

RAJYA SABHA

*Tuesday the 22nd December, 1981/
1st Pausa, 1903 (Saka)*

The House met at eleven of the clock, Mr. Chairman in the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Gurudev Gupta, Question No. 421.

SHRI GURUDEV GUPTA: I put Question No. 421.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are lucky that it is not 420.

Confiscated Goods

*421. SHRI GURUDEV GUPTA:

SHRI RAMCHANDRA
BHARADWAJ:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(i) what is the total value of confiscated goods in the godowns of the Customs Department at various places in the country as on the 30th November, 1981;

(b) what is the total value of goods which have since been disposed of through co-operative societies in the country during the years 1980 and 1981 upto 30th November, 1981;

(c) what is the total value of confiscated goods sold at the customs godowns during 1980 and 1981 upto 30th November, 1981; and

(d) whether Government propose to stop selling confiscated goods from the customs godowns?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SWAISINGH SISODIA): (a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Gurudev Gupta.

1558 RS—1.

Statement

(a) The total value of smuggled goods confiscated by the Customs authorities, lying in the godowns of the Department as on 30th September, 1981, figures for which are available was Rs. 42.62 crores (Figures provisional).

(b) The value of such confiscated goods sold to the National Co-operative Consumer Federation Ltd. during the years, 1980 and 1981 (up to September) figures for which are available, was Rs. 5.18 crores and Rs. 3.77 crores respectively (Figures provisional).

(c) The value of such goods disposed of by retail sale by the Customs authorities during the years 1980 and 1981 (up to September) figures for which are available, was Rs. 2.63 crores and Rs. 1.65 crores respectively (Figures provisional).

(d) No, Sir.

SHRI ARVIND GANESH KULKARNI: Sir...

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Sir, Sir...

MR. CHAIRMAN: These hands are already seen.

श्री गुरुदेव गुप्त : मान्यवर, जो यह स्टेटमेंट दिया गया है, इसके अनुसार 42.62 करोड़ रुपए का माल अभी सीमा शुल्क अधिकारियों के गोदामों में है, जो पकड़ा गया है। साथ ही जनता शासन के दौरान कस्टम गोदामों में लगभग सौ करोड़ रुपए का माल पकड़ा गया जिसको जनता शासन के कर्णधार समूह में प्रवाहित करके नष्ट करना चाहते थे या उसका पुनर्निर्माण करना चाहते थे। मैं यह जानना चाहूंगा कि इस माल की वर्तमान सरकार ने किस भाव से बिक्री का है और सीमा शुल्क अधिकारियों द्वारा जब्त किये गये माल को निपटाने का उनका तरीका क्या है ?

श्री सवाई सिंह सिसोदिया : मान्यवर, यह प्रश्न काफी महत्वपूर्ण है और व्यापक भी है। (व्यवधान) माननीय सदस्य ने मुख्य तौर पर दो बातों की तरफ ज्यादा जोर दिया है। पहला प्रश्न तो यह है कि यह जो सामान इस तरीके से जब्त होता है, इसके डिस्पोजल, इसके वितरण का क्या तरीका है। इसके बारे में मेरा निवेदन है कि माननीय सदस्य को यह जानकारी होगी कि जो माल इस तरह से जब्त होता है, हमारे कस्टम अधिकारियों द्वारा और जो स्मगलड गुड्स होता है, जितना वह ला सकते हैं, उससे ज्यादा लाने हैं तो वह भी जब्त किया जाता है, जो गैर-कानूनी तरीके से और गैर-कानूनी तरीके से लाया जाता है उसको भी जब्त किया जाता है। इसमें सबसे पहले विभाग का यह प्रयत्न रहता है कि जो इस प्रकार का माल है वह नेशनल कंज्यूमर्स कोऑपरेटिव फंडेशन, जो माल बल्क में आता है, ज्यादा तादाद में जब्त किया जाता है किसी बैरल में, अकम्पनाड और अतअकम्पनाड माल जो इकट्ठा, थोक माल होता है, उसके बारे में नियम बने हुए हैं, वह नेशनल कंज्यूमर्स कोऑपरेटिव फंडेशन को दिया जाता है। इस पर उनको कमीशन दिया जाता है और इसका मूल्य निर्धारित किया जाता है और नेशनल कंज्यूमर्स कोऑपरेटिव फंडेशन उनको

