

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: May I know if the Government is aware that in the State of Uttar Pradesh, many of the tube-wells cannot be worked because there is no electric power to work them?

SHRI M. V. KRISHNAPPA: It is true. The programme is so adjusted that we want to see that when the wells are dug, immediately the power should be supplied; otherwise, there is no use. But it so happens that, due to shortage of electric materials and other things, in some places they do not get the power in time.

DAMAGE CAUSED TO POST OFFICES IN GUJERAT

*433. SHRI DEOKINANDAN NARAYAN: Will the Minister of TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the loss suffered by Government on account of burning of post offices or other damage done to them in Gujerat in the recent disturbances; and

(b) whether postal employees were manhandled?

THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI S. K. PATIL): (a) Rs. 26,079·81 nP.

(b) Yes, two postmen of Nadiad Post Office.

SHRI DEOKINANDAN NARAYAN: May I know, Sir, if the buildings occupied by these post offices were rented ones and if so, who were the owners of these buildings?

SHRI S. K. PATIL: Sir, it is difficult for me to say that without notice. Some of them must be rented.

SHRI DEOKINANDAN NARAYAN: May I know how far these buildings were burnt?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The extent of the burning—that is what he wants.

SHRI S. K. PATIL: The total loss, as I said, is Rs. 26,000. The buildings were not burnt, but they tried to pull out the cash and stamps and

other things, so that they could have as much booty as they could lay their hands upon.

SHRI DEOKINANDAN NARAYAN: May I know if any cash was also lost in these from the post offices?

SHRI S. K. PATIL: Cash and stamp are lumped together here and that is Rs. 12,232. But stamps are as good as cash.

SHRI T. S. PATTABIRAMAN: Is there any proposal to keep these post offices closed as a punitive measure till the local citizens make up the loss suffered by the Government?

SHRI S. K. PATIL: It seems to be a very hard case.

SHRI DEOKINANDAN NARAYAN: May I know if there were watchmen at these post offices when these were attacked?

SHRI S. K. PATIL: We have one or two watchmen. But even then, when so many people come with the intention of having a free loot . . .

SHRI DEOKINANDAN NARAYAN: May I know what was the time when these post offices were attacked? Was it day-time or evening time?

SHRI S. K. PATIL: I think most of them were done in day-time.

AIR LINK BETWEEN BHOPAL AND DELHI

*434. DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARAMANAND: Will the Minister of TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to give air connection to Bhopal from Delhi once or twice a week; and

(b) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to link Raipur and Jabalpur with Bhopal by weekly air service?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI AHMED MOHTUDIN): (a) and (b). The Indian Airlines Corporation have no plans at

present to airmail Bhopal or any other place in Madhya Pradesh.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMANAND: Sir, is it a fact that the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh asked the personnel of the Indian Airlines Corporation to see him with regard to the opening of the line that was stopped and even in respect of the loss incurred? Sir, Madhya Pradesh is such a huge State and its capital is separated from all the other States.

SHRI S. K. PATIL: There have been persistent demands from Bhopal and many other places that this line should be resumed, and the Chief Minister did, of course, do that. The matter is under consideration because the loss is very heavy and we have got to find out as to how we can really improve the situation.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMANAND: Sir, may I know whether the Government has considered the desirability of opening this line at least once or twice a week, in view of the fact that the loss sustained was about Rs. 12 lakhs only and also in view of the fact that the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh impressed on the officers the need for opening this line, as also the fact that the Indian Airlines Corporation is not running at a profit anywhere? Sir, the loss involved would not be so heavy.

SHRI S. K. PATIL: I once said in the course of a debate that the whole question was under examination. We have got to make a difference between the two sets of routes, one which is economic and the other which is not economic but has got to be operated for other reasons. And the Government have got to take some decision as to the extent to which they will have to bear the loss. The whole question is under examination and the examination is not yet complete.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMANAND: Which are the other States where the Airlines are operating and where some loss is not sustained?

SHRI S. K. PATIL: That is a different matter altogether, Sir. Because some loss is sustained, that is no argument that more loss should be sustained.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: May I know, Sir, if these Herons cannot be used for connecting Bhopal with Delhi and other places in Madhya Pradesh?

SHRI S. K. PATIL: By experience it has been found that it is not so good, Sir.

AUTOMATIC TELEPHONE EXCHANGE AT BHOPAL

*435. SHRI NIRANJAN SINGH: Will the Minister of TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any complaints have been received about the working of the telephone exchange at Bhopal; and

(b) if so, whether Government propose to replace the present system by an automatic telephone exchange?

THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI S. K. PATIL): (a) No.

(b) Replacement of the present system by an automatic system during the 2nd Five Year Plan at a cost of nearly Rs. 24 lakhs has been approved. The automatic exchange is likely to be ready by 1961.

*436. [The questioner (Shri M. Valiulla) was absent. For answer, vide col. 2447, infra.]

EXAMINATION OF THE PRICE OF TELCO LOCOMOTIVES

*412. SHRI P. C. BHANJ DEO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the question regarding the price to be paid by Government for the locomotives manufactured by TELCO has been examined afresh by Government;

(b) if so, what is the result thereof; and

(c) what is the price now agreed to be paid for such locomotives?