Deshmukh:** (a) Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state whether it is a fact that a fatal accident was caused by the negligent act of the Posts and Telegraphs Department servants to Shri Shashikant Nawathe of Amravati on public thoroughfare on 22nd August, 1951 while passing by the crowded Rajkumari Chowk road, where he contacted loosely lying coils of telephone wires on the street?

(b) Is it a fact that the gangmen of the department were working without the necessary instruments and necessary precautions on the live electric wires without stopping the electric current?

(c) Has the District Magistrate made enquiries into the accident and, if so, with what result?

(d) Has any compensation been paid so far and if not, why not?

(e) What measures has the Posts and Telegraphs Department taken to give redress to the persons affected?

(f) Will Government institute a full and detailed enquiry into the accident?

The Minister of Communications (Shri Jagjivan Ram): (a) I regret to say that it is a fact that Shri Shashikant Nawathe of Amravati met with a fatal accident near the Rajkumari Chowk by treading on a coil of telephone wires one of which happened to have become charged by accidental contact with a live wire.

(b) The workmen of the department were dismantling two spare telephone wires one of which accidentally got charged by contact with a live electric wire, whose insulation had been damaged. The workmen had the necessary tools but had gone inside a building to remove an obstruction when the accident happened.

(c) I am not aware of any enquiry made by the District Magistrate.

(d) and (e). The parents of the deceased have given notice of a Civil Suit against Government while the question of making an *ex gratia* payment to them is under consideration.

(f) The accident has already been investigated by officers of the P. and T. Department, by the police and by the Electrical Inspector to the Government of Madhya Pradesh. It is not proposed to institute any further enquiry into the matter.

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Sir, has the Government determined the amount which they are prepared to pay to the father of the deceased?

Shri Jagjivan Ram: Sir, I am not prepared to divulge the information at this stage. I have asked my officers to negotiate with the parents of the deceased.

RURAL POST OFFICES (BERAR)

***248. Dr. P. S. Deshmukh:** (a) Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state if there are any villages with a population of 2,000 and more which are yet to have an independent Post Office in Berar (M.P.)?