श्री सभापति : बेचा है।

श्री सवाई सिंह सिसोदिया : नीचे को लेबल तक का कोऑपरेटिव के द्वारा बेचा है। इसी तरीके से छोटा-छोटा और कम तादाद में जो माल आता है, जिसको कस्टम इन्ट्री लाने वाले नहीं दे पाते हैं, या देने के लिए तैयार नहीं हैं उसको भी जब्त कर लिया जाता है और वह माल कस्टम के काउन्टर पर बेचा जाता है इसके अलावा बहुत से और सामान हैं जन के लिए अलग-अलग तरीके हैं

जिस तरह से उनको बेचा जाता है। इसमें श्रीमन्, आप देखेंगे कि ट्रेड गुड्स के लिए अलग प्रोसीजर है, जो वैसेल्स हैं उनके लिए दूसरे नियम हैं, गोल्ड और सिल्वर के लिए अलग हैं, इंडियन एंड फारेन करेंसी के लिए अलग हैं, आर्म एंड अम्युनिशंस . . .

श्री सभापति : सबके अलग अलग हैं।

श्री सवाई सिंह सिसोदिया : सबके लिए निश्चित प्रोसीजर है और उसी के अनुसार इसमें कार्यवाही की जाती है। अब प्रश्न यह है कि जनता शासन के जमाने में यह एक विचार था कि इसको नष्ट कर दिया जाये परन्तु इस बात से वर्तमान शासन सहमत नहीं है। जो कि मूल्यवान चीजें हैं, उनका वितरण किस प्रकार से हो इस पर काफी गम्भीरता के साथ सोचकर नियम निर्धारित किये गये हैं, बनाये गये हैं और उनके अनुसार अमल होता है।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Just a minute. He is entitled to a second supplementary.

श्री गुब्बेदेव गुप्त : मान्यवर, यह एक निविवाद सत्य है कि तस्करी किया हुआ माल आज देश के हर शहर में खुले आम बड़ले से फुटपाथों पर बिक रहा है। क्या शासन ने इस बात का पता लगाने की चेष्टा की है कि यह माल दुकानों पर किस स्रोत से आता है और इसको रोकने के लिए आप क्या उपाय कर रहे हैं। साथ ही कोफेपोसा में जो लॉग बन्द हैं उसमें कोई सरकारी अधिकारी भा है या नहीं ?

श्री सवाई सिंह सिसोदिया : कोफेपोसा में माल-माल आकड़े में विवरण करने चाहता हूँ। COFEPOSA detention orders issued in 1979 were 257, in 1980 these were 354, and in 1981 up to October the number is 254.

SHRI PILOO MODY: Sir, what is the relevance?

SHRI SAWAISINGH SISODIA: The number of persons actually detained in 1979 was 224, in 1980, 298 and upto October, 1981, 194. About the number of Government employees, the break-up is that during 1980...

SHRI PILOO MODY: Sir, what is its relevance?

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has asked how many of them are Government servants.

SHRI PILOO MODY: I want to know whether the question was planted or the answer is planted, because he has already the information with him even to answer a question which is totally irrelevant.

SHRIMATI HAMIDA HABIB-ULLAH: What is this, Mr. Mody?

MR. CHAIRMAN: You don't know what may be asked.

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN: Why are you annoyed with giving answers, Mr. Mody? You should be annoyed with not giving answers.

SHRI PILOO MODY: I am interested in all citizens of India, including you.

SHRI SAWAISINGH SISODIA: Customs and Central Excise Officers—in 1980, 9 officers were involved. Some of them were suspended. The number of police officers was 6 in 1980.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is all right. You need not give the whole catalogue. Shri Bharadwaj.

