

there is no proposal with the Government in this regard. I might add that no private company is dively to take on a labour force of 23,000. In organisations like National Building Construction Corporation and National Projects Construction Corporation they have their own arrangements. HSCL is the only Organisations which carries its work force and that work force is stationary. That is our problem. The losses of this company are about Rs. 100 crores. Part of due them are to the external works in Iraw, Libya and the Maldives. In the Maldives we made a modest profit. In Libya the loss is larger. Total of Libya and Iraq is about 29 crores. Except at Vizag there is no other plant being built. Therefore, the Hindustan Steel Works Construction Ltd. which was started in 1964 in order to stop private exploitation by the constructors having done its work upto 1977-78 is continuously running at a loss. We are trying to find out (a) how not to retrench any people; (b) how to ensure that unemployment does not increase; (c) how the company does not incur any losses. This is the dilemma and honestly there is no easy solution for this.

**SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSI :** I would like to know from the hon. Minister since I am very much involved in this company so far as labour is concerned whether it is a fact that a large number of the tribal workers from Bokaro, Dhanbad and Purlia in the initial stage who were in this Company ultimately become a large surplus force and they gave a concrete proposal for their absorption in Bokaro Steel Plant, in IISCO and any other steel plant so that within four years the work force will get stability to maintain economy in balanced shape. Whether it is a fact that inspite of this proposal being there it has not been looked into and carried out by the Ministry. If so, then will they look into it? That is my precise point.

**SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH :** About this proposal I shall certainly try and find out and satisfy the hon. Member. But I just want to mention that on account of surplus labour the Cumulative loss that the company has incurred is to the tune of Rs. 43 crores. The surplus manpower has been aggravating the financial problem of the company and since 1979-80 to 1984-85, this surplus has caused a loss of about Rs. 43 crores.

**MR. SPEAKER :** But you have recruited them and then you retrench them. Why should they be at first be employed and then retrenched?

**SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH :** They were employed because they were required for the civil construction and plants installation and have remained with company even since.

**MR. SPEAKER :** Next Question—267—Prof. Nirmala Kumari Shaktawat. She is not here. Next question—269.

[Translation]

**SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT :** Mr. speaker, Sir, what happened of my Question No. 268?

[English]

**MR. SPEAKER :** Your question No. 268 has been postponed to 19th. Next Question 269—Shri Braja Mohan Mohanty.

#### Seizure of Gold and Textile by Custom Authorities

\*269. **SHRI BRAJAMOHAN MOHANTY :** Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the total worth of sold and textile seized by customs during the preceding three years;

(b) whether the sources namely countries from which such smuggling is taking place have been identified;

(c) whether any preventive measures have been taken by Government in this regard; and

(d) how many smugglers have been arrested and prosecuted during the year 1984-85 and whether any of them is detained under National Security Act?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) :** (a) to (d). A statement is given blow.

#### Statement

(a) The value of gold and textiles seized by the Customs authorities during the years 1982, 1983, 1984 is furnished below :

(Value : Rs. in crores)

Year	Gold	Textiles
1982	12.88	7.61
1983	4.18	15.00
1984	10.24	18.39

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The drive smugglere has been intensified. The preventive and intelligence machinery of the Customs department has been reinforced in terms of manpower and equipment. In addition, appropriate anti-smuggling measures both short-term and long-term, are taken in close co-ordination with the concerned Central and State Government authorities. The trends of smuggling and seizures are kept under constant review for taking appropriate remedial action, as warranted.

(d) The number of persons arrested in connection with smuggling activities under the Customs Act, those prosecuted and these detained under COFEPOSA Act, 1974 (none can be detained under National Security Act for smuggling as such); during the period April, 1984 to March, 1985 are as under :

Number of persons arrested	Number of persons prosecuted	Number of persons detained under COFEPOSA Act, 1974
2375*	1396*	750

\*Figures are provisional.

