

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : You have to use economic journals .

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE : All these banks are located in some States. Banks are not located in the sky. Cases of fraud are registered with some authority. And I have given the statewise break-up starting from Assam to Gujarat and from Jammu and Kashmir—I do not know whether we have any branch in Pygmalion Point—at least to the southern-most tip of the country.

Smuggling Racket Unearthed by Bombay Customs

*289. †SHRI BALKRISHNA WASNIK:
SHRI K. LAKKAPPA :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) Whether it is a fact that the Air Intelligence Unit of Bombay Customs has recently unearthed a racket of smuggling foreign currency out of the country through parcels ;

(b) if so, the particulars of the party involved in this racket ;

(c) the details of the currency seized in the parcels ; and

(d) the action contemplated by Government against the persons involved ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PATTABHI RAMA RAO) : (a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

(a) and (c) The officers of the Air Intelligence Unit of Bombay Customs seized on 7.7.1983 from an export consignment of vegetables, foreign currencies equivalent to Rs. 2.44 lakhs as per details given below :

Kuwait Dinars	: 1,190/-
UAE Dirhams	: 28,000/-
Omani Riyals	: 2,830/-
Saudi Arabia	
Riyal	: 4,400/-
Bahrain Dinars	: 1,320/-
U.S. Dollars	: 1,600/-
Qatar Riyals	: 500/-

(b) and (d) Two persons have been arrested. Since the case is still under investigation, it will not be in the interest of effective investigation to give further details at this stage. However, action under the appropriate laws will be taken against the persons found involved in the case.

SHRI BALKRISHNA WASNIK : It has been mentioned in the statement that the officers of the Air Intelligence Unit of Bombay Customs seized on 7.7.83 from an export consignment of vegetables, foreign currencies equivalent to Rs. 2.44 lakhs. The countries mentioned in the statement are mainly the Gulf countries except US dollars equivalent to Rs 1600/-. The amount of currency received from the Gulf countries to our country is very great and the foreign currency seized is a very small amount. It is understood that a number of trading firms are involved in this. May I know whether the licences of such export firms which have been found involved in this kind of racket, have been cancelled ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : When the case is established we will take various actions including this. But it will not be possible just now to indicate what type of action will be taken when the whole matter is under investigation.

SHRI BALKRISHNA WASNIK : Is it a fact that some of the large industrial houses and some of the organised groups are involved in despatching such parcels where the currency have been found ? Is the Government aware that a sort of parallel post office like organisation is functioning and is being conducted by these large houses ? Every day parcels are carried from India to these countries. Has this come to the notice of the Government ? May I know whether all such parcels are checked and what other remedial measures the Government are taking in this matter ?

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE : Sir, whenever some doubts or suspicions arise or we get some information, definitely we check these parcels. In the text of the answer I myself pointed out that on the basis of Air Intelligence, some actions for safety were taken and this is one of the devices the foreign exchange racketeers and others do deploy to have illegal transactions, The

answer to tackle the problem lies in strengthening the enforcement agencies and machineries which we are doing.

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Air Intelligence Unit of Customs at Bombay have been making efforts to unearth lot of smuggling rackets operating through these agencies. The hon. Minister has already stated that there is ramification of unearthing and action is being taken after investigation. I would like to know whether it is a fact that this kind of organisations have developed on certain airlines operating between Sharjah and Bombay and whether it is also a fact, as reported in a news item, that pushpaka aviation licence has been cancelled? It has been reported in that news item that all the four flights a week of pushpaka aviation between Bombay and Sharjah have been stopped since last Friday by the Director General of Civil Aviation following the seizure of sophisticated communications equipment from the hangar of the airlines at Bombay Airport by Customs authorities? This most jarring situation prevails where even the air-worthiness of the aircraft with an ordinary VHF is operating in violation of the air safety rules and one of the Directors of Pushpaka Airlines is also escaping from our country, he has gone to another country. Therefore, I would like the hon. Minister to enlighten us on this matter. I would also like to know what steps have been taken for unearthing this kind of operations through this airlines and whether the Air Intelligence Unit of Bombay Customs will take more stringent steps to see that such kinds of operations are stopped and what are the actions proposed for the stoppage of civil aviation operations where they are involved?

