

LOK SABHA DEBATES

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LOK SABHA

Friday, 5th September, 1958

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Government of India Tourist Office, Paris

*947. Shri Abdul Salam: Will the Minister of Transport and Communications be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a huge building for Tourist Office in Paris was taken on lease at high costs and is lying almost empty.

(b) if so, the reasons therefor, and

(c) the action taken in the matter?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Transport and Communications (Shri Raj Bahadur): (a) No, Sir. The Government of India have taken only a small portion of a hotel in Paris, for their Tourist Office. The area of the rented space is 3161 sq. ft. The lease is for 15 years. Considering the central location of the premises and the prevailing rent values for such accommodation, the rent of Rs. 2,835 per month being paid for it, is not regarded as high. A major portion of the premises acquired is fully in use and the surplus space, in excess of the requirements of the Tourist Office, is proposed to be utilised by the Information Wing of the Indian Embassy.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

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Shri Abdul Salam: Is it a fact that a huge amount was paid as *pugree*—as gratis—for getting the building; if so, may I know how much was paid?

Shri Raj Bahadur: A sum of Rs. 2,57,640 equal to 19 million francs was paid in a lump sum as 'key money' which happens to be a legal transaction, a recognised transaction in France.

सरदार वृन्ध सिंह : फ्रांस में पगड़ी लेना दुस्त है ।

श्री राज बहादुर : जी हाँ, पगड़ी की इज्जत है वहाँ ।

Shri V. C. Shukla: What is the estimated number of tourists that come from France to India? Has there been any increase in the number of tourists that come from France to India after this tourist office has been opened there?

Shri Raj Bahadur: The proposal to open this office was conceived in 1955 and we opened it in early 1956. Since then I think there has been a regular increase. The number of tourists' arrival from Paris to India was 882 in 1955. In 1956 the number went up to 1726. In 1957 the number was 1955 and 1958 figures are not available.

Shri Tangamani: The hon. Minister said that Rs. 2,57,640 has been paid as 'key money'. May I know whether that amount will be adjusted towards the rental of Rs. 2,835 per month?

Shri Raj Bahadur: No, Sir: 'key money' is 'key money'.

Mr. Speaker: I am afraid that will be copied here also.