

the High Court itself.

**SHRI B. SHANKARANAND:** In Delhi there have been ten family courts sanctioned and the Delhi Administration is working on it.

#### Visit of UK Delegation

\*441. **SHRI SHANTILAL PATEL†:**  
**SHRI S.B. SIDNAL:**

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether British Secretary of State visited India during February, 1989;

(b) whether a British business delegation also visited India to explore the possibilities of joint collaboration;

(c) if so, the details and outcome thereof;

(d) the details of the agreement; if any, reached between the two countries; and

(e) the time by which it would be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P.R. DAS MUNSI): (a) to (e). A statement is given below.

#### STATEMENT

A delegation from UK led by their Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, which included representatives of some of their business organisations, visited India in February, 1989 to attend a meeting of the Indo-British Economic Committee. Agreed Minutes were signed at the conclusion of the meeting which, inter alia, covered cooperation in the area of trade and trade promotion, multilateral issues and industrial cooperation. Discussions in the Joint Committee were essentially in the nature of consultation between the two Governments and there is no time frame for implementation on these

discussions.

[Translation]

**SHRI SHANTI LAL PATEL:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to know from the hon. Minister the points which were discussed with the visiting delegations of Britain and what was our point of discussion. I would also like to know whether any agreement was reached on the points discussed or whether any action is proposed to be taken?

[English]

**SHRI P.R. DAS MUNSI:** We have already stated in our statement that a delegation from UK led by their Secretary of State for Trade and Industry including the representatives of some of their business organisations visited India in February 1989 to attend a regular meeting which we hold periodically of Indo-British Economic committee. In that meeting we discuss always the basic things concerning the trade, as to how we can overcome the trade deficit, which are the new areas we can enter into the market apart from the quota items, to persuade them so that they can plead our case to increase our quota in the EEC countries, to review the joint collaboration performance and to discuss the trade promotion programmes which have been started between India and UK right from 1983. The first TPP was over between 1983-86 and the second TPP has been recently started. We discuss these things between ourselves. In general we discuss all the areas covering the trade between India and UK.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Question 442. Shri George Joseph Mundackal is absent.

**PROF. P.J. KURIEN:** Sir, I have a submission. Question 442 is very important because it concerns lakhs of farmers. So will you please direct the Minister to answer this question? It is very very important and you are also interested in this Sir,

**SHRI SURESH KURUP:** There is a

precedent also, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: You put another question; I will allow it. Question 443.

**Involvement of Shipping Clearing Agents in Smuggling Activities and Excise Duty Evasion in Madras**

\*443. SHRI N. DENNIS: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether shipping clearing agents are involved in smuggling activities and excise evasion in Madras;

(b) if so, whether investigations have been made in this regard; and

(c) the details of the steps taken to prevent involvement of clearing agents in a smuggling activities and excise evasion?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EXPENDITURE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI B.K. GADHVI): (a) to (c). A statement is given below.

**STATEMENT**

(a) Only two cases of the involvement of a Customs House Agents/Shipping Agent of Madras Customs House or his employee in Customs duty evasion and in smuggling activities have been noticed in the recent past.

(b) and (c). Both the cases were investigated. In one case booked in January, 1986, a penalty of Rs. 5,000 was imposed on the Customs House Agent in departmental adjudication. The Agent has preferred an appeal before the Customs, Central Excise and Gold Control Appellate Tribunal. This appeal is pending decision. The licence of the Customs House Agent was also suspended. However, the Hon'ble High Court of Madras has stayed the operation of this order of suspension.

In the other case booked in June, 1986

in which 750 gold biscuits worth Rs. 1.96 crores approximately were seized from a car at Coimbatore the involvement of the Managing Director of Shipping Agent was noticed. This person has been arrested and also detained under the provisions of the Conservation of Foreign Exchange and Prevention of Smuggling Activities Act, 1974. Prosecution proceedings have also been launched in the Court of law and departmental adjudication is pending before the Collector of Customs, Madras.

Action is taken under the Customs Act, 1962 as well as the Customs House Agents Licensing Regulation, 1984 against the Customs House Agent and their employee who are found to be involved in smuggling activities and evasion of Customs duty. This action includes imposition of penalty in departmental proceedings, arrests and prosecutions in suitable cases and detention under the provisions of Conservation of Foreign Exchange and Prevention of Smuggling Activities Act, 1974, if considered necessary.

SHRI N. DENNIS: In the statement only two cases of tax evasion are noticed in Madras; but there are several unnoticed cases of tax evasion and also smuggling. We are widely hearing about them in the newspapers and through other means. The port authorities are the custodians of the goods and the shipping agents are under the direct control of the port authorities; they are not under the direct control of customs officials. In case they connive together there is a wide scope for tax evasion and smuggling. In such a circumstance, may I know what effective steps the Revenue officials would take to prevent smuggling and tax evasion?

SHRI B.K. GADHVI: I have answered that two cases have come to our notice and action is taken. As the Member says, there are other cases which are unnoticed ones. But we don't have any notice of the unnoticed cases. But so far as shipping agents are concerned, if they indulge in any smuggling activity or any activity by which they want to evade duty and want to do some-