

Inflow of these articles when they are available inside the country.

SHRI THAMPAN THOMAS : My second supplementary is, on account of the harassment by the customs officers, what has happened is, they are getting enriched at the cost of the passengers coming from abroad and that has been revealed in the recent raids conducted on customs officers in Bombay, Delhi and certain other cities. Therefore, there are cases where such malpractices are going on. In almost all the airports where customs officers are involved, they amass more wealth than any other person in the country. They have the means to amass wealth by using this opportunity. So, it is only proper to relax these rules and introduce an intelligent method to see that smuggling and other things are prevented. I would like to know what methods or steps taken to prevent involvement of customs officers in corrupt practices. Has the Government got any programme for that?

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY : I share the concern of the hon. Member so far as the harassment of the passengers is concerned. It is true and it is the duty of the Government to see that no harassment is caused to the passengers not only to Indians who are coming from abroad but also to foreign travellers. But, Sir it is our duty also to see that the baggage allowance given is not misused and abused. So, we are very careful so far as the treatment given to the passengers whenever they come from abroad is concerned and we are reducing the harassment given and we are monitoring it also.

If there are abuses and there are corrupt practices, we have already taken action and also some of the officials have been removed and their houses have been raided. We have not spared any person. Personally, I would say that the Government in the Finance Department is monitoring the performance of these officers and whoever has been found responsible for harassment, we have taken action. It will be continued and such action will not be stopped. It is not only that but when they are found living beyond their means, their houses are raided by the CBI.

[*Translation*]

Malpractices in Delhi Branch of State Bank of Indore

*28. **SHRI RAJ KUMAR RAI :** Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the number of cases involving malpractices of withdrawals, loans and appointment of staff in the Delhi Branch of the State Bank of Indore detected during the period 1983-85;

(b) whether these cases have been enquired into and any collusion of the bank staff established; and

(c) the outcome of the enquiries and the steps taken or contemplated?

[*English*]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) to (c). A Statement is given below.

Statement

State Bank of Indore has reported that two cases of malpractices in respect of loans came to its notice during the period 1983 to 1985. Both these cases have been inquired into by the Bank. In one case, the entire amount, including interest amounting nearly to Rs. 28.50 lacs, has been recovered. In connection with that case, the penalty of removal from service has been imposed on the Branch Manager, while two other bank officials have been awarded punishment involving reduction in pay/censure.

2. In the other case, an amount of Rs. 1.58 lacs out of Rs. 2.17 lacs has been recovered, and efforts are continuing to recover the balance. The matter has also been reported to the Police and a charge-sheet has been issued to one officer for his negligence.

3. During the same period, one case of irregular appointment of an under-aged person as a temporary peon came to light. The individual concerned had been appointed temporarily and when at the end of the

6th day it came to light that he was under-age, his services were dispensed with. The Branch Manager concerned has been cautioned.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJ KUMAR RAI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, though no one can raise a finger against the efficiency of the hon. Minister, yet it is a fact that the bank officials and the bureaucrats are misleading him all the time. In reply to my question it was said that there had been two cases of malpractices in which one bank manager had been dismissed and action was being taken against another.

Sir, in the account books of a firm called Messrs. Sen Sales Corporation, the C.B.I. had detected a bungling of Rs. 35 lakhs in 1983. Two persons, namely Shri P.N. Srivastava and Shri P.K. Mudgil were found responsible for it. Sir, it so happened that according to Item No. 28 dated 30.8.83, the Executive Committee of the Head Office had found both of them equally guilty and it was decided to award punishment to both of them. However, as one of the family members of Shri P.N. Srivastava was in the bank vigilance, he was given promotion and the entire blame was put on Shri P.K. Mudgil who was the Branch Manager and he was dismissed. This is the way the banks function.

Secondly, Messrs. Expo International, Messrs. Jasmine had suffered losses of more than Rs. one crore in 1984-85. In the matter of letters of credit...

MR. SPEAKER : Allegations cannot be levelled here. If there are any allegations, you should first give me in writing.

