

STATUS OF DELHI

*274. **Shri B. R. Bhagat:** Will the Minister of Home Affairs be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Delhi State Government has decided to press the Central Government to revise the status of Delhi State and introduce full-fledged autonomy on the model of Part 'A' States;

(b) if so, whether any Memorandum to the effect has been submitted to the Government of India; and

(c) if the answer to part (b) above be in the affirmative what decision is being taken on it?

The Minister of Home Affairs and States (Dr. Katju): (a) No.

(b) No.

(c) Does not arise.

Shri B. R. Bhagat: May I know whether there is any other Part C State legislature which has asked for a change to the status of a Part A State?

Dr. Katju: Not so far.

STERLING BALANCE

*275. **Shri Jhunjhunwala:** (a) Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to state the amount of Sterling Balance which was to the credit of the Government of India in June 1946?

(b) What was the balance on the 31st March, 1952?

(c) What is the amount which India earned in the form of Sterling and in the form of Dollars during this period?

(d) What is the total amount credited to our account as interest for this balance during this period; i.e., from June 1946 to 31st March, 1952?

The Minister of Finance (Shri C. D. Deshmukh): (a) The balances at the end of June, 1946 were Rs. 1,693 crores.

(b) Rs. 723 crores.

(c) I presume what the hon. Member wants to know is the amounts drawn from the sterling balances and the amount of our deficits with non-sterling area met from the central gold and dollar reserves of the sterling area. The total amount drawn from the sterling balances, inclusive of transfers to Pakistan as their share of

the assets and to the U.K. Government in payment of defence stores and pensionary annuity, is Rs. 970 crores. During the period from January, 1948, our deficits with the dollar and non-sterling area were met from the central reserves to the extent of Rs. 68 crores. Figures for earlier periods are not available.

(d) Rs. 53.7 crores.

Shri Jhunjhunwala: What is the rate at which interest accrues?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: Sterling securities at present earn interest at rates ranging from 1½ to 2½ per cent.

Shri Jhunjhunwala: What is the final rate we are having at present?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: It is very difficult to say. From time to time it varies and it is any rate in between the two rates I have mentioned. It must be remembered that some of the sterling is invested in Treasury Bills and that operates to reduce the rate.

Shri R. K. Chaudhury: May I know what the amount set apart for payment of pensions is, and whether the amount was for a particular year or for an approximate period of the duration of the lives of the pensioners?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: Pensions are usually paid during the duration of the lives of the pensioners and we made a consolidated payment to His Majesty's Government on account of pensionary liability amounting to Rs. 224 crores.

Shri R. K. Chaudhury: What was the object of making a consolidated payment? Could it not be paid every year so that the money could be released for other purposes?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member need not argue. He may just put his question.

Shri R. K. Chaudhury: What was the object of making a consolidated payment on the approximate duration of a man's life? What was the object in doing that?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: To make durable arrangements for discharging one's liabilities.

Pandit M. B. Bhargava: To what extent are the sterling balances utilised each year for nation-building activities and for the import of capital goods?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: It is not possible to answer that question.