

financial judgment to any other authority. Therefore, this is the principle underlying why the powers are merely directive and not mandatory. Hon. Member would like this power, however, to be mandatory and not just directive. We will look into his suggestion.

Enhancement of Baggage Allowance

*373. SHRI T. BASHEER: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under consideration of Government for enhancement of baggage allowance to Indians working abroad;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI A.K. PANJA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) A statement is given below.

STATEMENT

Since the 25th November, 1986, Indians working abroad for not less than one year and returning after termination of work are allowed to bring, free of duty, used household articles and personal effects upto a value of Rs. 20,000/- subject to the conditions stipulated in the relevant Rules. This is in addition to the free allowance of Rs. 1,250/- which is allowed to all persons, other than tourists, coming to India. Indians working abroad and returning after a minimum stay of two years, under Transfer of Residence, are allowed to import duty free their used household effects, subject to the fulfilment of certain conditions. Having regard to the interests of the domestic industry, these allowances are considered adequate at present.

SHRI T. BASHEER: Sir, you know,

from India, thousands of workers are working, especially in Gulf countries. They find it difficult there to get a job. So, they go abroad to find a job there and to earn something for their livelihood. They are working there in a very difficult situation. They earn valuable foreign exchange for this country. When they come to India, their home country, after two or three or four years, they are entitled for a free allowance of only Rs. 1250. You can imagine that this is a very meagre amount and it is quite inadequate. The point is that the tourists who are coming to this country are also entitled for the same amount of free allowance. This is illogical and unjustified. There is no difference between the tourists coming to this country and the sons and daughters of our country who are working abroad in a difficult situation and earning valuable foreign exchange for our country. So, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government proposes to bring some changes in the baggage rules to differentiate the tourists and the Indians working abroad and to provide more concessions in the baggage rules for the Indians working abroad, while coming to India?

SHRI A.K. PANJA: Sir, it is not correct to say that there is no difference between the tourists, the non-tourists and people who want transfer of residence. There is a clear-cut division which is controlled by various rules.... (Interruptions).... I am not talking about the TRs. I am talking about others. There are three types of Rules. They are Non-tourists Baggage Rules, 1978, Transfer of Residence Rules, 1978 and Tourists Baggage Rules, 1978. These Rules were promulgated under Section 79 of Customs Act, 1962. Non-Tourists Baggage Rules give the clear details which are lengthy. It gives the facilities which are available in a clear manner. So far as the workers and others are concerned, if they fall under transfer of residence rules and are working abroad for more than two years and if they ask for transfer of residence, then various facilities are made available for them. It is not that only Rs. 1250 is made available for them. I am sure that the hon. Member will go through these Rules. If the hon. Member wants, I can

give him a copy of these Rules. Then the confusion will be cleared.

SHRI T. BASHEER: The hon. Minister may be knowing that a majority of Indians who are working in Gulf countries are from my home State, Kerala. They are poor and illiterate people. When they come to this country after three or four years, they are harassed by the customs authorities in the airport. As Members of Parliament from Kerala, we are receiving a lot of complaints. I can give specific instances also to the Minister. I would like to know whether or not the Minister has received any complaint regarding unnecessary harassment by the customs authorities. If so, what steps are you going to take to stop this practice of harassment by the customs authorities?

SHRI A.K. PANJA: I have not received any complaint regarding the harassment of Indian workers who are coming over to India, by the customs officials. I meet the hon. Member almost everyday. If he has got any specific complaint, he can please hand it over to me and I will try to see whether there is any justification in those allegations. I want to make one thing clear about the workers. The Indians working abroad for one year or more and returning to India on termination of such work can import free of duty personal effects and household articles which have been used for a minimum period of six months by the passenger or his family up to the total value of Rs. 20000/-. This is under Rule 4 (A) (1). There are also some other provisions. There is also computation of period of stay for facility of workers going abroad and if their services are terminated. In the matter of computation of period, we have made certain laxity so that they are not in difficulty. I do not want to take time of the House in giving details, but if the hon. Member is interested, I can hand over these to him.

Kolar Irrigation Project of Madhya Pradesh

*375. SHRI PRATAP BHANU

SHARMA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the construction of Kolar Irrigation Project in Sihore, Madhya Pradesh is much behind the schedule;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the actual progress made and the expenditure incurred thereon, till-date; and

(d) the revised schedule for completion of this project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI M.M. JACOB): (a) to (d). The project has not been cleared by the Centre. The State Government is reported to have incurred an expenditure of about Rs. 90 crores upto March, 1989 against the reported latest estimated cost of Rs. 120 crores.

[Translation]

SHRI PRATAP BHANU SHARMA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, as per my information, Kolar Irrigation Project was cleared as one of the World Bank projects and it was scheduled to be commissioned by 1990. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the state administration and the Ministry of Agriculture have been working to commission this World Bank project within the time schedule as laid down for it and whether the required funds are being provided for this project from the Central Government and the World Bank?

[English]

SHRI M.M. JACOB: This project was one of the 16 projects in a cluster for the World Bank Assistance, as I understand. The target fixed by the World Bank was also