श्री गुरुदेव गुप्त : मान्यवर, मैं यह जानना चाहता था कि जो माल फुट-पाथों पर बिक रहा है वह किस श्रोत से आता है और इसके रोकने के लिए वे क्या उपाय कर रहे हैं। इसका उत्तर

तो मिलना चाहिये। पीनू मोदी के प्रश्न में हमारा प्रश्न समाप्त नहीं हो जाता।
(व्यवधान)

श्री सवाईसिंह सिसोदिया : मान्यवर, यह काफी महत्वपूर्ण प्रश्न है। इसके बारे में मेरा निवेदन है कि जो फुट-पाथ पर माल बेचा जाता है उसके बहुत से स्रोत हैं। सबसे बड़ा यह है कि वह स्मगल कर के आता है। आम तौर पर तीन हजार पैमेंटर रोज बाहर से आते हैं। वे भी जो परमिसिबल आइटम्स हैं जितनी वेल्थ की परमिशन है यहां लाने के बाद भी बाजार में चीजें जा सकती हैं। इस तरीके से यह समझना कि फुटपाथ पर जो माल बिकता है वह सब माल स्मगल हो कर आता है, यह सही नहीं है। लेकिन दोनों प्रकार का हो सकता है साथ में लाया हुआ माल भी हो सकता है। इसके बारे में जो मेजरज ले रहे हैं—
Soon after the present Government took office, an action plan was formulated in connection with the implementation of the 20-point programme...

श्री पीलू मोदी : 20 प्वाइंट प्रोग्राम भी इसमें आ गया।

SHRI SAWAISINGH SISODIA: ... which, *inter alia*, called for pursuing anti-smuggling and anti-tax evasion measures. The action plan proposes the following four-pronged strategy: strengthening of the preventive and intelligence machinery, intensification of application of the provisions of COFEPOSA, economic and legislative measures and bilateral arrangements for cooperation with neighbouring countries.

श्री रामचन्द्र भारद्वाज : मान्यवर, मेरा प्रश्न वहीं से शुरू होता है जहां से निश्चित उत्तर में कहा गया है, जहां नहीं। वा

सरकार मीमा शूल्क गोदामों से जन्तुशुदा वस्तुओं की बिक्री रोक देने का विचार रखती है, इसके उत्तर में मान्यवर, माननीय मंत्री जी की ओर से जवाब है, जो नहीं। मैं इस सम्बन्ध में निवेदन करना चाहता हूँ और यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि जन्तुशुदा जोड़ें हाँ बाजार में बिक रहा है इसका क्या गारंटी उनके पास है। यह पहली बात है। इसको रोकने की जरूरत है क्या किसी माध्यमी कौतूहारी की जरूरत है जिससे इन वोजों को कम बाजार में पहचान सकें। अभी मंत्री महोदय ने यह कहा कि कई तराकों से समान हो कर तस्करी का सामान आता है। हमारा बार्डर एक ओर से इतना खुला हुआ है और दूसरी ओर हम समुद्र से घिरे हुये हैं। तस्करी से जा माल आता है उसको रोकने के लिए हमारे पास आधुनिकतम नौकाय नहीं हैं जो बहुत संभाव्य ढंग से तस्करी रोकें।

श्री सभापति : आप सवाल पूछिए।

श्री रामचन्द्र भारद्वाज : तो मेरा सवाल यह है कि वह तस्करी का पकड़ा हुआ माल है और वही बाजार में है, क्या इसकी जानकारी के लिए इनके पास कोई साधन है ?

श्री सवाईसिंह सिसोदिया : तस्करी किया हुआ और काउन्टर से बिका हुआ माल भी बाजार में आता है इस बात से इन्कार नहीं किया जा सकता है। अगर एक व्यक्ति पांच रुपए में किसी चीज को खरीदता है तो इसको मुनाफा कमाने के लिए बाजार में बेच सकता है, इस प्रकार की संभावना हो सकती है। लेकिन ज्यादातर बाजार में बनावटी माल ही अब आता है। वह हिन्दुस्तान में बनता है लेकिन उसको फारेन गुड्स बताते हैं

और इस तरीके से करते हैं। इस पर कोई निश्चित प्रतिबन्ध इस प्रकार का लगाने का कोई तरीका नहीं है और इसका आइडेंटिफिकेशन भी नहीं हो सकता है। यह माल वही है जो काउन्टर से खरीद कर लाये हैं। इस प्रकार की संभावना भी हो सकती है।

श्री रामचन्द्र भारद्वाज : मेरा दूसरा प्रश्न... इसी का एक अंश है। इस पर जो अभी मंत्री महोदय ने कहा कि ऐसी कोई व्यवस्था नहीं हो सकती है कि जाना जा सके कि जन्तुशुदा माल है या दूसरी तरह का माल लाये हैं तो जन्तुशुदा माल जो कस्टम के गोडाऊन से भेजा जाता है क्या उस पर ऐसा कोई निशान नहीं लगाया जा सकता जिससे उसका सही पता चले...

श्री सभापति : वह निशान भी बना लेंगे। आपको मालूम नहीं मोदी साहब से पूछिए कि बोटलों में क्या भरा होता है ?

SHRI PILLO MODY: It all depends on whether you are filling them or he is filling them.

श्री महेन्द्र मोहन मिश्र : श्रीमन्, यह बड़ा महत्वपूर्ण प्रश्न है, यह हमारे मंत्री जी ने भी कहा और इस प्रश्न के पीछे की चिंता हमारे माननीय सदस्य की यही थी। श्रीमन्, कन्फिस्केटेड गुड्स आती हैं वह चीज अपनी जगह पर हैं परन्तु इसका वितरण कैसे होता है इसके लिए हमारे मंत्री जी ने कहा कि वितरण नेशनल कन्ज्यूमर्स कोऑपरेटिव के माध्यम से होता है। मैं मंत्री जी से कहना चाहता हूँ कि अगर सरकार का स्रोत यही है कि इन कस्टम डिपार्टमेंट के शोरूम से माल बेचना चाहे वह गोडाऊन का शोरूम हो या कस्टम का तो क्या संसद भवन में भी इसका एक शोरूम खोलेंगे जिससे हम इसको समझें और वहां से माल खरीद सकें ?

श्री सवाईसिंह सिसोदिया : यह सब विचार के लिए सुझाव हैं। इस पर गौर किया जाएगा।

SHRI PILOO MODY: Mr. Chairman, Sir...

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Sir Sir,...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Just a minute. I think there is more interest in this question than in the smuggled goods.

SHRI PILOO MODY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Minister has made two rather very amazing statements. He says that goods which are brought in under the allowable limits, he thinks, can be sold and, therefore, are not considered as smuggled goods. I think it is clearly understood—the Finance Minister will correct me if I am wrong—that goods that are brought in for resale are considered as smuggled goods. You are only permitted to bring in these goods for your own...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Personal use.

SHRI PILOO MODY: ...personal use. That is one point which the hon. Minister replying to the question, perhaps did not know. And the second thing is, he has claimed complete helplessness in being able to check all these goods that are fraudulently manufactured over here and then stamped otherwise. So, on both scores he has admitted that he cannot do anything and, therefore, I do not think that his reading out a list of the COFEPOSA victims is going to help the matter at all. The point that I wanted to ask was this. From his reply over here. I made a quick calculation that so far the Customs have been able to dispose of goods worth 13 to 14 crores of rupees out of the Rs. 42-odd crore worth of goods. Can I take it, and will the hon. Minister assure me, that 25 to 30 crores worth of goods are still in the Customs sheds?

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN: Sir, so far as the first part of the question

is concerned, what my esteemed colleague explained was that if people who are allowed to bring certain things as allowable baggage sell them to other people, it will be difficult for the Government to check. It is true that if they declare that these goods are for sale, then we will not allow them as baggage. Baggage is allowed only in respect of those items which are for personal use. (Interruptions) You have not understood him.

SHRI SAWAISINGH SISODIA: He will never understand. (Interruptions)

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN: No, you did not understand. What my colleague said was that when...

SHRI PILOO MODY: I heard it.

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN: You heard it and you are trying to cleverly twist... (Interruptions)

SHRI PILOO MODY: I appreciate the team spirit.

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN: Certainly we take action in regard to spurious goods under our industrial regulation machinery, but still it is confession of reality when I say that these things do take place. My hon. friend visits Hong Kong and various other countries very often. He knows that there some of these watches are just put on with the brand names like Omega, Rolex and all that and are sold as such and our people think they have got wonderful watches at cheap prices whereas only the dial is of that brand.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That also may not be genuine.

