

assure the hon. Member that the interpretation regarding retrospective effect was the point of dispute. There have been some in favour saying that we can give retrospective effect, while the Supreme Court was not of that view. So, it was an honest difference of opinion.

श्री उपसेन : अध्यक्ष महोदय, माननीय मंत्री जी ने जो उत्तर दिया उससे हम लोगों को मालूम हुआ कि सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने जो प्रादेश दिया था उसका कसई लोगों ने गलत अर्थ लगाया और अपने म्वाब्ध में उन्होंने गलत कार्यवाही की। जिन्होंने यह गलत कार्यवाही की, क्या उनके खिलाफ कोई कार्यवाही की गयी ?

श्री भोलेन शारिया : ऐसी बात नहीं है कि जानबूझ कर गलत कार्यवाही की। यह मामला सुप्रीम कोर्ट में गया था और सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने जो प्रादेश दिया उसके अनुसार पूरी कार्यवाही की गयी।

Talk with the Commerce and Industries Minister of Mauritius

*544. SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY. Will the Minister of COMMERCE, CIVIL SUPPLIES AND CO-OPERATION be pleased to state

(a) whether the Commerce and Industries Minister of Mauritius held talks in New Delhi during the 2nd week of January, 1978, and

(b) if so, the details thereof and conclusions drawn?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION (SHRI ARIF BEG): (a) and (b). Hon. Mr. D. Basant Rai, Minister of Commerce and Industry, Government of Mauritius visited New Delhi from 5th to 9th January 1978. During his stay in New Delhi, he called on the Minister for External Affairs, Minister for Commerce, Civil Supplies and Cooperation, Minister for Industry,

Education Minister and Minister for Information & Broadcasting. Some of these meetings were in the nature of courtesy calls only. A general review was made of Indo-Mauritian trade and other matters of mutual interest to Mauritius and India.

SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY: I do not think he has said anything concrete, whether any trade agreement was considered or discussed with him, or simply the whole thing ended in courtesy calls and entertainment.

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND CO-OPERATION (SHRI MOHAN DHARIA): The hon. House may be aware that there is already an agreement of economic, technical and cultural co-operation between the Government of India and the Government of Mauritius. That agreement is very much there. Whenever discussions take place, naturally one of the aspects of the discussion is how we can implement these agreements. Naturally, that discussion was very much there.

SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY: Can he cite one instance as far as exports and imports are concerned?

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA: The hon. Minister of External Affairs who visited Mauritius, has already made a detailed statement on the floor of the House wherein he has narrated all these steps.

Coverage of Deficit in Orissa

*546. SHRI SARAT KAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state

(a) whether it is a fact that the Finance Minister of Orissa has said that he expected to cover the deficit of Rs. 12 crores and a total deficit of Rs. 46.78 crores including the opening deficit of Rs 34.78 crores; and

(b) whether the State Government of Orissa has sought special accommodation from the Government of India

to meet the remaining deficit of Rs. 34.78 crores, equivalent to the opening deficit of the year and if so, the reaction of Central Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI H. M. PATEL): (a) and (b). The Finance Minister of Orissa, in his budget speech on 3rd March, 1978 stated that he expected to cover the deficit of Rs. 12 crores out of the total deficit of Rs. 46.78 crores shown in the budget for 1978-79. He has sought special Central assistance to cover the remaining deficit of Rs. 34.78 crores equivalent to the opening deficit of the year.

The ways and means of meeting the gaps in resources for the States' Annual Plan 1978-79, including the opening deficits, will be considered during the course of the year, in consultation with the States and the Planning Commission.

SHRI SARAT KAR: Orissa is one of the poor States economically. 75 per cent of its population live below poverty line and there is regional imbalance. May I request the Central Government to react favourably to the demands of the Orissa Government so that the State can improve.

SHRI H. M. PATEL: The Central Government is always considerate to the regions which are in financial difficulties.

की राज बिलास पासवान : जो राज्य प्राथिक दृष्टि में पिछड़े हुए हैं, कमजोर हैं क्या उन राज्यों को भारत के वित्त मंत्री विशेष सहायता देने की व्यवस्था करेंगे, याद नहीं तो क्यों नहीं ?

SHRI H. M. PATEL: The hon. Member must be aware that there is a finance commission which is appointed every five years to try and assess the difficulties of all States particularly the backward ones and see what additional assistance they should be given from the Central Government.

Replacement of Sales Tax by Excise Duty

*552. **SHRI ANNASAHEB GOTKHINDE:** Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 1521 on the 3rd March, 1978 regarding decision on abolition of sales tax and state:

(a) the names of the States with which the concerned discussions were held,

(b) whether the State Governments ruled by Janata Party are also reluctant to accept the proposal to replace sales tax by excise duty; and

(c) the reaction to the said proposal of the State Governments ruled by Janata Party, separately?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI H. M. PATEL): (a) to (c). The question of replacement of sales tax by excise duty has been discussed with the Chief Ministers/Finance Ministers of almost all the States including the States ruled by the Janata Party. The Chief Ministers/Finance Ministers of States have generally shown lack of enthusiasm for abolition of sales tax. This is a matter which cannot be settled immediately and calls for continuing efforts in this direction.

SHRI ANNASAHEB GOTKHINDE: Sir, I seek your protection. I think this is one of the modern methods of giving evasive replies. Please see Question (b) and (c). I asked: "whether the State Governments ruled by Janata Party are also reluctant to accept the proposal to replace sales tax by excise duty". There is no reply to that: And Then Question (c) "the reaction to the said proposal of the State Governments ruled by Janata Party, separately." He has not replied this. So, I cannot put my supplementaries.

SHRI H. M. PATEL: I have given this reply. I may repeat for his benefit. I said: "...has been discussed