**SHRI BRAJAMOHAN MOHANTY :** Sir, for part (b) of my question that is, whether the sources namely countries from which such smuggling is taking place have been identified, the answer given by the Minister in the Statement is : Yes, Sir. But the names of the countries have not been mentioned in the reply. Sir, apparently, Nepal, Dubai and Japan are the countries from which smuggling is taking place. So far as Nepal is concerned, recently, they have liberalised the personal baggage rules

under which they can carry goods worth of Rs. 20,000 into Nepal without any difficulty, although they are releasing only \$150 for a person. So, naturally, this is to encourage smuggling into India. That means Government is already encouraging smuggling. Dubai is also importing Polyester for the purpose smuggling the same into India. So also from Japan nylon is smuggled into India. My question is very clear. I want to know whether the Government is taking and step with those countries to prevent smuggling at the source. Recently, the Nepal Foreign Minister had made a press statement that trade and transit treaty with India is unequal, You have persuade the Government of Nepal and other countries to take preventive measures against smuggling. I think no Government can openly come forward and support smuggling. My point is that at least they should take steps to prevent smuggling. Otherwise, it is highly impossible for the Government of India to check smuggling. The hon. Finance Minister must have seen the statement of the Nepalese Foreign Minister very recently, in the month of July, that the trade agreement with the Government of India is not satisfactory and they are unequal treaty and that also indicate that they should be given more liberal scope for smuggling. My question is : what steps have been taken in this regard ?

**THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND COMMERCE (SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH) :** Sir, the hon. Member has said that the question whether the sources are known to the Government we answered 'Yes'. He did not ask the names of the countries. About beggare rules and they being the route of smuggling, baggage rules are open rules and if anybody violates the rules, we always take action. Whenever we come across that the baggage rules or any other rules are contravened, we take action. About trade and transit treaty, there is no smuggling provided there.

**SHRI BRAJAMOHAN MOHANTY :** My question has not been understood. My question was : whether you have taken up with the Governments of Nepal, Dubai and Japan to take appropriate steps to prevent smuggling from that end.

**SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH :** So far as Nepal is concerned, we are in dialogue with them and these things are

brought to their notice, whenever necessary. As regards other Governments, I have no information about Government to Government dialogue.

**SHRI BRAJAMOHAN MOHANTY :** My question was : How many smugglers have been arrested and prosecuted during the year 1984 and 1985, and whether any of them had been detained under the National Security Act ? Perhaps I was not understood. They say that the National Security Act is not applicable. Perhaps, that was the impression of the Finance Ministry. Persons who are smuggling arms and ammunition will not come within the purview of COFEPOSA, and National Security Act is the appropriate Act under which they can be detained, and that is why I put the question. Have the Government got information to say how many arm smugglers have been arrested, prosecuted and detailed. My impression is that COFEPOSA is not applicable in this case.

**SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH :** National Security Act is not applied to smugglers. I have got figures for COFEPOSA. In 1985, upto 27th July, 1985, 485 persons have been arrested. About arms smuggling, I do not have the date with me.

**SHRI VAKKOM PURUSHOTHAMAN :** There are different kinds of passengers bringing foreign goods into the country. One is the smugglers, who bring good for sale and for making money, but there are other type of passengers, who work abroad, especially as coolies. They also bring some textiles for their families, two-in-one or three-in-one transisters for their families. Will the Government be kind enough to give them some concessions by raising the limit or something of that type for them ? From the Gulf countries, we earn about Rs. 500 crores worth of foreign exchange. Will the Government consider giving some concessions to this type people ?

**SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH :** This problem has been posed by people returning from Gulf countries. At this moment, I can only take note of the suggestion.

[*Translation*]

**SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR :** Is it a fact that textiles, watches and costly electronic goods worth crores of rupees seized by

the customs authorities are lying in godowns like rubbish and goods worth crores of rupees get damaged due to non-availability of proper godowns and adequate staff to man them ? Is the Department also aware that there is a racket in which the officials and the traders are involved, for selling goods in good condition after showing the as damaged and if so, the steps taken by the Government to check it ?

**SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH :** I cannot say that such a practice is common, but at the same time I cannot deny it totally. Action is taken whenever such things come to our notice.

**SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR :** I have asked about the condition of the godowns ?

**SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH :** I am not in a position to tell immediately about the condition of all the godowns where smuggled goods are stored, but as far as possible, they are well maintained.

**SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR :** These goods worth crores of rupees fetch revenue to the Government.

**SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH :** I can reply to anything relevant to the main question.

**SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR :** You should pay a visit to these godowns once.

[*English*]

#### **Underground Gas and fire at Sanctoria village in Asansol**

\*270. **SHRI PURNA CHANDRA MALIK :** Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether underground gas and fire came out at Sanctoria village in Asansol;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken to stop it ?

**THE MINISTER OF STEEL, MINES AND COAL (SHRI VASANT SATHE) :** (a) and (b). Underground fires from shallow abandoned coal Mines in areas near Sanctoria village and the neighbouring Bastees have been noticed since, 1946. Sometimes, whenever subsidence takes place and cracks