

RAJYA SABHA

Tuesday, the 22nd November, 1983/ 1
Agrahayana 1905 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock, Mr.
Chaii-man in the Chair

MEMBER SWORN

SHRI SHAMIM AHMED SIDDIQUE
<De.hi>

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Seizure of Baggage of Officials who accompanied the Prime Minister on her recent U. S. Tour

- 101. SHRI HARISHANKAR BHABHRA:f SHRI PYARELAL
KHANDEL-WAL;

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased
to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has
been drawn to the Press report which app
eared in the 'Indian Express' dated the
12th October, 1983 to the effect that bag
gage valued at several lakhs of rupees, of
the 18 top Government official who ac
companied the Prime Minister on her re
cent tour to the United States, was detain
ed by the Customs authorities at the Delhi
Airport;

(b) if so, the dates on which the
baggage was detained and the full payment
of duty made;

(c) the names of the items, the value
thereof and the amount of duty paid thereon;

(d) whether they declared their baggage; if
not, what action was taken against them and
what are the names of the items detained and
still unclaimed, alongwith their value; and

(e) what are the names and designations of
the officers who brought such baggage and
what are their sources of foreign exchange?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAT-
TABHI RAMA RAO): (a) to (e) A

(•The question was actually asked on the
floor of the House by Shri Harishan-kar
Bhabhra. 1236 RS—1.

statement is laid on the Table of the
House.

Statement The Press report
which appeared in the "Indian Express" of the
12th October, 1983 had come to
Government's notice; and a clarification
explaining the facts was issued on the same
day, a copy of which is annexed.

Fourteen of the passengers on this special
flight (one of whom had also carried the
unaccompanied baggage of another
passenger, who was due to arrive separately
later) did not clear their dutiable baggage on
the spot and left it with the Customs for
subsequent clearance for which. in
accordance with the usual procedure,
detention receipts were issued to them on 4-
10-1983. This baggage included such items as
video cassette recorders, radio cassette
recorders, colour T. Vs., Cameras and a fire
arm of an aggregate value of about Rs.
1,38,000.

Ten of these passengers have since cleared
the dutiable baggage left over by them,
wholly or partly, on different dates, on
payment of appropriate duty. The amount of
duty recovered on the baggage since cleared
by these 10 passengers, comes to about Rs.
86,000. In one case, I.T.C. fine was also
recovered in addition to the duty leviable. The
declared value of the baggage which is
pending clearance comes to about Rs. 93,000.

The question of sources of foreign exchange
of the passengers who had left their dutiable
baggage with Customs for subsequent
clearance and for which detention receipts
were issued, will be looked into separately by
the concerned authorities. Annexure
Government Press note

Reports appearing m a section of the Press
that baggage of the Prime Minister's staff has
been seized by the Palam Customs on the
ground that there were contraband items
valued at several lakhs or that there was an
attempt at transporting this baggage directly
from the runway to the homes of the
passengers, are incorrect. There is also no
basis in the report that