

agreement between India and Pakistan for importing long staple cotton because that would save our foreign exchange to a considerable extent, and also freight charges?

SHRI N. KANUNGO: I am not sure whether it will save our foreign exchange, but we are always attempting to negotiate with Pakistan to arrange exports.

AIRSTRIPS IN THE NORTH EAST FRONTIER AGENCY

*180. SHRI M. VALIULLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) how many airstrips are there at present in the North East Frontier Agency;

(b) whether any new airstrips are likely to be constructed there; and

(c) what is the amount spent on the maintenance of the existing airstrips during the year 1954-55?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ANIL K. CHANDA): (a) There are at present five airstrips in the North East Frontier Agency.

(b) Yes. It is proposed to increase the number of airstrips so that eventually most of the administrative centres are linked by air. Three siting boards were set up early this year to survey sites for new airstrips but they approved of only 4 sites. It is proposed to reassemble the siting boards during the coming winter and continue our efforts to find suitable sites.

(c) Information regarding the amount spent on the maintenance of the existing airstrips during 1954-55 is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

SHRI M. VALIULLA: Are all these airstrips permanent or temporary?

SHRI ANIL K. CHANDA: No, Sir. Only the airstrip at Pasighat is a

regular aerodrome, and the others are fair-weather airstrips.

SHRI M. VALIULLA: There was a proposal last year to construct eight airstrips. Now I am told that only about three are going to be constructed.

SHRI ANIL K. CHANDA: No, Sir. As I indicated, we have been looking for some suitable sites, and up till now only three sites have been chosen. But during this winter, after the rains are over, we shall again continue our efforts.

SHRI N. D. M. PRASADARAO: What is the purpose of having these eight airstrips?

SHRI ANIL K. CHANDA: Well, obviously to put the planes down there whenever needed.

NATIONAL BUILDINGS ORGANISATION

*181. SHRI M. VALIULLA: Will the Minister for WORKS, HOUSING AND SUPPLY be pleased to state:

(a) the progress made so far by the National Buildings Organisation; and

(b) the expenditure so far incurred on it?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS, HOUSING AND SUPPLY (SARDAR SWARAN SINGH): (a) and (b). A statement is laid on the Table of the the Sabha.

STATEMENT

(a) Though all the technical staff required by the National Buildings Organisation is not yet in position, the Organisation has undertaken the preparation of Model Building Bye-laws and of Type-designs for houses for various income groups. It has also collected literature from various sources relating to research on building materials and, amongst the more important subjects which it is investigating today are the use of non-erodible plaster on mud masonry and the