

MR. SPEAKER: Don't they have cooperatives there?

SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO: In spite of the cooperatives, Sir. But when we take loans in the commercial banks they charge higher rate of interest and for every three months they compound it also. So, my question to the Government is whether the Government is aware of this particular aspect that because the present scale of financing of the crop loans is not up to the mark and to the requirement of the farmers, the farmers are taking gold loans to utilise that money in the agricultural sector. If so, I would like to know whether the Government will treat these gold loans also on par with crop loans before the harvest of the crop and charge lesser interest and apply the same rules which are followed for the agricultural crop loans.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Sir, I would like to say this that there is no question of poor farmers who have been hit by the calamities being harassed in pursuit of request for loans from banks. Banks will not take up these matters in a manner where the farmers are put in jail. They will not do it. If such cases come to our notice ..

SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO: It was brought to your notice by Mr. Janga Reddy. I am very sorry you have not taken any action

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: No; if there are any such cases please bring it to my notice, I will definitely inquire into it and take necessary action in this matter.

Secondly, as far as gold ornaments which are pledged with the banks are concerned, we have issued instructions that in respect of gold ornaments, though the loans and security have not been paid, gold ornaments will not be auctioned. (*Interruptions*).

On the third point, the rates of interest are fixed by the Reserve Bank. However, I will look into the matter.

#### **Proposal to set up Trade centre in Singapore**

\*323. SHRI SHANTILALPURSHOT-TAMBHAI PATEL†:  
SHRI S.M. GURADDI:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are actively considering a proposal to set up a trade centre in Singapore for promoting economic cooperation;

(b) whether the proposal has been received from Government of Singapore; and

(c) if so, the time by which the centre will be set up and the benefit to accrue from it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P.R. DAS MUNSI): (a) to (c). No proposal has been received from the Government of Singapore. However, one of the suggestions made during the Ministerial meeting with trade in Singapore in August 1988, was the need for establishing a trade centre in Singapore.

[*Translation*]

SHRI SHANTILAL PURSHOT-TAMBHAI PATEL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, what initiatives have been taken by the Government for setting up the proposed trade centre in Singapore.

SHRI P.R. DAS MUNSI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Ministry of Commerce held discussions with the Government of Singapore and their officials of the Chamber or trade have

realised that they have been finding it quite difficult to understand the function of Indian chambers of trade and Industry until an establishment similar to that of trade centre was set up there in Singapore to apprise them of Industrial set up in India. They specifically stressed upon the need of a warehouse to the set up there. So, the Indian authorities decided to set up a similar establishment on priority basis in Rotterdam and Netherlands and initiated the project. Further action will depend upon the results to be achieved in Netherlands. Indian High Commission and Expert Promotion Council are preparing a report on it. After that when I visited that country in August, they asked and suggested setting up of Indian trade centre. All the important Indian agencies like STC, MMTC EPC and Tea Board are making concerted efforts to see whether setting up of a warehouse or a show room, in order to provide extensive knowledge about the functioning of Indian Chambers of trade and Industry, is needed. As regards the expenditure likely to be incurred on this project, EPC and the officials of the High Commission are engaged in preparing a report. We have been examining the matter extensively and are considering to open the trade centres in cities of Frankfurt, Tokyo, Dubai, Newyork and London also.

[English]

**Man-Power Engaged in Anti-Smuggling Operations**

\*324. SHRI BHADRESWAR TANTI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the present man-power is adequate to manage all types of anti-smuggling operations; and

(b) if so, the circumstances under which smuggling activities are increasing in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI A.K. PANJA): (a) and (b). A statement is given below.

**STATEMENT**

(a) Keeping in mind the trends in smuggling, the vulnerability of various regions and the changing modus operandi adopted by the smugglers from time to time, the manpower needs of the anti-smuggling machinery to prevent all types of smuggling operations cannot be said to be adequate. Steps are taken from time to time to augment the staff requirements on the basis of felt needs.

(b) Smuggling is a clandestine activity and, therefore, no reasonable estimate of the quantum of goods being smuggled into or out of the country at any given time can be made. However, seizures of contraband effected during the last few years indicated below show an upward trend. This need not necessarily be on account of a spurt in smuggling activities and could be due to more effective preventive and anti-smuggling measures.

Year	Valu of goods seized (Rs. in crores)
1985	195.63
1986	217.52
1987	251.47
1988(upto 21.11.'88)	351.00 (provisional)

SHRI BHADRESWAR TANTI: Sir, it appears from the statement given by the Minister that the smuggling activities in the country are increasing from 1985 to till date