SHRI RAJ KUMAR RAI : I want to know from the hon. Minister when the Head Office of the Bank had found specifically two persons guilty of the offence, then why was Shri Mudgil alone made the scapegoat and Shri P.N. Srivastava was allowed to go scot-free just because the bank vigilance official who was investigating this case happened to be his relative ?

[English]

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY : We

refute the allegation that the CBI favoured any person. For the information of the honourable member, the CBI consist of officials of high integrity. So far as the allegations are concerned, we have gone into them. CBI also has gone into the matter. In fact, so far as the Manager is concerned—Shri P.K. Mudgal—he was dismissed and in his case we are examining also whether he can be prosecuted, he can be prosecuted criminally also. So far as the loss to the bank is concerned, no monetary loss has been caused to the bank. So far as the case of Mr. Srivastav, Accountant is concerned, action has been taken departmentally and his increments were cut. The gravity of his offence was not so high as to attract the dismissal. In fact, in another case also, we are going into it. We are examining all the aspects. The hon. Member is aware of the fact that I have written to him giving the details of the action we have taken. If you are not satisfied with that, you can write to me once again and definitely I will go through your new points which you are going to bring in.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJ KUMAR RAI : Sir, since the Committee had found Shri P.N. Srivastava also equally accountable for the offence, why was he promoted ? The hon. Minister has not replied to this question.

MR. SPEAKER : When some persons are to be sent out, they are promoted.

SHRI RAJ KUMAR RAI : Sir, now the Hon. Prime Minister is the Finance Minister also and he would not allow such things to continue.

In regard to your reply, I also want to know as to what punishment has been awarded to Shri Prakash Sharma who was responsible for giving appointment to an under-aged person ? The under-aged employee was dismissed from service after 6 days but was posted to a better post in the R.M. Office. Shri S.L. Sharma of the same office who had filed a written complaint that an underaged person had been appointed was sent to Madhya Pradesh and was not paid the subsistence allowance

for two years, in spite of my writing a dozen letters for it.

(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY : Sir, in this case a temporary peon was appointed for cleaning the Bank. He was appointed on production of an out-patient slip. In that slip it was mentioned that he was more than 18 years of age. Within six days it was revealed that he was not 18, and fortunately or unfortunately that boy was removed and the manager was cautioned.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : Individual cases should not be put forth in this manner.

[English]

I think, we should not do it in future.

SHRI S.M. GURADDI : I would like to know whether you have received any complaints from other nationalised banks' staff like Managers or Chairmen and whether any action has been taken.

MR. SPEAKER : This is a routine question and too wide a question.

MR. SPEAKER : Next question. Smt. Vyjayanthimala Bali.

SMT. VYJAYANTHIMALA BALI : Firstly I am glad that my question is coming after two years ! Question No. 29.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : You have achieved in two years, what others achieve after 12 years of penance.

(Interruptions)

[English]

Preservation of Forests Areas in
Tamil Nadu

*29. SHRIMATI VYJAYANTHIMALA BALI : Will the Minister of

ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) the regions in Tamil Nadu having 60 per cent or more forests area;

(b) whether felling of trees in these regions during the past several years has taken place depriving their forest wealth; and

(c) if so, the corrective measures taken in this regard including any special schemes of afforestation in the Central sector ?

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BHAJAN LAL) :

(a) No district in Tamil Nadu has more than 60 per cent of geographical area under forests. However, 'The Nilgiris' district has approximately 59% of the area under forests.

(b) No large scale felling of trees in 'The Nilgiris' district has taken place in the past years so as to deprive it of its forest wealth.

(c) Clear felling of natural stands in Reserved forests has been banned since 1977. The management of private forests in the district is covered under the Tamil Nadu Preservation of Private Forests Act, 1949 and Tamil Nadu Hill Areas (Preservation of Trees) Act, 1955. The central scheme for hill areas development is being implemented specially in 'The Nilgiris' district of Tamil Nadu. Central assistance for afforestation is also provided under various programmes.

[English]

SHRIMATI VYJAYANTHIMALA BALI : Sir, I would like firstly to mention that while we are very grateful and proud... (Interruptions) I cannot explain certain things in Hindi... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Silence please. She is getting a chance after two years.

SHRIMATI VYJAYANTHIMALA BALI : We are very proud of the fact that the present Government of India is