

SHRI K. MAYAHEVAR: What are the steps taken to collect the long pending arrears of income-tax from Chief Ministers, actors and others and to reduce inflation?

DR. SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY: Since when is Hema Malini inflated to reduce inflation?

SHRI K. MAYATHEVAR: He is a close friend. He knows better. Therefore, I want to know the steps that are taken by this Government to collect the long pending arrears of income-tax running into crores of rupees from big industrialists in this country who are cheating the Government and the people.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: So far as the realisation of arrears are concerned, we take all steps to recover the arrears... (*Interruptions*) including from Hema Malini.

MR. SPEAKER: They are much more interested in actresses.

SHRI SUNIL MAITRA: You mentioned 4,800 searches and seizures. Out of these 4,80 ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Now an actor from West Bengal...

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI SUNIL MAITRA: Out of these 4,800 searches and seizure, how many prosecutions were launched? Out of the prosecutions, how many convictions were made?

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Then number of raids is 4,282 and the number of prosecutions is 390. On an earlier occasion I explained why the number of prosecutions is less. As far as the number of convictions is concerned, I do not have any figures with me.

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY: No convictions! (*Interruptions*)

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: You can ask Mr. Somnath Chatterjee about the number of convictions.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: I do not deal with such cases.

MR. SPEAKER: Yes, Mr. Hiralal Parmar?

श्री हीरा लाल पारमार : मैं माननीय मंत्री जो को यह बताना चाहता हूँ कि पिछले दो साल से गुजरात के उद्योग-पतियों और बड़े-बड़े विजनसमनों और विल्डिंग कंस्ट्रक्टरों के यहां छापे मारे गये हैं और अखबारों में यह बात आई है कि उन के यहां से दो नम्बर की बहुत सी किताबें पकड़ी गईं लेकिन एक-दो महीने के बाद वह मामला निपट जाता है। मैं मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या इस में कोई सौदेबाजी होती है ?

MR. SPEAKER: This is a wild goose chase.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: I can give the total figures, about which the hon. Member is mentioning. The action taken is not merely that we prosecute them. One of the major things is to impose the tax, assess the valuation and see what should be the tax-rate and the quantum of tax and then we take action to recover the taxes. These are all part of the action taken programme. If the hon. Member is interested in the total number, I can give. But unless he gives a specific case it is not possible to give details.

MR. SPEAKER: He is just putting a question.

Shri Manmohan Tudu.

Replacement of Vijayanta tank

375. **SHRI MANMOHAN TUDU:** Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has a proposal to develop a main battle tank

(MBT) to replace the ageing Vijayanta tank;

(b) if so, the progress made in this regard; and

(c) by which year Vijayanta tank is expected to be replaced?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN): (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (d). The General Staff Qualitative Requirement for the Main Battle Tank (MBT) was first issued in August 1972. The project for the development of a futuristic MBT was sanctioned by Government in 1974. The original project envisaged an imported engine and building up of other accessories within the country. With a view, however, to achieve self-reliance it was decided in 1980 to undertake the challenging task of developing the engine also. Meanwhile the General Staff Qualitative Requirement was updated to make the tank contemporary with world class tanks.

Considerable progress has been achieved in the development of various system such as the armament system, the fire control system and a composite armour. However, we are facing some problems, which are quite normal, in the development of a modern high performance engine for the first time in the country. The Research and Development and other agencies are trying to overcome these problems.

The Vijayanta tank is performing well and the question of its replacement will be considered when superior options are available for our armed forces.

SHRI MANMOHAN TUDU: May I know from the hon. Minister as to when the development of an engine through indigenous effort is expected to be completed?

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN: The original GSQR envisaged import of an engine. In order to improve our self-reliance, we decided in 1980 to go in for a sophisticated futuristic engine. We have started work on it. It is possible, with some luck, that by 1983 we may be able to produce the first prototype of the tank.

SHRI MANMOHAN TUDU: The General Staff Qualitative Requirement was issued in 1972. Will the hon. Minister tell the House the amount spent so far for the completion of the development of the tank and the amount earmarked for its completion?

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN: The GSQR was issued in 1972. But the project was sanctioned only in 1974 by the Government. The original GSQR envisaged import of an engine, and, therefore, the amount sanctioned at that time was Rs. 15 crores. The present sanction is Rs. 56 crores because we are going to produce an engine of our own. The amount spent so far is Rs. 18.2 crores.

DR. SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY: When it comes to protecting the country, one should not worry too much about where the knowhow comes from. For the sake of the country we should get it. The MBT which he has referred in his statement, is being subjected to some journalistic controversy. I do not know how good the MBT that he has envisaged is. Of course, I would say that if he wants my assistance, I get him a very superior MBT from Israel. Recently I went there. I want to know from the hon. Minister whether he has seen the remarks made about the MBT project in published in the country and whether he has to say anything on the question of self-reliance and modernity?

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN: So far as his offer of assistance from Israel is concerned, I have taken note of it. That is all I can say.

