

Year	No. of cases unearthed.	Value of foreign exchange seized.
1995	79	Rs. 2.17 crores
1996	52	Rs. 5.46 "
1997	6	Rs. 0.23 "

(Upto Feb.. 1997)

(d) The Enforcement Directorate keeps a regular vigil on the activities of foreign exchange racketeers. Actions as envisaged in the statutes are taken as and when any such case comes to the notice of the Directorate.

Import of Newsprint

3143. DR. MAHADEEPAK SINGH SHAKYA:
SHRI SURENDRA YADAV:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether large quantity of newsprint was imported during 1996-97;

(b) If so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is resulted in surplus stock of foreign newsprint in the country and it has also affected the production of domestic newsprint;

(d) if so, the reasons for such imports;

(e) whether the Government have investigated the matter;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor and the remedial steps taken by the Government to save the domestic industry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) to (g) Import of Newsprint had been permitted freely since 01.05.1995 without any restriction. Import of newsprint being free, it would be difficult to confirm that imports have resulted in surplus stock of foreign newsprint in the country affecting production of domestic newsprint.

However, keeping in view the interests of domestic newsprint industries, newsprint has since been restricted for import by Actual Users only since 29.01.1997.

[English]

Jammu B-2 City

3144. SHRI GULAM MOHD. MIR MAGANI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have received any proposal from the State Government of Jammu and

Kashmir regarding declaration of Jammu City as B-2 city; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) and (b) Representations have been received to upgrade Jammu City from 'C' Class to 'B-2' Class for the purposes of House Rent Allowance. According to the existing policy, cities/towns are classified for grant of House Rent Allowance on the basis of their population as reflected in the decennial Census. A city having a population above 4 lakhs but below 8 lakhs, within its municipal limits, is classified as 'B-2' class city for HRA. The current classification is based on 1991 Census. The Census could not, however, be conducted in Jammu due to unavoidable reasons. The Registrar General and Census Commissioner (RGI) has indicated the estimated population of Jammu City in 1991 to be 2.76 lakhs. Since this is below the bench mark for classification as 'B-2' class, Jammu is classified as 'C' class city for HRA.

The proposal under consideration is to upgrade Jammu city as 'B-2' class taking into account the migrant population.

[Translation]

Production of Opium

3145. DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the percentage of morphine is less in the opium which is produced in India;

(b) whether on account of this it is sold on low price in the international market which resulted loss to the Indian farmers; and

(c) If so, the measures being taken for the development of new seed and to save the crop from disease?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) The percentage of morphine in Indian opium, as confirmed by Chemical analysis reports, ranges between 9.5 to 11.5. It is not possible to compare the morphine content of such opium vis-a-vis other countries' produce since India is the sole producer of licit opium gum in the world.

(b) Indian opium commands a good price in the international market because of its morphine and other important alkaloid contents. There is no loss to the Indian farmers, on account of morphine content of opium, because payments to cultivators are made on the basis of consistency of opium i.e. percentage of water and other adulterants, if any, therein rather than the morphine content of opium.

(c) The Agricultural Colleges and Research Institutes in the three poppy growing states of Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan are engaged in conducting research to develop high Morphine content and disease resistant varieties of opium poppy seeds. The K.N.K.