

The Deputy Minister of Rehabilitation (Shri J. K. Bhonsle): (a) A plan for the construction of tenements, houses and shops was finalised in consultation with the State Government in the beginning of the financial year 1952-53.

(b) Tenements	8000
Houses/flats	1110
Shops	890
TOTAL	10,000 Units.

WORLD BANK AID FOR STEEL PRODUCTION

*418. **Shri Velayudhan:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) whether any World Bank aid is likely for the steel production expansion programme of the Government of India; and

(b) what happened to the Japanese and the German proposal for setting up a new steel mill in India?

The Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri T. T. Krishnamachari):

(a) The question is hypothetical. I am unable to hazard an answer.

(b) A proposal has been made by a Japanese Industrialist. The proposal is being examined.

INDIAN-OWNED NEWS AGENCIES

*419. **Shri N. P. Sinha:** Will the Minister of Information and Broadcasting be pleased to state the number of Indian-owned news agencies in India?

The Minister of Information and Broadcasting (Dr. Keskar): Unlike newspapers which are required to file a declaration under the Press and Registration of Books Act, at present no registration under the Act is necessary in the case of news agencies and Government have, therefore, no accurate information regarding the number of such news agencies.

PRICES OF CEMENT

*420. **Shri Beli Ram Das:** (a) Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state what are the prices of cement prevailing in Calcutta, Delhi, Bombay and Gauhati?

(b) Is it a fact that each bag of cement must contain 112 lbs. of cement?

(c) If the answer to part (b) above be in the affirmative, how is it that one bag of cement in Assam contains 90 lbs. of cement only?

(d) What is the reason for this disparity?

(e) What steps do Government propose to take to supply cement to Assam at a uniform rate?

The Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri T. T. Krishnamachari): (a) The f.o.r. destination price of cement which the producers are allowed to charge at Calcutta, Delhi and Bombay is Rs. 71 per ton plus cost of packing. At Gauhati, an addition over this price depending on the actual freight incurred in effecting supplies to this remote station, is allowed. Retail prices are fixed by the State Governments concerned on the basis of the price chargeable by the producers, after taking into account handling and other incidental charges.

(b) No Sir.

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

(e) The remoteness of this State from any cement factory and the transport conditions in the State render it impossible to make available cement at a uniform rate throughout the State.

DEVELOPMENT OF COTTAGE INDUSTRIES

*421. **Shri Dabhi:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to refer to the answer given to my Starred Question No. 1564 on the 8th July, 1952 regarding priority given to the development of cottage industries, and state the exact methods by which Government have given or contemplate giving high priority to the following cottage industries:

(i) Khadi; (ii) Ghani-oil; (iii) Paddy-thrashing; and (iv) hand-grinding of corn?

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Karmarkar): (i) Khadi.

It has been decided to set up a "Khadi and Village Industries Board". This Board will look after the development of Khadi and Village industries.

(ii) Ghani oil.

(a) The Indian Central Oilseeds Committee has been financing schemes in the various States for the organization of co-operative societies of village oilmen.

(b) It has taken steps to popularise the *Wardhaghanis* which is an improvement over indigenous *ghanis*.

(c) Schemes have been sanctioned for the grant of interest free loans to certain State Governments up to two lakhs of rupees for each State for financing co-operative societies of oilmen.