

Shri Ram Krishna: May I know whether any site has been suggested by this Delegation?

Shri Manubhai Shah: No; not yet.

Shri Joachim Alva: Is the Government aware that the Swiss operate on a monopolistic basis in the manufacture of watches? May I also know whether Government has received any other offer from the Germans or Russians who also make their own watches?

Shri Manubhai Shah: This particular offer was for training purposes, but as the hon House is interested in the manufacture of watches being established in India I may say that about 12 proposals have been received by the Government and they are under consideration. The parties have been called in the third week of this month. Two or three proposals thereof seem to be very attractive. They are not necessarily from Swiss manufacturers, there are German manufacturers, Japanese manufacturers and British manufacturers who are ready to collaborate with Indian enterprise.

Shri Tyagi: May I know if the import of watches continues to be banned in India?

Shri Manubhai Shah: Yes, Sir

Shri Tyagi: How long do Government intend to stop the import of watches?

Shri Manubhai Shah: The foreign exchange position being what it is, the ban continues.

Shri Muhammed Elias: A number of watch-making factories are going to be closed resulting in many workers being thrown out of employment due to difficulty in obtaining the small parts required for watches. May I know whether the requirements of the country in respect of these small parts of watches were taken into consideration before the import policy was restricted?

Shri Manubhai Shah: As far as repair of watches is concerned, this country has an ancient tradition and there are many small factories throughout the country which are repairing watches. No question, therefore, arises as to what will happen to the existing watches in the absence of parts coming from outside; they are all being manufactured in the country.

Central Designs Organisation and Construction Agencies

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*2. { **Shri Subodh Hansda:**
Shri S. C. Samanta:
Shri R. C. Majhi:
Shri Rameshwar Tantia:

Will the Minister of Works, Housing and Supply be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal for the establishment of Central Designs Organisation and Construction Agencies by the Planning Commission;

(b) if so, the object of setting up such organisations, and

(c) whether these agencies will be of permanent character?

The Deputy Minister of Works, Housing and Supply (Shri Anil K. Chanda): (a) and (b) Reduction of building costs has assumed great urgency in the context of our development projects and Government are giving a high priority to the examination of the various aspects of this problem. The methods to be employed in order to bring down building costs would have to take into consideration the setting up of suitable agencies for proper and economical designing and construction and these will have to be studied along with other factors, such as the proper use of building materials, laying down norms and standards, preparing specifications and model plans for buildings.

(c) Does not arise at present

Shri Subodh Hansda: May I know whether Government have assessed the percentage of construction cost

that would be saved by setting up these agencies?

Shri Anil K. Chanda: I am afraid, have not understood the question

Shri Subodh Hansa rose—

Mr. Speaker: Shri Samanta

Shri S. C. Samanta: May I know whether new designs will be adopted in all governmental activities as the designs and standards that are being followed now have become almost obsolete?

Shri Anil K. Chanda: The whole question is under examination. There are different types of buildings and the needs are also of a varied type. The whole question is being studied by a team.

Shri R. C. Majhi: May I know whether these agencies have already been established, if so, how many?

Shri Anil K. Chanda: There is no designing agency at present except in the Central PWD where they have their own organisation for making designs.

Shrimati Renu Chakravarty: May I know whether the Central Designs Organisation is only meant for designing houses or does the Planning Commission also envisage the setting up of a designs organisation for plants and machinery of any particular industry?

The Minister of Works, Housing and Supply (Shri K. C. Reddy): We are not now dealing with any organisation for considering designs for setting up plant and machinery. That, if I may say so, is outside the purview of the activities of my Ministry. That it is necessary, of course, is not open to question. I would like to say that the question of preparing new designs, going in for new specifications and the examination and utilisation of proper materials in order to economise in construction has been continuously under the examination of this Ministry as also other concerned Ministries including the perspective Division of the Planning Commission. Naturally,

we have intensified our activities, and so far as my Ministry is concerned we have circulated a paper to all the other Ministries which deal with construction of one kind or another, including the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. We have circulated our views to the various Ministries. We have received replies from all of them and we are in the final stage of being in a position to submit a paper about this subject for the consideration of all the agencies concerned. It is hoped that it will be possible for us to do something more active in this direction. Meanwhile, as I said already, this is a matter which has been continuously under the examination of the Government.

Shri V. P. Nayar: The hon. Deputy Minister referred to economy in construction materials—in an answer to an earlier question. I want to know whether Government have any specific schemes for economising cost of timber by the substitution of non-conventional timber for conventional timber in their construction work?

Shri K. C. Reddy: Yes, Sir.

Shri V. P. Nayar: What is it?

Mr. Speaker: It cannot be explained now.

Electrolytic Copper

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*3. { Shri S. C. Samanta.
Shri Subodh Hansa

Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state

(a) what progress has so far been made to manufacture Electrolytic Copper in the country, and

(b) how much Electrolytic Copper is imported every year?

The Minister of Industry (Shri Manubhai Shah): (a) Electrolytic Copper is not manufactured in the country at present. M/s Indian Copper Corporation Ltd., Ghatsila, are the only manufacturers of copper in the