

Simplification of baggage clearance procedures at international airports

1224. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Excise and Customs Board has recently taken a decision to simplify baggage clearance procedures at the international airports in the country in order to ensure speedy disposal of passengers;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether more X-ray machines have been installed to scan the baggage etc.; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The scale of checks at green channel has been considerably reduced. Customs officers have been told to be polite and prompt in clearance of passengers. Separate Customs Counters have been opened to facilitate clearance of senior citizens, women, children, handicapped persons and Non Resident Indians.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) In view of reply to part (c), does not arise.

New drug for treatment of T.B.

1225. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the scientists at the Institute of Microbial Technology, Chandigarh have developed a more potent form of rifampicin, a drug for treatment of T.B. for more effective and quick treatment;

(b) whether Government have tested the new drug for T.B. treatment;

(c) whether Government propose to make such drug available in all Government Hospitals in the country; and

(d) if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SMT. D. K. THARA DEVI SIDDHARTHA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The new preparation has first to be evaluated for toxicity and efficacy before it can be released for treatment of patients.

(c) and (d) The issue regarding making the drug available in Government Hospitals will be taken up after its safety and efficacy is established.

Poisoning of peacocks in M.P.

1226. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:

SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL:

SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to a news-item captioned "Over 250 peacocks poisoned in M.P." appearing in the Hindustan Times of the 8th August, 1991;

(b) if so, whether the Central Government have contemplated any action in this regard under the Wild Life (Protection) Act;

(c) whether the National bird has been deliberately poisoned in the State to smuggle its wings;

(d) what are the facts and details of the investigations made in this regard, so far; and

(e) what further steps Government propose to take to save the national bird?

THE MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) A news-item has appeared in the Hindustan Times dated the 19th August, 1991, with the caption "Over 250 peacocks poisoned in M.P.". The news-item states that 175 peacocks were killed near village Mirzapur in Rajgarh district, Madhya Pradesh, in April last.

(b) Madhya Pradesh police has registered a case under section 429 of Indian Penal Code and 4/9 of Animal and Bird Protection Act. Madhya Pradesh Government has been requested to invoke the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, in this case.

(c) The viscera of the two dead peacocks found on the spot has been sent for examination by forensic laboratory at Sagar to confirm if the peacocks died due to poisoning. The report has not yet been received. The investigations by police suggests that the peacocks were killed by "Kanjars" for the sake of meat. During investigations it has been found that many female peacocks, which do not have exportable tail feathers, were also killed and quite a large number of peacock tail feathers were found lying on the spot. These facts indicate that peacocks were not killed to smuggle peacock tail feathers.

(d) Investigations have not yet been concluded by the Police.

(e) The steps taken to save the National Bird from killing are:—

(i) the peacock is included in Schedule I of the Act. Any person guilty of killing a peacock is liable for a fine which shall not be less than Rs. 500/- and imprisonment for a term which may extend to 6 years but shall not be less than 6 months or both.

(ii) Amendments to Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, are contemplated to authorise officers of the Central Government to file complaints in Court against the violations of the Act. Individuals would also have the right to file complaints against the violation of the Act subject to certain stipulations. The penalties for poaching and illegal trade are also proposed to be suitably enhanced.

(iii) Ceiling for export of peacock tail feathers and articles made thereof has been reduced from 60 lakhs to 20 lakhs, per year.

(iv) Central Government is providing financial assistance to State Government to strengthen their anti-poaching infrastructure.

Narcotics control in the Country

1227. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:
SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to a news-item captioned 'India not paying enough attention to drug control' as 18th August, 1991;

(b) whether it has been revealed in the International Narcotics Control Strategy Report that India has not paid adequate attention to narcotics control;

(c) whether the smuggling of narcotics in India has increased during the past few years; and

(d) if so, what steps Government propose to take to check its smuggling?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHR RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) and (b) The Government have seen the news item and have obtained a copy of the International Narcotics Control Strategy Report of the Department of States of the United