

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY : Sir, a very pertinent question has been raised. We have already written to the State Governments. Law and order is a State subject. We have written to the State governments to take sufficient steps to prevent such robberies.

SHRI Y.S. MAHAJAN : The hon. Minister has classified the banks according to the degree of vulnerability. I would like to know whether he has made a study of vulnerability of nationalised banks vis-a-vis private banks which have not been nationalised.

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY : These things should be considered by the management concerned. Law and order is a State subject and as the hon. Finance Minister has said the State Governments have also to provide sufficient security and safeguards.

(Interruptions)

**Seizure of Smack and Gold Biscuits by
Custom Officials**

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*89. **SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI :**
SHRI MANVENDRA SINGH :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Custom officials have seized smack and gold biscuits worth Rs. 50 crores from the baggage left unclaimed at Palam and other airports in different parts of the country in recent months;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the persons who have been arrested in this connection; and

(c) the steps Government are taking to prevent such crimes ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH) : (a) to (c). A statement is given below.

Statement

(a) and (b). The total value of contra-band goods seized at various airports in the

country during the period from January to September, 1985 amounted to Rs. 29.25 crores (provisional) out of which gold accounted for Rs. 16.18 crores and dangerous drugs Rs. 4.64 crores. 903 persons were arrested in this connection under the Customs Act.

No separate statistics regarding seizures from baggage left unclaimed at airports is maintained.

(c) The drive against smuggling activities at the airports has been intensified. The existing intelligence and preventive set-up of the customs at the airports is being further strengthened with a view to preventing smuggling activities at the airports. The scheme of rewards to informers and Government servants has also been liberalised.

Besides, the trends of smuggling and seizures made at the airports are kept under constant review for taking appropriate remedial action as warranted.

Stringent action is taken against persons found involved in smuggling activities both departmentally as well as through prosecution in courts. Apart from confiscation of goods involved and the imposition of personal penalties, preventive detention under the COFEPOSA Act is also resorted to in appropriate cases.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, in part (b) of my question, I had asked about the persons arrested in this connection. In reply thereto, the hon. Minister has replied that 903 persons were arrested under the Customs Act. I want to know from the hon. Minister the names of top Customs Officials, let him tell only four or five names, arrested under the Customs Act... *(Interruptions)* I want to ask from the hon. Minister the number of top officials of the Customs Department arrested under this Act? In your reply you have stated that the cases were also instituted in the Courts; I want to know the number of persons against whom prosecution was initiated? You only give the names of three or four officials if it is not possible to give the names of all of them,

SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not have the names of Customs Officials.

MR. SPEAKER : You may send her in writing if you know.

SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI : We come to know only through newspapers. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has stated in his reply that seizures made at the airports are kept under constant review for taking appropriate remedial action as warranted. The hon. Minister has certainly increased vigilance in the airports and has taken effective steps in this field for which he deserves congratulations, but I would like to know what steps have been taken by the hon. Minister in respect of very extensive border area with other countries as well as coastal area ?

SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH : Sir, we had a fair amount of success in this field this year. During the last year, seizures worth Rs. 101 crores were made during 10 months whereas this year seizures worth Rs. 142 crores were made during the last 10 months. You will be glad to know that gold worth Rs. 10.24 crores was seized during the entire last year whereas gold worth Rs. 42 crores has been seized only in 10 months this year. Thus, there has been a good deal of success. Therefore, quality of work and procedure has further been improved. Last year, seizures worth Rs. 101 crores were made while the number of seizures was 76 thousand, but this year, seizures worth Rs. 142 crores were made and the number of seizures was 40 thousand. It speaks of the quality of work

SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI : But, what is the position with regard to coastal and surface borders ?

SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH : It includes all; sea, surface and air.

[English]

SHRI S.M. BHATTAM : Sir, the Customs Officials are responsible for the seizure of about Rs. 30 crores worth of contraband materials. I would like to know

whether any of the Customs Officials who are responsible for the seizure of contraband materials to the value of Rs. 30 crores has been rewarded. The persons involved in the smuggling activities number about 903 persons and all of them were arrested. But I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether any charge-sheet has been framed against them and whether any stringent action will be taken against such persons who are involved in these activities. What are the stringent actions proposed to be taken against, how many of them are charged and how many of them are convicted ? Is there any information available with you with regard to the conviction of such people ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH) : We have a reward scheme. The officers can be given rewards up to the value of 20% of the seizures and we held several functions in which we openly honoured the officers for their good work done. I am glad that the customs officers have done a very good job. Some officers have been given rewards worth several lakhs of rupees. In this way, about Rs. 2 crores worth of rewards have been sanctioned. This is a very positive reward which has been given to the officers in appreciation of their good job. I may inform the hon. Member that under COFEPOSA itself, this year (upto 26-10-85) 1623 persons have been actually detained as compared to 719 persons last year.

As regards prosecution, we take the most stringent action and the conviction is dependent on the verdict of the court.

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD : As mentioned by the Minister, the total amount involved in the seizures last year was Rs. 82.33 crores and this year upto now Rs. 142 crores. May I know if the magnitude of the problem this year has increased as compared to last year, or whether last year they could not detect properly ? Keeping in view the seizures in both the years, is the Minister satisfied that we have been able to reach a sizeable section of these people in this year ?

SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH : I am not satisfied. Much more has to be done. We have to do it on the

administrative side, we have also to take economic measures to tackle smuggling and that is what we intend to do.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Release of Cotton Export Quota

*90. SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to release immediately the cotton export quota for the current season to ensure better deal to cotton growers; and

(b) the quantity proposed to be allocated to Markfed of Andhra Pradesh ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI KHURSHID ALAM KHAN) : (a) and (b). The Government have already released some quantities for export during the current cotton season. Further export quota will be released if and when considered necessary. Allocation of export quotas to State Federations including Andhra Pradesh can be considered keeping in view their capability and past performance.

Relaxation to Credit Policy

*91. SHRI JAI PRAKASH AGARWAL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Reserve Bank of India has recently relaxed its credit policy to allow larger funds to meet credit requirements;

(b) if so, the norms evolved for extending credit; and

(c) whether any ceiling has been fixed on bank credit for various items to different parties ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH) : (a) to (c). The Reserve Bank of India

reviewed the credit policy prior to the onset of the busy season. Taking into account the liquidity position of banks and the genuine seasonal credit needs, certain changes were made in the credit policy announced on October 25, 1985. These included :

- (i) Release of one-third of impounded cash balances maintained under the Additional Cash Reserve of 10 per cent of the incremental demand and time liabilities of banks accruing between January 1977 and October 1980.
- (ii) Reduction of Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR) for non-resident (external) rupee accounts from 37 per cent to 25 per cent.
- (iii) Bringing forward of the base for 100 per cent export refinance from the monthly average level of 1983 to 1984.
- (iv) Repayment by banks of discretionary refinance outstanding on October 25, 1985 and corrections for shortfalls in the maintenance of SLR.

These measures taken together are expected to provide some improvement in banks' liquidity.

No new norms or ceilings on banks' credit for various items to different parties were prescribed in the recent credit policy statement of October 25, 1985.

Export of Jute

*92. SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSI : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether the recent bulk contracts of State Trading Corporation for export of jute to some countries have been cancelled;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) the steps taken/proposed to increase export of jute; and

(d) the prospects for the current year ?