

Import of Newsprint and Buffer Stock

3429. SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJ-PAYEE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the intended newsprint imports for October, November, December 1980 and January 1981 as announced by the State Trading Corporation and also the actual imports;

(b) whether it is a fact that the State Trading Corporation had proposed a buffer stock of 30,000 tonnes, if so, how much has been its buffer stock during each of the last five months; and

(c) consequences of the State Trading Corporation's performance on the economy of newspapers in general and on the economy of small newspapers in particular?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KHURSHED ALAM KHAN): (a) Proposed to be imported at per demand received by STC in the beginning of the year.

Actual Imports

October, 1980	. 26000 MT 24819 MT
November, 1980	. 26000 MT 25216 MT
December, 1980	. 26000 MT 21674 MT
January, 1981	. 26000 MT 23898 MT

(b) The Government have authorised holding of buffer stock of 30,000 MT. The buffer stock level, including under clearance, during the last five months, is as under :

September, 1980	. 18126 MT
October, 1980	. 19989 MT
November, 1980	. 18482 MT
December, 1980	. 16912 MT
January, 1981	. 13534 MT

The lower than prescribed buffer stock level is due to late arrival of

ships on account of strikes in the supplier countries and unforeseen berthing delays.

(c) Despite shortfall in arrivals in particular months, the requirements of newspapers, including those of small newspapers, have, by and large, been met out of actual imports and the buffer stock. In case of sales ex-buffer, State Governments levy sales tax. Some State Governments have, however, already exempted newsprint from sales tax.

Smuggling of Narcotics

3430. SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any scheme has been formulated to check smuggling of narcotics; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SAWAI SINGH SISODIA): (a) and (b). Although there is no separate scheme to check smuggling of narcotic drugs, the preventive and intelligence machinery of the Customs department has been strengthened with reference to the areas vulnerable to smuggling and the commodities sensitive to smuggling including narcotic drugs. The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence also maintain close liaison with other enforcement agencies, namely, the Narcotics Commissioner of India and the Police authorities to prevent trafficking in narcotic drugs.

Setting up of Modern Sponge Iron Plant Near Maharashtra

3431. SHRI B. V. DESAI: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry is seriously proposing to set up a modern sponge iron plant near Maharashtra based on gas from the Bombay High;

(b) if so, whether the plant would be

able to utilise the pellets produced from Kudremukh;

(c) if so, whether the Ministry has approached the Ministry of Petroleum and Chemicals for the gas from the plant; and

(d) whether the Planning Commission has also approved this proposal?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL, AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) An application from the State Industrial & Investment Corporation of Maharashtra for the issue of a Letter of Intent for setting up a Sponge Iron Plant in Maharashtra is under consideration.

(b) No such proposal is contained in the application.

(c) Ministry of Petroleum have intimated the Department of Steel that gas would be available for the production of 4 to 5 lakh tonnes of sponge iron per annum.

(d) The best site for locating such a plant on techno-economic considerations is under consideration of the Planning Commission.

Gold Smuggling

3432. **SHRI RAJESH KUMAR SINGH:**
SHRI RAJNATH SONKAR SHASTRI:

1979			1980		
Number of cases detected	Approximate quantity (in Kgs.)	Approximate value (Rs. in lakhs)	Number of cases detected	Approximate Quantity (in Kgs.)	Approximate value (Rs. lakhs)
7	0.66	0.59	24	33.10	49.32

(d) The preventive and intelligence machinery of the Customs department have been strengthened and the Customs authorities alerted to prevent any attempts at smuggling of gold.

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that, of late smuggling of gold outside the country has been on the increasing;

(b) if so, the number of cases and the quantity of gold (with value) seized at the various exit points in the country by the end of 1980 as compared to the quantity of gold (with value) seized during the year 1979;

(c) the estimated quantity (with value) of gold which remained undetected and was smuggled out of India; and

(d) the measures taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SAWAI SINGH SISODIA): (a) No, Sir. Reports received by Government do not show that presently gold is being smuggled out of the country.

(b) and (c). There is no authoritative estimate of the quantity and value of gold which was smuggled out of India during 1979 and 1980. The number of cases, and the quantity and value of gold (including gold jewellery) seized by the Customs authorities while being attempted to be smuggled out of India during 1979 and 1980 is given below:—

Foreigners not allowed to enter Historical Temples in South India..

3433. **SHRI R. N. RAKESH:** Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state: