

toral rolls in Urdu where Urdu speaking people are found?

[English]

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGLAM: Sir, I have already in the answer, very specifically pointed out that wherever the request is made and where the percentage of the Urdu speaking population is twenty per cent of the total population, in such cases, definitely it would be printed.

Shifting of Head Offices of Tea Board.

*716. SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to shift the Head Offices of the Tea Board from Calcutta;

(b) if so, the reasons therefore;

(c) whether the Government have received any representation in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government thereon ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (e). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

(a) to (e). Representations have been received from time to time suggesting shifting of the Tea Board's headquarters from Calcutta to Assam owing to the State's predominant position in the production of tea. However, Calcutta being a major commercial centre and one of the major Indian Ports has remained the centre of export activity in tea. The headquarters of a number of exporting and producing firms are located at Calcutta. Moreover, most of the tea buying for overseas markets is done at Calcutta auctions. Thus, due to the strategic position of

Calcutta and other infrastructural facilities available there, it has not been found possible to shift the headquarters of the Tea Board from Calcutta to Assam.

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH: Sir, this apprehension about the shifting of the headquarters of the Tea Board was there widely because of certain trends of this Department to shift various activities of the Tea Board from Calcutta to other places from time to time. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether certain sections of the functioning of this Board have been shifted from Calcutta during the last few years. If so, which are all those activities which have been shifted, how many people have been shifted from there and what are the reasons. As the centralised functioning was doing well, what was the reason for shifting those activities from Calcutta to other places?

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: No activity of the Tea Board has been shifted as such from Calcutta to any other place. And I have categorically stated in the answer and allayed the apprehensions expressed to me in Calcutta that there is no proposal what so ever to shift the headquarters of the Tea Board from Calcutta to any other place. What has happened is that we have set up regional offices in Gauhati and Coonoor. These regional offices are now headed by Chief Regional Executives to whom powers have been delegated so that many of the problems of the small growers can be dealt with at a de-centralised level. No activity as such of the Tea Board has been shifted out of Calcutta.

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH: I am told that seven activities like tea plantation scheme, tea unit finance, tea machinery and irrigation equipment, etc. have already been shifted. But the hon. Minister says that it has not been done. Any way, I asked the question: whether the Government have received any representation in this regard to stop that shifting. And the reply is different. It says that the representations that have been received are in favour of shifting. Then I asked: What is the action Government has taken on that?

And finally the reply is that it has not been found possible to shift the headquarters of Tea Board from Calcutta. That means a n attempt has been made.....

MR. SPEAKER: You are just confusing the issue. Please ask the question.

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH: Sir, in the reply it has been said that it has not been found possible to shift the headquarters. It means that an attempt has been made. That is the apprehension.

MR. SPEAKER: Not like this.

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SHRI BJOY KRISHNA HANDIQUÉ: Shifting of the Head Office of the Tea Board to a major tea producing state is the natural demand of the people of that state. However, since the hon. Minister expressed his inability to do so, due to various reasons, will the hon. Minister, as an alternative, through a poor alternative, consider strengthening the regional offices at Guwahati and Coonoor by giving them more responsibility and more power to take decisions on urgent matters since these offices are at the moment a mere apology for the regional offices?

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: I think, all hon. Members will welcome decentralisation of powers so that the needs of the growers can be dealt with at a decentralised level if the Tea Board offices are closer to the tea estates. What we have done is to set up a Chief Regional Executive's office in Guwahati. If the hon. Member says that this is an apology for decentralised functions, I am willing to look into it. In addition to the decentralised powers, if more powers are to be given to these offices to deal with the grievances, problems and developmental activities of the region we will certainly look into them.

MR. SPEAKER: Without shifting?

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: I am not shifting the headquarters. That is what I have said.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: Is it a fact that already seven departments have been shifted? Will the Minister assure the House that all the activities that were previously being undertaken by the Head Offices will be restored to it?

MR. SPEAKER: This is not allowed. He has already answered that.

(Interruptions)...

MR. SPEAKER: The question has already been answered in categorical terms and you are repeating it.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: This is just carrying the cue again. When the minister says in specific terms on the floor of the House that he is not shifting it, you are depending on the cue.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Some of the departments have already been transferred....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: It is unnecessary.

40-44 (Interruptions)..

[Translation]

Ban on Export of Frogs, Rabbits and Monkeys

*718. SHRIVILASRAO NAGNATHRAO GUNDEWAR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a ban in the export of frogs, rabbits, monkeys and other animals of this kind;

(b) if so, since when;

(c) whether there is any proposal to lift the ban imposed on the export of these animals;

(d) if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor;