

M.P. Dutta, Railways, HMS/AIRF, Delhi

Name	M.P. Dutta, Railways, Delhi, HMS/AIRF
Date of Interview	
Time	
Place	NRMU Office, Chemsford Road, Delhi.
Context	M.P. Dutta is a freedom fighter and in good health, short in height and in his late 70s. He is a man of cheerful character and quite loud and direct in his speaking about things and honest. He is respected by the people around. Currently he is Secretary HMS. He was also Divisional Secretary NRMU from 1952 to 1980.
Interviewers	Bobby Poulouse.

Biographical Sketches

M.P. Dutta was born in Gurdaspur in 1922. He came from an Arya Samaji family and his father died due to torture by British as he saw Bhagat Singh's associates murder Sunder. After his education he joined Bharat Insurance. He participated in an agitation against Chaudhry Devi Lal and was jailed in Sirsa jail with 60 others. Then he went at JP's call to fight against the Maharaja of Kashmir. He participated in the Quit India agitation. He went with others to meet Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan to seek help for the Cotton Mills in Lyallpur in Punjab now in Pakistan. After partition he came to India and Dr. Lohia got him a job as Social Guide in the railways in 1948. He started his work among railways in Delhi since 1948. He was involved in the 1956 May Kalka strike in which some workers were killed by police and in protest he personally blocked rail traffic in Delhi. He met Nehru on this issue along with others. He also participated in the 1960 rail strike and was jailed for 10 days. He was also active in the 1968 strike and also in the 1974 railway strike. Today he leads 7 railway unions.

Transcript Summary

M.P. Dutta was born in Gurdaspur in 1922. In his childhood his mother died and his brother-in-law was in the Railways in Kanpur. His brother-in-law transferred himself from Allahabad to Lahore where M.P. Dutta studied and passed 10th class in 1935 and then moved to DAV College. M.P. Dutta was from an Arya Samaji family and his father died of torture by British police as he was near the place when the famous Saunders was shot dead by Bhagat Singh's associates. His father was arrested on this count and later died of the torture.

M.P. Dutta joined Bharat Insurance and he along with some of his friends was of the view that the British should be overthrown. It was at this juncture that M.P. Dutta started going to Bradley Hall and joined the Socialist Party. At this time he met the NWFP leader of railways Mirza Ibrahim.

M.P. Dutta revealed that he was jailed with 60 persons in Sirsa jail for their struggle against Chaudhary Devi Lal who was a big landlord of the region.

In 1946 JP took M.P. Dutta and other socialists to agitate against Maharaja Hari Singh of the state of J&K. They came back to Gujarawala after 10 to 15 days of involvement in this agitation. They distributed a paper brought out by socialists i.e. "Kashmir Sansar". However the problem was that their struggles were getting affected by the religious venom introduced into politics by Muslim League and Hindu Mahasabha in the J& K politics at this critical juncture. M.P. Dutta says during the Quit India agitation they participated and went to meet Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan and help the struggle in the Cotton Mills in Lyallpur Punjab.

After partition M.P. Dutta came to Delhi via Amritsar. Dr. Lohia got him a job as Social Guide in Railways by recommending his name in 1948. He started his work in Railways in Delhi and in June 1948 railways created new zones.

In the 1956 May many railway workers were killed in Kalka near Jammu. M.P. Dutta and his railway workers in protest blocked and stopped the leaving of train from Delhi. M.P. Dutta personally led the march to stop the train going to Faizabad from Delhi. PM Nehru intervened to settle this strike. M.P. Dutta and others met PM Nehru.

M.P. Dutta also participated in the 1960 strike and was jailed for nearly 10 days. Then again he was active in the 1968 strike also. In the 1974 railway strike also he participated and faced the govt. repression. As of today M.P. Dutta leads 7 unions of the railways. He ended by saying that privatization of railways would only spell disaster for India like it did for UK. In fact the situation will be much worse.