

Metal Detectors to detect Hidden Treasures

*969. SHRI M. S. PURTY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Income Tax Authorities have decided to import 'highly sensitive' metal detectors to facilitate detection of hidden treasurers; and

(b) if so, whether such instruments are not available in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PRANAB KUMAR MUKHERJEE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

श्री एस०एस० पुरती : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मंत्री महोदय ने मेरे प्रश्न का उत्तर ना मे दिया है .। मैं जानना चाहता हू कि गत दो वर्षों में आयकर अधिकारियों के द्वारा क्या कहीं हिडन ट्रेजर का भी पता चला है ? यदि पता चला है तो किन तरीकों से उन्हें बूढ़ निकालने का प्रयास किया गया है ?

SHRI PRANAB KUMAR MUKHERJEE: It is not a fact that these sophisticated instruments are not available in our country. In fact, we have these instruments in the National Geophysical Institute and whenever it is necessary to find out hidden treasures, we get these instruments from them.

श्री एस० एस० पुरती : मेरे प्रश्न का उत्तर स्पष्ट नहीं हुआ । मैंने पूछा कि गत दो वर्षों में वत. कहां-कहां हिडन ट्रेजर का पता लगा है ?

SHRI PRANAB KUMAR MUKHERJEE: The question relates to metal detectors to be imported. But if the hon. Member wants information about the income-tax raids, many a time I have given it on the floor of the House and I can give it.

श्री भारीरष अवर : मंत्री महोदय ने कहा है कि इस प्रकार का यत्न हमारे पास नहीं है । मैं यह जानना चाहता हू कि देश में कई जगह ऐसे खजाने हैं जो छिपे हुए हैं और उनको बताने के लिए लोग तैयार नहीं हैं तो जो इस प्रकार का छिपा हुआ धन या खजाना देश से है उसका पता लगाने के लिए क्या सरकार की ओर से कोई प्रयास किया जाएगा और उनका पता लगाया जाएगा ? यदि हां, तो किस प्रकार से ?

SHRI PRANAB KUMAR MUKHERJEE: I have already replied that the metal detector is not available with the Department of Income-tax, but it is available with other institutions from where we get it. In fact, in one place we got the equipment from them and used it.

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Recently, some raids were conducted in the place of Jaipur and it is reported that jewellery and gold and other things of the value of Rs. 50 crores were detected with the help of these equipment. Even with the help of these sophisticated equipment you could detect hidden treasures of the value of Rs. 50 crores from an hon. Member of the BLD of this House. I would like to know whether the Government will employ these sophisticated instruments more extensively and find out how many Maharajas and Maharanis of Gwalior and Jaipur are having unaccounted hidden treasures.

SHRI PRANAB KUMAR MUKHERJEE: Whenever we get information about any hidden treasure belonging to either a Maharaja or a Maharani or anybody else, for that matter, we have got to detect the treasure. (Interruptions).

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: I would like to know one information. According to sources available to us, the total quantity of gold and jewellery unearthed in these raids is valued at Rs 32 crores I would like to know what is the information of the hon. Minister and what is the total

quantity of gold and jewellery recovered from the Jaipur palace.

SHRI PRANAB KUMAR MUKHERJEE: We have replied to this question on many an occasion on the floor of the House. Up till now the total quantum of gold which we have obtained from the Jaipur palaces is 871 kg, and there are certain other jewellery also and the valuation is still in the process. Up till now whatever we have been able to evaluate, it is in the order of Rs. 1.84 crores and during the recent raids we got two things, one a necklace and another, an emerald whose value is approximately Rs. 2 crores.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, the Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Memorandum from Chairman, Small Scale Industrial Association, Batala regarding 1 per cent Excise Duty

958. PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a memorandum has been received from the Chairman, Small Scale Industrial Association, Batala (Punjab) regarding the 1 per cent Central Excise Levy on commodities not specified elsewhere;

(b) if so, the action taken by Government on this memorandum; and

(c) when a decision would be taken so as to provide relief to small scale industrialists?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PRANAB KUMAR MUKHERJEE): (a) No such memorandum appears to have been received in this Ministry from the Chairman, Small Scale Industrial Association, Batala, regarding the levy of excise duty under Item 68 of the Central Excise Tariff. However, a telegram has been received

from the said Association as also a joint memorandum addressed by 27 Associations of Punjab, the Small Scale Industrial Associations, Batala, being one of them, regarding levy under Item 68 of the Tariff. Neither of the above two representations is, however, addressed by the Chairman of the said Association.

(b) and (c). The Government has carefully considered the requests of the Association, but consider that there is not sufficient justification to liberalize the exemption beyond what has already been announced in Parliament.

Branches of Nationalised Banks in Orissa

***959. SHRI ARJUN SETHI:** Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of branches of nationalised banks operating in Orissa at present;

(b) the total investments made by these banks in Orissa during the financial years 1972-73, 1973-74 and 1974-75, and

(c) the total amount of money advanced by them as loans for agricultural and industrial purposes, separately during the above period?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM): (a) to (c). As at the end of December, 1974, there were 291 branches of commercial banks in Orissa. Of these 275 belonged to public sector banks, including the fourteen nationalised banks.

Available information regarding flow of bank credit in Orissa as at the end of December, 1972, and December, 1973 is set out in the Statement.

Besides bank credit as such, banks also invest funds in the securities of the State Government and in the