So far as various criticisms, that have appeared in the newspapers, are

concerned, I am sorry to say that they are both ill-informed and based on half knowledge.

MR. SPEAKER: Not Mr. Swamy himself?

DR. SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY: I am a member of the Defence Consultative Committee. So, he tells me everything there.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: So, he is 1.5 informed.

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN: I can take the House into confidence to the extent that it will not hit or affect the security of the country. We have made progress in fire power, mobility and developing immunity in the tank. As I said, initially the prototype would be available in 1983. There is a lot of ill-informed criticism. Somebody has said that we have spent Rs. 600 crores. We have spent Rs. 18.2 crores.

MR. SPEAKER: Only a small difference, marginal difference!

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN: Then I would like to inform the House that there are some people who want to sell some of their equipment in the country and they go about decrying our R & D effort. One of the ways in which they can sell foreign equipment here, is to first run down your indigenous effort and then go about saying this has failed, that has failed and come forward saying, this is better, that is better.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: That is like Coca Cola and Pure Drinks.

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN: The Defence Ministry has to resist all kinds of pressures including pressures from these extraneous people, who want to sell their wares. I only wish to assure the House that our people have done a very good job. There was criticism about the engine. Even there, they were not informed of the subject. We first have an engine and then we have a turbo-charger, which can develop horse power to two-and-half times. For instance, we have developed a horse

power of 400. With the turbo-charger it can go upto 1000 HP. And the newspapers write that we have developed an engine of only 400 HP. All this is based on ignorance.

I wish to assure the House that we are making very satisfactory progress. I wish only to add with respect to one point which he has made about the press. You know, if you abuse God, you go to Heaven and if you abuse Venkataraman, you will get a Magsaysay Award. (Interruptions)

DR. SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY: It should be inscribed in golden letters.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: I am sorry, the Defence Minister should not have cast any reflection on the Magsaysay Award. This is not in good taste. This is an internationally recognised Award. Why should that Award to be brought in? I take strong objection to that.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: He has said it humorously.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Haldar—how are you interested in this? Your legendary weapon is 'hal'. (Interruptions)

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDAR: I am for indigenous production of this tank for our defence and self-reliance also. But still news appear in the papers that the Government of India is trying to get Soviet technology to manufacture a most modern and strong tank for our defence. I want to know whether it is correct or what does he want to say in this regard?

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN: So far as technology is concerned, our policy is to develop indigenous technology. But no country in world develops its own technology by itself. Today, modern technological development is always in cooperation with several other countries. For instance, latest tank development was between the United States and West Germany. There are various countries who are

cooperating with each other in the matter of development of defence technology. So far as India is concerned, wherever we are able to absorb the technology, we will try to get it on the condition that we are the owner of the technology and we are able to use it for ourselves.

Delay by Banks in Making Payment to Pensioners

*377. SHRI K. LAKKAPPA: Will Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that nationalised banks, and particularly the United Bank of India, take a long time in debiting and making payment of pensions as well as the announced increased relief in the pensioners accounts causing great hardship to them;

(b) whether this delay is due to banks not getting the instructions in time from Government;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) what measures Government propose to ensure that such relief is automatically and simultaneously credited to the pensioners' account within one month from the date of such announcement, particularly in the United Bank of India; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PATTABHI RAMA RAO): (a) to (e). Payment of pensions and relief to approximately 15 lakh pensioners is being made not only through the public sector banks but also through the treasuries and post offices spread all over India. Efforts are continually made to make speedy payment of pensions and relief. The procedure for payment has been streamlined and is reviewed from time to time. As and when any complaint regarding delay in payment is received, action is taken to remove bottlenecks, if any.

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA: I am speaking today on behalf of the pensioners of this country. I have put a specific question, which had five clauses, (a), (b), (c), (d) and (e). In fact, if you go through it, part (a) reads:

"whether Government are aware that nationalised banks, and particularly the United Bank of India, take a long time in debiting and making payment of pensions as well as the announced increased relief in the pensioners accounts causing great hardship to them;"

Though I have put a specific question, there is no specific answer, as is required under the rules. The question related to the inordinate delay caused by this bank. I also wanted to know whether there are any specific complaints by the pensioners against this Bank. Now I want to know the nature of the complaints against this Bank and whether this Bank has violated the directions of the Finance Ministry and, if so, the details thereof.

SHRI PATTABHI RAMA RAO: No specific complaint has come to our notice. However, if the hon. Member brings to our notice any particular complaint, we will go into it.

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA: In view of the answer given by the hon. Minister that the procedure for payment of pension has been streamlined from time to time, I would like to know whether the guidelines have been provided to the United Bank of India. I would also like to know whether they have been directed to make quick disbursement, as per instructions.

SHRI PATTABHI RAMA RAO: Previously, the payment of pension was made only by the treasury. Then the nationalised banks were also permitted to make the payment of pension, so that a large number of pensioners could draw their pension early. Under the guidelines, a person before retirement has to give six months' notice to the concerned officer that he is retiring on such and such date. In between,