

Shri B. K. Das: Are the purchases made through contractors or through the purchasing department of Government?

Shri Buragohain: By the Central Purchase Organisation of the Government.

Shri Dabhi: May we know the value of Khadi purchased by Government?

Shri Buragohain: I cannot say of Khadi but some handloom cloths are purchased through the Textile Commissioner.

Shri A. N. Vidyalankar: May I know, Sir, whether Government contractors are required to give an undertaking that they would give preference to Indian material?

Shri Buragohain: I do not follow.

Mr. Speaker: Whether Government contractors also are required to give an undertaking that they would give preference to Indian material?

Shri Buragohain: So far as contractors are concerned, there is no question of their giving an undertaking that they would give preference to Indian material because we, as purchasers, can always ensure that.

Mr. Speaker: Whether Government enforce it as a condition of the contract that the contractors will use only Indian made goods. That seems to be the point.

Shri Buragohain: That is the policy, Sir.

Shri Alfekar: May I know whether tenders are invited for the articles purchased?

Shri Buragohain: Yes, Sir. That is done.

SHIFTING OF OFFICES FROM DELHI

*686. **Shri A. N. Vidyalankar:** (a) Will the Minister of Works, Housing and Supply be pleased to state whether it is a fact that Government are investigating the possibility of shifting some of the offices at present situated in Delhi, to some other localities?

(b) Which offices are proposed to be shifted?

(c) Which are the new stations that have so far been selected?

(d) Will the new arrangement permanently cost Government extra expenditure and if so, what is the estimate?

(e) What would be the estimated cost of building etc., at the new stations?

(f) Will the Minister-in-charge of the department so shifted, also shift his headquarters from Delhi, or a skeleton department would be kept in the capital also?

(g) What will be the approximate number of employees that will be shifted out of Delhi under this scheme?

The Minister of Works, Housing and Supply (Sardar Swaran Singh):

(a) Yes.

(b) It is proposed to shift such offices as are not integral parts of the Secretariats of the various Ministries and whose location outside Delhi is feasible. The selection of these offices has not yet been finalised. In the meantime, however, it has been decided to shift (1) Salt Commissioner's Office and (2) the office of the Director of Agricultural Marketing and Inspection. The office of the Narcotics Commissioner has already been shifted to Simla.

(c) Simla, Mt. Abu, Dalhousie, Mussoorie and Faridabad are among the probables.

(d) There will be some extra expenditure but the amount thereof would be capable of calculation after the decision to shift a particular office is firmly taken, depending upon the requirements of that particular office.

(e) It is not for the present proposed to construct new buildings at new stations.

(f) No. The Minister will not shift, nor will it be necessary to keep a skeleton Department in the Capital.

(g) This will depend on the offices proposed to be shifted.

Shri A. N. Vidyalankar: May I know, Sir, whether it is a fact that the experience of keeping offices at the hill stations has not been encouraging in the past?

Sardar Swaran Singh: Opinions, Sir, differ on that point.

Shri A. N. Vidyalankar: Will the Government see that residential accommodation to all its transferred employees is given and that the educational and other facilities that are available to its employees at Delhi will also be made available there?

Sardar Swaran Singh: Government will ensure that its employees are not worse off in the matter of residential accommodation or other facilities as a result of these shifts.

सेठ बचल सिंह: क्या मंत्री महोदय बतलाने की कृपा करेंगे कि क्या आगरे के बारे में भी कोई विचार किया गया है, कि वहाँ कौन से आफिस जा सकते हैं ?

Sardar Swaran Singh: There is, Sir, a lot of congestion, if I know correctly, in Agra but if there is available accommodation, it cannot be ruled out.

ARREARS OF RENT FOR GOVERNMENT QUARTERS

*687. **Shri A. N. Vidyalankar:** (a) Will the Minister of Works, Housing and Supply be pleased to state whether it is a fact that a considerable amount of rent for Government residential quarters remains in arrears and if so, what is the amount of the same year-wise from 1947 up to date?

(b) What measures are being adopted to realize this rent?

(c) Have any dues been written off as unrealizable?

(d) What is the amount of such written-off debts?

The Minister of Works, Housing and Supply (Sardar Swaran Singh): (a) While there are arrears, they cannot be said to be considerable in relation to the total demand. A statement showing the amount of arrears outstanding as on 31.10.52 in respect of the years 1947-48 to 1951-52 relating to the civil residential pool of accommodation for Central Government servants in Delhi, Simla, Bombay and Calcutta is placed on the Table of the House. [See Appendix IV, annexure No. 17].

The total arrears outstanding are only about 3.2 per cent. of the total demand for the period.

(b) Every item of arrears is continuously being followed up with a view to recovering the amounts outstanding from the individuals concerned working in various offices. There is a special Accounts Officer exclusively entrusted with this job in the Estate Office.

(c) and (d). Yes, for the years 1947-48 to 1951-52 an amount of about Rs. 34,000 has been written off. Much of this, however, is only a technical and accounting write off, as I understand that the rents of certain units were revised but could not be recovered retrospectively.

Shri A. N. Vidyalankar: From which class of persons mostly this amount is recoverable?

Sardar Swaran Singh: Sir, I think all Government employees belong to one class.

AUCTION OF ASSAM TEA

*688. **Shri Beli Ram Das:** (a) Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state what quantity of Assam tea was auctioned in Calcutta in the years 1950-51 and 1951-52 both for internal and external consumption?

(b) Is it a fact that, on account of the recent re-grouping of North Eastern Railway, Assam tea can be carried to Kandalla Port via, Katihar, Kanpur, Agra and Ahmedabad as this route consists of metre gauge Railways?

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Karmarkar): (a)—

Assam tea auction in Calcutta

	1950-51	1951-52
	Qty. in Chests	Qty. in Chests
Export	1,087,868	1,149,055
Internal	91,098	34,044

(b) Yes.

Shri Beli Ram Das: Is the Government aware of the fact that on account of the sale of Assam tea at Calcutta, the Government of Assam is losing a large sum of money in the shape of sales tax?

Shri Karmarkar: Yes, Sir, because the rule is that no sales tax be levied on exported tea and tea sent out; the State therefore is losing.

Shri Beli Ram Das: Is it under the contemplation of Government to have one tea auction house in Gauhati in place of Calcutta?

Shri Karmarkar: I require notice.

Shri Beli Ram Das: Is it not a fact that the transport cost from Assam to Kandalla Port via Katihar is far less than through Calcutta?

Shri Karmarkar: Likely, because the distance is 1778 miles.

SYSTEM OF WEIGHT FOR IRON AND STEEL

*689. **Shri Beli Ram Das:** (a) Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the Government of India have adopted British Avoirdupois weight as the standard system of weight for iron and steel?

(b) Is it also a fact that iron and steel are sold in Assam in Indian weight of maunds and seers?