

LOK SABHA DEBATES

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LOK SABHA

Tuesday, 20th August, 1957.

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock.

[Mr. SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Gold Smuggling

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*968. { Shri Wodeyar:
Pandit D. N. Tiwary:
Dr. Ram Subhag Singh:
Shri M. C. Jain:
Shrimati Tarkeshwari
Sinha:
Shri Raghunath Singh:
Shri Ganpati Ram:
Shri Tanti:
Shri Supakar:

Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an international gang has been smuggling gold into India;

(b) if so, whether any of its members have been arrested;

(c) whether Government have investigated into the source of foreign exchange of the smugglers;

(d) whether there was some connivance by the custom officials on duty; and

(e) if so, the action taken against them?

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The Deputy Minister of Finance (Shri B. R. Bhagat): (a) to (c). It is true that substantial seizures of gold and Indian currency have been made in various parts of the country in the last few months and certain persons have been arrested in that connection. These cases are still under investigation and some persons are on trial before courts of law. It is not possible to state with any degree of precision, especially at this stage, as to whether an international gang has in fact been operating.

(d) and (e). Three cases of alleged connivance by customs officials have been reported since 1956 and they are being investigated.

Shri Wodeyar: May I know whether the Government knows the names of the countries from where gold is smuggled into India?

Shri B. R. Bhagat: They are the adjoining countries.

Shri Wodeyar: In view of the fact that smuggled gold was discovered in Malabar, Saurashtra and Punjab, does it mean that smugglers operate in all the States in India?

Shri B. R. Bhagat: We have a very large border line and they operate wherever they find it convenient to operate.

Shri Supakar: May I know the total value of gold that was smuggled and the principal places in which this smuggling is conducted?

Shri B. R. Bhagat: Does the hon. Member want the figures for 1957?

Shri Supakar: I want the figures for the last one year.

Shri B. R. Bhagat: In 1956, for the whole year, the value of gold and currency smuggled in the country and detected was Rs 59 lakhs and odd. In 1957, up to June, it is Rs. 47,37,373 detected.

Shri Surendranath Dwivedy: May I know whether it has come to the notice of the Government that some public charges were made against the son of the Chief Minister of Punjab that he is the leader of a gang of smugglers?

The Minister of Finance (Shri T. T. Krishnamachari): I would ask for the indulgence of the Chair. I cannot express an opinion about what is mentioned in papers, certainly not about a person who is not in a position to defend himself here.

Shri Surendranath Dwivedy rose.

Mr. Speaker: The hon Member will kindly hear me. With respect to such very serious allegations about important men, I would like that, before any question is put, hon. Members should ascertain facts. Of course, papers give information, that is one source. Hon Members may also get letters. Of course, I am not going to shut out such questions, because this is a forum for all legitimate grievances to be redressed. But when once a charge is made publicly, whether it is proved or not, whether it is true or not, it has an effect which cannot be undone. So, I would urge upon hon Members that before such very serious allegations are made they can write to the Minister and try to find out what exactly is the position. If he is not satisfied, he can write to me, I will look into it and if necessary, I will allow it to be brought before the House. When a supplementary question is asked on a very serious matter, what will happen? There are 14 Assemblies and 8 Councils in the country. If any hon. Member in some other Assembly has some contacts, that man is also involved in it. Do you mean to say, I will keep quiet? I will say, "no, no; it is wrong". It is my duty to see that no allegations are

made, unless they are supported by very authentic evidence, in which case I will myself allow it, if it is on a matter within our jurisdiction.

Shri Surendranath Dwivedy: In this case, a statement has already been made in the Press by a responsible public man. What I wanted to know was, whether the Government of India has taken notice of this very serious allegation in the Press. He said that smuggling has taken place in Punjab...

Mr. Speaker: He said so already; even before that, the hon. Member might have written to the hon. Minister.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: It has gained enormous publicity. One paper says, "let him charge me for defamation".

Shri Surendranath Dwivedy: There is an agitation going on all over the Punjab. The person concerned has challenged the Chief Ministers' son to go to the Court. He has demanded enquiry by High Court Judges. Has this come to Governments' notice and have they made enquiries?

Mr. Speaker: The hon Minister.

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: The point is this. So far as any information that we have in our possession goes, all these statements are not true. That is all that I can say. I can say nothing more about what is happening. If some member in a legislative assembly challenges another member and he goes to the court, I should not be compelled to become *particeps criminis* in the proceedings. I wish to be left out of all these wrangles.

Mr. Speaker: If a matter, which is within the jurisdiction of this House, has been agitated in the newspapers and it appears in such bold headlines, the House is entitled to ask whether it has come to the notice of the Government; not in every ordinary matter, but in serious matters which have appeared in very bold headlines in the papers, one can probably say, "it is true" or "no, it is wrong".

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: I cannot make any statement in regard to facts which are unknown to me. So far as my officials are concerned, according

to the reports sent to me, I feel there is no justification for these allegations made. That is all I can say.

Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha: Is it a fact that most of the imported gold that comes from the Persian Gulf is unloaded in the small islands round about this country, like Chak, Nuru, Ajad, etc and then gold is brought to Salia and then to Jamnagar? May be able to detect and punish the offender. I also know how many ships Government had to check for smuggling, because loading and unloading is always done at these islands?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: I require notice

जी नं० ला० द्विबेरी अभी माननीय मंत्री जो की ओर से बताया गया है कि हमारे देश की बहुत लम्बी सीमा है। क्या इसका यह मतलब है कि हम इस स्मगलिंग को इसी तरह से चलन दें, यदि नहीं, तो वे कौन से विशेष प्रयत्न हैं जो कि सरकार द्वारा सीमा पर स्मगलिंग को रोकने के लिये किए जा रहे हैं ?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: It is realised that we do not want to allow crimes to be committed and therefore, we have the Indian Penal Code and the police to enforce it. Crimes are nevertheless committed and they are in most cases. Similarly, in regard to smuggling, we have a large borderline and we cannot have men posted all along for hundreds of miles, it is not possible. In fact, we are spending an enormous amount of money for that purpose and to the extent it is possible to check smuggling, we are trying to do it. It is a question of getting information and I think, of late, they have been vigilant about it. But if one were to ask whether we are able to prevent smuggling completely, I will answer it by another question, if any Government has been able to put down crimes completely.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to make a suggestion seriously. I find that many important matters come in,

which cannot be disposed of in the Question Hour. The Finance Ministry Demands are coming up, hon. Members may divide themselves into groups and will decide who should speak on gold smuggling and who should speak on the other points. This is a matter of such great importance. If further elucidation is necessary, I will give an opportunity. Amongst hon. Members, the whole subject may be divided, as to who should speak on this or that point, instead of the same point being repeated by all hon. Members. I am making a suggestion for the consideration of hon. Members.

अनाथ और भावारा बच्चे

*६६६. श्री नं० ला० द्विबेरी क्या शिक्षा और वैज्ञानिक गवेषणा मंत्री यह बन ने की कृपा करके कि राज्यों और सच क्षेत्रों में अनाथ और भावारा बच्चों को शिक्षा तथा भरण-पोषण की सुविधाये देने के लिये केन्द्रीय सरकार ने क्या कार्यवाही की है अथवा करन का विचार है ?

शिक्षा और वैज्ञानिक गवेषणा मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (डा० का० ला० भीमाली) : भारत सरकार अनाथ और भावारा बच्चों की शिक्षा तथा उनके भरण-पोषण के लिए सहायता कर रही है। यह सहायता केन्द्रीय समाज कल्याण बोर्ड की मार्फत अनुदान देकर की जा रही है। स्त्री और बाल संस्था (लाइसेंस) अधिनियम १९५६ के अधीन नियम बनाते समय भारत सरकार इस बात की वाछनीयता पर विचार कर रही है कि प्राथी संस्थाएं आवश्यक रूप से शिक्षा और भरण-पोषण क पर्याप्त स्तर कायम रखें।

Some Hon. Members: English answer

Dr. K. L. Shrimall: The Government of India are assisting in the education and maintenance of orphans and unattached children through the grants given by the Central Social Welfare