

exhibitions organised by the HSEC which is a public sector undertaking, the sale of gold jewellery is also allowed. And then we have also organised a scheme where the gold jewellery against gold supplied by the foreign buyer is also allowed. Like that there are a few other schemes and of late, we have also decided to set up jewellery complexes in Jaipur, Bombay, Madras, Calcutta and New Delhi.

SHRI A.J.V.B. MAHESWARA RAO : The Indian artisans are known the world over for their craftsmanship, but they are very poor. Is Government taking steps to improve their lot so that they can improve their skill ?

SHRI P.A. SANGMA : I think gold jewellery is certainly in the small scale sector and a lot of people are employed in this industry and the efforts that we are making and the steps we have taken to promote gold jewellery export will certainly help those artisans.

(Interruptions)

SHRI G.G. SWELL : I would like to know, Sir, whether Indian-cut diamonds constitute a most important export of jewellery abroad and is a good market.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Mostly to Burma, I think.

SHRI G.G. SWELL : No, no, Europe—U.S.A.

I would like to know whether the Minister has included in his answer the export of diamonds, and if so how much of diamonds was exported last year, whether the raid has affected this trade and what is the earning from diamonds last year and this year.

SHRI P.A. SANGMA : Sir, the figure which I have furnished does not include the export figure of diamonds. In fact, diamond is our largest single jewellery item where we earned foreign exchange. In 1983-84 our export of

diamond was Rs. 1,188.89 crores and in 1984-85, it was Rs. 1,172.10 crores.

(Interruptions)

SHRI G.G. SWELL : He has not answered my question—whether the raids have affected the trade, whether the export of diamond has fallen. That my question, Sir.

SHRI P.A. SANGMA : Sir, there has been a slight fall, of course, compared to 1983-1984 and 1985. But it is quite a marginal one.

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI : Has it come to the notice of the Government that large scale smuggling of these ornaments is going on from our country and if so, what steps have been taken to check it?

SHRI P.A. SANGMA : I think it is the duty of the Finance Ministry to answer this question.

(Interruptions)

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : He only deals with exports, Sir, not in smuggling.

Declaration of Agardanda in Maharashtra as a Customs Port for Ship-Breaking

*456. **SHRI S.G. GHOLAP :** Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government of Maharashtra have requested for declaration of Agardanda as the customs port for ship-breaking;

(b) whether Government are aware that ship-breaking work is held up for declaration of the port as a customs port;

(c) if so, the reasons why the matter is being delayed; and

(d) when Agardanda is likely to be declared as the customs port for ship-breaking?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF STEEL (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH) : (a) and (b). Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d). It has not been possible to declare Port of Agardenda as a Customs Port for ship-breaking due to non-availability of adequate customs-facilities.

SHRI S.G. GHOLAP : I would like to know what are the requirements of the customs facilities required and who has to create the facilities.

SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH : The Department of Revenue under the Ministry of Finance is the appropriate authority for declaring a port as customs port. The Ministry of Steel has recommended to the Department of Revenue that Agardenda should be declared a port for the purpose of ship-breaking and the Maharashtra Government had made a similar request to the Department of Revenue. I hope my distinguished colleagues on my right will agree to this proposal.

SHRI S.G. GHOLAP : This question was put to the Finance Department. Now, the reply is given by the Steel and Mines Department. This Department has given two ships for ship-breaking purpose to the Development Corporation of Kokan and they had to pay heavy interest on these investments. At present there is no ship-breaking allowed in Maharashtra in any port. Now, as this new port is not coming up, I would like to know whether the Government would allow ship-breaking in Bombay port.

SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH : I am aware of the difficulty that the Hon. Member has mentioned. That is why we on our part made a proposal. But the Ministry of Finance in their wisdom ... (*Interruption*) If you want the Minister of Finance to take up this question at this stage, I will be very happy to sit down...

AN HON. MEMBER : It should be transferred to Finance.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : It was a voluntary effort on his part. The question is : Who will take it up? I have no objection, if you want to take up this question.

SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH : We are in touch with the Ministry of Finance and we have made a suggestion to them... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : You are already touching him.

SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH : The relationship here is fraternal. What I am suggesting is this. We have asked the Ministry of Finance to look at the proposals as to whether the customs officials from Bombay can be deputed to Agardanda and clear ships. They are doing so in the case of Mangalore and other places in Karnataka. So, I hope, this will be resolved between the two Ministries.

Post of Chairman of Central Silk Board

*457 SHRI H.N. NANJE GOWDA : Will the Minister of SUPPLY AND TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Chairman's post in the Central Silk Board is lying vacant since long;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the performance of the Board was comparatively better when it was headed by a non-official who had knowledge about the silk industry;

(c) when the said post will be filled up; and

(d) whether Government propose to consider appointing a non-official as Chairman of the Silk Board in the interest of the silk industry?