

released on payment of penalty amounting to Rs. 22.67 lakhs.

As regards M/s. Assam Roller Mills and M/s. Premier Vegetables Products also referred to in the news-item, no case has so far been reported to the ITC Organisation.

(c) According to the information available, no official of the Ministry of Commerce is involved.

(d) Customs have already imposed a fine of Rs. 2267,000/- on the importer. Besides proceedings against the importer under the Imports (Control) Order for consequential penal action, are in hand.

(e) The matter is already under investigation by the ITC authorities.

### राष्ट्रीयकृत बैंकों में उर्कतों

873. श्री राम सागर :  
श्री राम मरेश कुशाहा :

क्या उप प्रभाव मंत्री तथा वित्त मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) प्रमैल, 1978 से अब तक देश के विभिन्न प्रत्येक राष्ट्रीयकृत बैंकों से कितनी कितनी धन राशि की चोरी हुई; प्रश्नवाची उनमें उर्कती पड़ी ,

(ख) कितने मामलों के सुराग मिले हैं और कितने मामलों में बैंक क कर्मचारियों का हाथ होना पाया गया ;

(ग) दोषी व्यक्तियों के विरुद्ध क्या कार्यवाही की गई है ; और

(घ) भविष्य में इन चोरियों की रोकथाम के लिये सरकार का क्या प्रभावी कार्यवाही करने का विचार है ?

वित्त मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री सुनिकार कुशाहा) : (क) से (घ). यथा सम्भव सूचना इकट्ठी की जा रही है और मदन के पदल पर रख दी जाएगी ।

### Steps to prevent rise in prices of critical Commodities

874. SHRI D. D. DESAI : Will the DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that increase in railway freight, postal rates and prices of steel, aluminium and cement have contributed substantially to the inflationary trend ;

(b) if so, what steps it is taking to prevent rise in prices of critical commodities; and

(c) whether there is any proposal to ensure that the increased cost of infra-structural facilities owned by Government are met from their own resources ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL) : (a) The Wholesale Price Index (1970-71=100) has risen by 5.9 per cent between March 31, 1979 and June 23, 1979. The contribution of steel, aluminium and cement to this rise has been about one-ninth. It is not possible to quantify the impact of an increase in the cost of services like railway freights, etc.

(b) It is Government's endeavour to ensure that the prices of critical inputs are kept as low as possible and it permits increases only when they become inevitable. Even then the increases are sought to be kept to the minimum justified by rise in costs of production and the needs of development of the particular industry.

(c) While Government do expect public sector undertakings to rely on their own resources and not to depend on the Budget for support, it is not possible for this to be achieved in all cases because of the social responsibilities which attach to their operations

### Losses to Public Sector Banks

875. SHRI D. D. DESAI will the DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) Whether Government has seen a news-item in the Financial Express dated June 2 where it was stated that public sector banks may incur losses if they are asked to continue to lend to sick industries and also expand rural branches.

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto ;

(c) whether rural branches of public sector banks are being heavily ; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI ZULFIQUARULLAH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Banks have been advised to nurse sick units which are considered potentially viable. Though such nursing of advances to sick units does put a strain on bank's profits, these advances are granted on several considerations such as achieving social objectives, recovery of money already advanced by undertaking nursing