

6. Torrance & Sons Ltd., Madras.

7. Weedel (India) Ltd., Calcutta.

Racket in Demand Draft

4530. SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that a big racket in demand draft has been unearthed by the Income-tax Department in Bombay recently ;

(b) if so, the details thereof ;

(c) the number of Demand drafts rackets which have come to the notice of Government during the year 1983-84 uptill now and the total amount involved ; and

(d) the steps Government propose to take to bring an end to the activities of such rackets throughout the country ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S. M. KRISHNA) : (a) and (b) Income-tax Department conducted searches at Bombay on 13.2.84 in the case of 15 shroffs discounting drafts suspected to represent unaccounted transactions and seized prima facie unaccounted cash and bank draft of Rs. 12.26 lakhs approximately. Prohibitory orders have been issued on Bank accounts and Fixed Deposits freezing balances of Rs. 8.6 lakhs approximately. Two bank lockers have been sealed.

(c) During the year 1983-84 similar searches were conducted on 25.7.83 and cash/bank drafts of Rs. 32.05 lakhs were seized and bank balances of Rs. 18.49 lakhs approximately were frozen.

(d) It is proposed to carry on such searches periodically to mop up the drafts. This will have a deterrent effect on such activities.

Ban on Export of Silver

4531. SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is a ban on the export of silver ;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that the ban on silver export was ineffective during the year 1983-84 ;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor ;

(d) the total quantity of silver exported to foreign countries during the year 1983-84 ; and

(e) the steps being taken to implement the ban and to stop the illegal consignment of silver ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SUPPLY (SHRI NIHAR RANJAN LASKAR) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Export of silver bullion, silver sheets and plates which have not undergone any process of manufacture subsequent to rolling are banned for export from February, 1979.

(b) to (e) No commercial export of silver has been allowed in relaxation of the ban. Government is aware that silver is an item which can be smuggled out of the country. The activity of anti-social element involved in smuggling is kept under constant review by the Government and appropriate anti-smuggling measures are taken in close coordination with the concerned Central and State Government authorities. The preventive and intelligence machinery of the Customs Department has been reinforced in the vulnerable areas in terms of manpower equipment.