

PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

NOT TO BE PUBLISHED BEFORE SEPTEMBER 29, 1956.

NEW CUSTOM HOUSE AT COCHIN

SHRI A.C. GUHA TO OPEN

Ernakulam, September 28, 1956.

The new Administrative Office of the Cochin Customs Department will be formally opened tomorrow by Shri Arun Chandra Guha, Union Minister for Revenue and Defence Expenditure.

The Office is situated at the northern end of Willingdon Island overlooking Ernakulam Town on the east and Port of Cochin on the West across the blue lagoons. Appropriately enough this new building will be named "Asulk Griha" as it stands astride the Cochin Port and its Administrative Offices, adding a new vignette to the fast changing topography of Willingdon Island.

The Customs Department at the Cochin Port has been in existence for over 9 decades. Before 1947 the centre of activity of the Customs was on the Fort Cochin side of the Mattancheri Channel and the department was housed successively in two small buildings which have since been transferred to the Port Administration. With the gradual development of the Port of Cochin, Willingdon Island has come to be the hub of activity of the Port and consequently the Customs Department shifted its Administrative Offices from Fort Cochin to Willingdon Island in 1947. In August 1952 the old Custom House and the Fort Cochin Custom House buildings were sold to the Port Administration and 3.1 acres of land belonging to the Customs Department at Fort Cochin were exchanged with four acres of land on Willingdon Island with the Port Authorities. This new building has been constructed on 1.7 acres of land thus exchanged.

"Asulk Griha" has a strong room inside the Cash Section with special safety arrangements for keeping cash and valuables. Sufficient floor area has been allotted for the Customs Laboratory which will soon be equipped with all necessary modern fittings and appurtenances. The plinth area of the building, the estimated cost of which is about Rs. 6,13,000 is approximately 24,000 square feet.

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