

SHRI C. T. DHANDAPANI: This is about subsidiary banks of the State Bank of India.

MR. SPEAKER: I am so sorry. Please do not expand the scope of the Question. In spite of my vigilance, you go on doing it.

Scarcity of small coins

*464. **SHRIMATI SAVITRI SHYAM:** Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that a number of people exchange small coins at the rate of 90 to 94 paise for a rupee; and

(b) if so, the action taken or proposed to be taken to apprehend such people?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI K. R. GANESH): (a) and (b). Due to shortage of coins, Government is aware that certain people are taking advantage of the situation. Buying and selling of small coins for an amount other than their face value is an offence under Rule 128(2)(a) of the Defence of India Rules, 1971. The action against such offenders is taken by the State Governments and Union Territories.

श्रीमती सावित्री श्याम : मंत्री महोदय ने यह बतलाया कि डी० आई० आर० के अन्तर्गत अफेंस है। जब सेकण्ड वर्ल्ड वार चल रहा था तब 50 रुपये की रेजगारी रखने वाले को डिफेन्स आफ इंडिया एक्ट के मातहत छः महीने की सजा दी जाती थी। मंत्री महोदय ने बतलाया कि स्टेट गवर्नमेंट्स और यूनियन टेरिटरीज गवर्नमेंट्स की इसके प्रति जिम्मेदारी है और वह पनिशमेंट देती है। मैं जानना चाहती हूँ कि

क्या उनको जानकारी है कि राज्यों की सरकारों ने, विशेषकर दिल्ली की सरकार ने अब तक कितने लोगों को सजायें दीं। दिल्ली में पुलिस के रहते हुये इस प्रकार के असा-माजिक कार्य होते हैं। मैं जानना चाहती हूँ कि कितने लोगों को और कितनी-कितनी सजायें दी गईं।

SHRI K. R. GANESH: As I have indicated, the law has to be enforced by State Governments and we will have to collect the information from various State Governments. But I have got certain facts to know how this is being tackled. For instance, small coins worth Rs. 79,154 were seized during raids from unauthorised premises during 1971-72. 14 persons involved in 5 cases of small coin offences under the Small Coins Offences Act have so far been arrested in Delhi, U.P. and Maharashtra and the cases are reported to be under investigation.

श्रीमती सावित्री श्याम : सिक्कों की कमी का कारण यह भी है कि सरकार के पास जो विदेशी मिंटिंग मशीनें हैं वह ठीक कार्य नहीं कर रही हैं, रा मंटीरियल भी सरकार के पास नहीं है जिससे कि आवश्यक संख्या में सिक्के गढ़े जा सकें। मैं जानना चाहती हूँ कि जो सिक्कों की कमी है उसको सरकार किस प्रकार दूर करना चाहती है ?

SHRI K. R. GANESH: These are not the facts for the shortage of small coins. The shortage of small coins is due to the fact that the percentage of small coins to the total currency in circulation has remained constant at about 3 to 4 per cent during the last six years. To meet this deficiency, various steps have been taken. The content of the coin has been changed

so that the constraint in the process of production is removed. Then, two shifts are being opened in the Alipore Mint and in Hyderabad, it is to be opened. The capacity has been increased with the result that today we are producing 75 lakh pieces per day whereas in August, 1970, we were producing 12 lakh pieces per day and in January-February, 1971, we were producing 35 lakh pieces per day. It is proposed to step it up during 1972-73 and thereafter. With these steps that are being taken, the shortage of coins to an extent will be met.

SHRI H. M. PATEL: Will the hon. Minister be good enough to explain what the Ministry's planning is as to by what date the shortage of coins will come to an end as a result of steps taken for increasing the production of coins or otherwise? That is an important thing. What is the estimate of requirements and what is the date by which they hope to meet those requirements so that no shortage of coins remains?

SHRI K. R. GANESH: It will be very difficult to indicate a precise date by which the shortage will be met. I have already indicated what steps have been taken. I would like to draw the hon. Member's attention to my first answer that the total amount of small coins in circulation is about 3 or 4 per cent of the total currency in circulation. That is to be stepped up to a considerable extent. By 1972-73, we envisage an increase in production of coins by 33 per cent in terms of numbers and 94 per cent in terms of value of the actual production in 1972-73.

SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY: There is no shortage of small coins in Andhra Pradesh. Why is the shortage of coins occurring persistently in Delhi?

MR. SPEAKER: Because you happen to be here!

श्री राजेन्द्र प्रसाद यादव : मंत्री महोदय ने अभी बतलाया कि 1970 से छोटी क्वान्टिटी का प्रोडक्शन काफी बढ़ा है। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि इस समय जो शॉर्टेज है वह वास्तव में 1970 के बजाय कम है या वह बढ़ती जा रही है? मंत्री महोदय इस कमी को दूर करने के लिये क्या करने जा रहे हैं ?

SHRI K. R. GANESH: The shortage is certainly much less than what it was in 1970 because of the number of coins that we have introduced. About the future programme, I have already indicated.

श्री भागीरथ भंडार : मंत्री महोदय ने बताया कि छोटे सिक्कों की कमी को दूर करने के लिये वे क्या कर रहे हैं। छोटे-छोटे देहातों और कस्बों में जो राष्ट्रीयकृत बैंकों की शाखाएँ हैं, मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या उन शाखाओं को भी ये छोटे सिक्के भेजे जाते हैं और यदि हाँ, तो क्या ऐसी भी शिकायतें प्राप्त हुई हैं कि इन बैंकों के जो लोग हैं वे कमीशन लेकर छोटे सिक्कों का दुरुपयोग करते हैं और यदि मिली है तो उनके ऊपर आपने क्या कार्यवाही की है ?

SHRIMATI SAVITRI SHYAM: I seek your assistance, Sir. My question was not answered.

MR. SPEAKER: You have thought of it after so many minutes.

श्रीमती सावित्री श्याम : जो मशीनें काम कर रही हैं चाहे भारत की हों या बाहर की हों बकॉबल कंडिशन में हैं या नहीं हैं ?

MR. SPEAKER: The main question is whether Government are aware that a number of people exchange small coins at the rate of 90 to 94 paise for a rupee and action taken on that. How does machine come here?

SHRIMATI SAVITRI SHYAM: The shortage is on account of so many reasons.

प्रश्नक महीष्य : मशीनें इसमें कहां से ले आयीं आप ?

There is no time left, now.

SHRI K. R. GANESH: There are standing instructions with the Reserve Bank that they should place at the disposal of the nationalised banks sufficient number of small coins. This is being done. There are no complaints that some authorities in Bank in collusion with unscrupulous elements are trying to exaggerate the shortage. There are no complaints. Whenever complaints are received that in a particular area there is shortage of small coins, there are definite instructions that they have to be rushed there, and this is being done.

Depression in Jute Industry

*467. SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY: Will the Minister of FOREIGN TRADE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Jute industry in the country is reported to be in the midst of depression; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and remedial measures proposed?

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI L. N. MISHRA): (a) and (b). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

The jute industry is currently faced with two problems, namely—

(1) shortage of raw jute resulting from a short crop in the current session; and

(2) competition in foreign markets from synthetics and products of Bangla Desh.

As a result of these handicaps, exports of jute goods during the first 6 months of the current financial year have been somewhat lower than corresponding figures for last year.

2. In order to meet the current shortage of fibre, adequate imports of jute from Bangla Desh are being arranged.

3. Government have already reduced the exports duty on jute primary carpet backing by Rs. 400 per tonne to make it competitive with synthetics. The other remedial measures contemplated are—(a) research and product development, (b) promotion and publicity, and (c) provision of adequate funds to meet the requirements under items (a) and (b).

SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY: The Minister has stated that the foreign export losses are very marginal, but the figures speak otherwise. The foreign export losses till the end of August are over 12 per cent. and they are more than 22 per cent over the preceding four months. I want to know how he is going to meet this shortage. Moreover, our carpet backing, which we are exporting to North America, has also fallen. I want to know the reasons for that.

SHRI L. N. MISHRA: The main difficulties are generally two. Number one is, synthetics have very much come in the market. The second is, because of some duties on jute manufactures, we are finding it difficult to sell them as last year. Last year was a special year because of the situation in Bangla Desh, it was a windfall that we had. This year also, the figures for the current year, April to September, indicate jute exports to the extent of Rs. 133.25 crores as compared to Rs. 135.26 crores; there has been a shortfall of only Rs. 2 crores upto this month.