

Unlicensed Cultivation of Opium

*164. SHRI JUJHAR SINGH : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to State :

(a) whether Government have received complaints about unlicensed cultivation of opium in Kota and Jhalawar Districts;

(b) whether any enquiry has been made in the matter; and

(c) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Enquiries ordered, in the matter, are in progress.

SHRI JUJHAR SINGH : Is it a fact that the first complaint was lodged with the Minister of Finance in the month of February and at that time the crop was standing in the fields. That the second complaint was made in the month of March and at that time also the crop was standing in the fields. And the third complaint was made in the month of April when the crop was about to be harvested—That was the time when proper enquiry could have been made—If so, what was the reason for delaying the enquiry for such a long time ?

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY : The first complaint was made on 27.1.1985, the second complaint was made in March, 1985, and the third complaint was made on 12.4.1985. In the case the first complaint the allegation was exploitation of the cultivators in the renewal of opium licences by the officers of the Narcotic Division. That complaint was looked into, and the hon. Member of Parliament was requested to give specific instances for necessary action as, in the initial enquiry, the allegation was found to be baseless. In March, 1985, another complaint was received, as I stated earlier. In that complaint also the enquiry was entrusted to the Vigilance Branch in respect of all the three letters. In the third complaint, I have ordered the detailed

enquiry and asked them to examine the witnesses. I requested the Hon'ble Members also to help the investigation. We will definitely taken action on those complaints. We will not spare any person, if found to be guilty.

SHRI JUJHAR SINGH : This is a case of corruption on the part of the office of the Narcotic Department. Cultivators were instigated and encouraged by department officers to grow unlicensed opium on payment of Rs. 2000 per *bigha* and thousands of *bighas* of unlicensed cultivation was thus done in that area. This is a very serious matter.

Another point Sir. It was very clearly mentioned in the application of some gentlemen that the Narcotic Department collected bribe from hundreds of cultivators and the licence was not issued to some of these cultivators for some reasons. These cultivators went to the Collector and the Collector asked the Narcotic Department to return the money which they had taken as bribe. This money was returned on the order of the Collector of Jalawar in the presence of the MLA and a number of cultivators.

MR. SPEAKER : What was the mutual understanding, Sir ?

SHRI JUJHAR SINGH : The thing is that this is such a clear thing that the money was returned in the presence of hundreds of cultivators and in the presence of the elected representative of the Assembly, on the order of the Collector. Even on such a clear evidence, the Department has not been able to take action for such a long time. This is a really serious matter which everybody is concerned about.

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY : Sir, the Government is seized of the matter. We have viewed it very seriously and action will be taken. That is why I am requesting the Hon'ble Member also to see that the evidence is coming forward and it will be recorded. Action will be taken against the guilty.

(Interruptions)

SHRI AMITABH BACHCHAN : Mr. Speaker Sir, May I know from the Minister whether it is a fact that due to development of chemical substitute for opium and also due to the enlarged production of opium in other countries, the demand for Indian opium has now diminished abroad and whether the excess opium that has been grown in our country is now converted into dangerous drugs like heroin, as the Hon'ble Member of Parliament has just indicated? What steps have been taken to control them?

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY : The Hon'ble Member is correct in his statement Sir, that the production has gone down. In 1977, the area under production was about 64,000 hectares, now it has come down to about 25,000 hectares. As per the international convention India is the only country which has to export this. Now, Sir other countries are also producing for their domestic purposes. That is why market has gone down. Turkey, America, France and some other countries are also producing this. In view of this the stock in our country has gone up and because of the accumulation of this in two or three factories we had to control the production. The production has gone down. So far as the controlling of this and its mis-use are concerned, we are going to come with a comprehensive legislation. There will be deterrent punishment for the culprits. The legislation will be brought as early as possible and it will be curbed.

SHRI AJAY MUSHRAN : Sir, we all know that whether it is heroin, smack or brown sugar, they are all derivatives of opium. Now whether the cultivation of opium has gone down or gone up, the fact remains that the unlicensed cultivation, whether in the districts of Rajasthan or the western districts of Madhya Pradesh is going on. Unlicensed cultivation is the first step towards increase of drug abuse. So many speakers have spoken to you in this regard Sir, and you have agreed to have a discussion on this subject. May I ask the Hon'ble Minister through you, what steps is he going to take before bringing a comprehensive legislation? Because bringing a comprehensive Bill will

involve many other Ministries like the Home Ministry and the Ministry of Social Welfare apart from his own Finance Ministry and all these Ministries comprehension may take about year, waiting for that comprehension, can we have some ordinances through which deterrent steps can be taken by the hon. Minister to arrest not only the unlicensed cultivation but the results thereof, that is, the drug abuse?

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY : The cultivation, the supervision of the cultivation and also the export market is controlled by the Central Government.

(Interruptions)

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY : But wherever there are specific instances and wherever they are brought to our notice, action is being taken and if the hon. Member is in a position to give any specific information, I will personally supervise it, monitor it and personally look into those complaints.

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI : I do not want to put any question because you have agreed to allow a call attention motion. But as the Minister said that he has to enquire from the Home Ministry he should have enquired from the Home Ministry and come fully prepared to the House.

Unfair Trade Practices Followed by Powerloom Sector

***165 DR. G. VIJAYA RAMA RAO :** Will the Minister of SUPPLY AND TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn by the Consumer Protection Organisation to the many unfair trade practices followed by the powerloom sector and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether these complaints and remedial measures relate to misleading marks and fraudulent stampings and if so, the steps taken by Government; and

(c) whether Government propose to