

MATERNAL MORTALITY

*266. **Shri Radha Raman:** (a) Will the Minister of Health be pleased to state the percentage of women who die at the time of child-birth in India?

(b) What steps are Government taking or propose to take to decrease this percentage?

The Deputy Minister of Health (Shri-mati Chandrasekhar): (a) No reliable information for maternal deaths in India is available. The Health survey and Development Committee appointed by the Government of India in 1943 came to the conclusion that the maternal death rate for undivided India was in the neighbourhood of 20 per 1,000 live births. It may, however, be claimed that there has been some reduction in maternal mortality in recent years as a result of the use of antibiotics and the expansion and improvement of maternity services.

(b) Schemes for the improvement of maternal and child health services are in progress in all these States. These include additional facilities for training of maternal and child health workers, the expansion of services for prenatal care of expectant mothers, an increase in institutional services and the provision of domiciliary midwifery. Emphasis is being laid on midwifery services in the rural areas.

Shri Radha Raman: May I know if the Government have examined the cause of maternity?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The Question-hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

COMPENSATORY ALLOWANCE TO P. AND T EMPLOYEES IN ASSAM

*254. **Shri Vittal Rao:** (a) Will the Minister of Communications be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the Posts and Telegraphs employees in Assam used to be paid a compensatory allowance up to 1948?

(b) If so, what was the rate of this allowance?

(c) Is it a fact that since 1948, this allowance has been discontinued and if so, why?

(d) Are Government aware that at the Fifth Annual Conference of the Assam Circle Union of Posts and Telegraphs workers, a demand has been made for the restoration of this allowance?

(e) If so, what action do Government propose to take in the matter?

The Deputy Minister of Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) Yes.

(b) 30 per cent. of pay.

(c) Yes. This allowance was sanctioned during the war period and since the reasons for which this was granted no longer exist, it has been discontinued.

(d) Yes.

(e) The Union have been informed that there is no justification for the grant of this war time allowance to the P. and T. staff in Assam. But Hill allowance for certain areas in Assam have been sanctioned for places where the State Government have sanctioned.

HINGOLI-KHANDWA RAILWAY LINE

*259. **Shri Krishnacharya Joshi:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether the construction of a new railway line between Hingoli and Khandwa has started; and

(b) if so, when it will be completed?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shah Nawaz Khan): (a) Not yet. It is proposed to take up the final location survey of the project soon and the work of construction will start thereafter.

(b) It is not possible at present to anticipate the date of completion but every effort will be made to complete the work as early as possible.