SHRI PRANAB MUKHEREJEE : Sir, the Air Intelligence is there, therefore, I cannot go into the whole gamut of air-worthiness or of the aircrafts or stoppage of civil aviation. I am confining myself to the question of foreign exchange or Indian currency racketeer. I have some figures with me. If the hon. Members are interested, I can give these. For instance, in 1980, the total number of cases detected involving Indian currency is 975 and involving foreign currency is 1,324. The number of persons arrested in the first case is 33 and in the second case 63. It is not that it has any

uniform pattern that either it is increasing or it is decreasing : it depends on the type or organisation they have and how we tackle them. Therefore, this exercise is being constantly made. I can give some examples about the total effect of the anti-smuggling operations which we are having. For instance, even the number of seizures has come down from 1,04,431 in 1978 to 71, 751 in 1982. The value of the goods seized has increased substantially from Rs. 13.9 crores to Rs 66.39 crores. The number of COFEPOSA detenus has also increased substantially, from 122 at the beginning of January, 83 to 307 at the end of July 1983. The number of customs cases and prosecutions have also increased substantially. The number of cases in connection with the foreign exchange violations has also been brought down but it is not my claim or anybody's claim that we have been able to tackle the problem totally or to eliminate the foreign exchange of smuggling racketeer completely. They are trying to take advantage of the loopholes or take advantage of the situation and we are trying to prevent them. This battle goes on. I do not know whether we will be able to eliminate it totally at any time.

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY : Is the hon. Minister aware of the fact that the notorious smugglers of this country are sometimes praised by the political leaders? Recently, the most notorious smuggler, Haji Mastan, was praised by a Maharashtra Minister for the services rendered by him to the country. If that is so, what steps the Government are going to take, particularly his party, to stop praising such people because, after all, if that is done, it is an encouragement to smuggling? I would request the Minister to take note of it and take appropriate action against the Minister...*(Interruptions)* I can show in the Bombay papers the photographs...*(interruptions)* I can lay it on the Table of the House for the information of the Minister...*(Interruptions)* Sir, why are they shouting...*(Interruptions)*

PROF. K.K. TEWARY : In future we will also level charges against them...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY : He is capable of defending himself...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE : I would be really grateful to the hon. Member if he shows the picture of whatever he is saying...

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY : I am prepared to lay it on the Table of the House.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : I am prepared to lay the Chief Minister on the Table of the House... (interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : At least I would not allow that.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE : Some sort of social awareness against social offences is needed. Here my case is against you that you people give respectability to smugglers by releasing them all by one stroke of the pen... (Interruptions) Please take your seat. I will most respectfully submit to the hon. Member who put the question to convince the State Government for God's sake to apply COFEPOSA in respect of smugglers and foreign exchange racketeers. This is one of the steps which they can take. The smugglers and racketeers cannot be detained under COFEPOSA; each case to be brought by the Collector of Customs from Calcutta to New Delhi so that he can be detained. If they co-operate I think I can handle even bigger smugglers than this... (Interruptions)

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY : He has evaded it. That was not my question. What are you going to do about the Maharashtra Minister, who praised Haji Mastan? Sir, I seek your protection... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I do not give protection in such cases.

Failure in Production of Rubber.

*291. **SHRI HARISH KUMAR GANGWAR :** Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state.

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a failure in production of rubber leading to imports (Business Standard dated 30-6-83) ;

(b) whether it is also a fact that this represents serious failure of R & D of ICAR and Agricultural Universities on which

Government are spending at least Rs. 100 crores annually ; and

(c) whether Government will consider closing down R & D units which have failed to deliver goods ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRIMATI RAM DULARI SINHA): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) No, Sir. Rubber production has increased from about 15,000 tonnes in 1948-49 to about 166,000 tonnes currently. The productivity has also gone up from around 300 kgs. hectare in 1948-49 to around 830 kgs./hectare during 1982-83. However some imports have to be resorted to in view of higher demand.

(b) and (c) R & D of rubber is mainly looked after by the Rubber Board. Increase in production and productivity over the years is mainly attributed to the efforts made by the Board.

In view of the good results obtained so far, the question of closing down the R & D units of the Rubber Board does not arise.

श्री हरीश कुमार गंगवार : अध्यक्ष जी, मैं माननीय मन्त्री जी से जानना चाहता हूँ पिछले तीन वर्षों में रबर की कुल कितनी आवश्यकता थी, कितना उत्पादन हुआ और प्रतिवर्ष कितना आयात किया गया ? दूसरी बात जैसा कि आपने अपने उत्तर में कहा है कि रबर विकास की देखरेख और उनके द्वारा अनुसंधान तथा विकास किया जाता है और उन्हीं सुझावों पर अमल किया जाता है । मेरा कहना यह है कि भारतीय कृषि अनुसंधान परिषद और जो कृषि विश्वविद्यालय खोले गए हैं, उनमें इसका अनुसंधान किया जाता है या नहीं, ताकि रबर अधिक उत्पादित हो ? यदि हाँ, तो इसके कोई सुझाव हैं या नहीं और उन सुझावों को न कार्यान्वित करने का क्या कारण है ? जो उत्तर मांगा गया था, उस उत्तर में ऐसी चालाकी से रास्ता काटा है, मैंने पूछा था कि क्या यह भी सच है कि इसके भारतीय कृषि