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN: Yes, that also is not genuine. Therefore, that is the point with regard to it. Then, as regards the last point of Rs. 40-42 crores,...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Look at the excitement. Do not disclose where they are available.

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN: ...I would say that not all of them are sold. For instance, gold and silver will be transferred to the mint, the currency notes will be transferred to the Reserve Bank, then some of these things are transferred to military and para-military stores; and only the remaining things will be sold. Therefore,...

SHRI PILOO MODY: Value of the residue?

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN: Do you want me to give the whole figures?

SHRI PILOO MODY: I want to know how much you still have.

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN: That is difficult. Out of these, 92 (68+24) lakhs will be transferred to the mint because it is gold and silver; then item like currency worth Rs. 18 lakhs will be transferred to the Reserve Bank. Now, we will go on transferring. It is only the balance that will be sold. I cannot get a complete calculation. Shall I take out my calculator and do it?

SHRI PILOO MODY: Sir, he is always threatening to take out his calculator every so often. Very good.

SHRI ERA SEZHIYAN: Is it a foreign one or an Indian one?

SHRI PILOO MODY: It is a Sharp.

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN: Yes, it is a very sharp instrument, very useful instrument. (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: I will give a few more chances.

SHRI GURUDEV GUPTA: He is having the information which the hon. Minister has got.

श्रीमती मनोरमा पाण्डेय : माननीय मंत्री जी ने अपने उत्तर में बताया है कि टोटल वैल्यू आफ स्मगल गुड्स क्या है। मैं उनसे जानना चाहूंगी कि टोटल नम्बर

आफ गुड्स जो कांफिस्केट हुये हैं वह क्या हैं? और, जिन लोगों ने नियमों को तोड़ा है उनमें से कितने लोगों का अभी तक प्रासीक्यूशन हुआ है और कितने लोगों को सजायें हुई हैं?

श्री सच्चान्द पति : यह तो बड़ी लम्बी फेहरिस्त होगी।

SHRI SAWAISINGH SISODIA:

Yes, Sir. संक्षिप्त में बता।
About the number of persons arrested, she has not asked it for any year but I am giving her the information for 1980 and 1981. The number of persons arrested is 1,878 in 1980 and in 1981...

श्री सच्चान्द पति : कुछ होंगे थोड़े से ज्यादा, थोड़े से कम। मगर कितने प्रासीक्यूट हुये?

SHRI SAWAISINGH SISODIA:

Yes, Sir, that figure I have got. The number of persons prosecuted in 1980 is 1,350 and in 1981 it is 1,368 and the number of those convicted in 1980 is 783 and in 1981 it is 691. Sir, regarding the first part of the question, that was relating to 1980 and up to 30th November, 1981. The figure of Rs. 42.66 crores is relating to 1981 up to September, but the total goods seized and under the custody of the Department are worth Rs. 85.23 crores. (Interruptions) Let me explain the position for confiscated goods. As you know, after seizure there is a procedure—adjudication and final judgment—and after that the goods are ordered to be confiscated in favour of the Department. Therefore, the confiscated goods will be valued at Rs. 42.62 crores. Then there are goods ripe for disposal after adjudication by the Collector or the Assistant Collector. There is appeal and revision before different tribunals, before different authorities, competent authorities. Therefore, it takes time. And somebody may go to the High Court and the Supreme Court also. Therefore, the actual

position would be like this. The goods ripe for disposal out of (a) and (b) that is Rs. 85.23 crores and Rs. 42.62 crores, amount to Rs. 12.43 crores.

SHRI R. RAMAKRISHNAN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, when it is the avowed policy of the Government of India to discourage this craze for foreign goods, I would like to ask, through you, the hon. Finance Minister a very important question. All of us have been noticing in the past one year half-a-page and full page advertisements in a national newspaper from Casio, Citizen and Sharp and all these big foreign companies whose goods are sold in the smuggled goods market in India. At the end of the advertisement they put "For information purposes only", because nobody can import it. Obviously it is to encourage the smuggled goods market. Now Casio has brought in the latest calculator. They have advertised it in a big way. Will the Government of India consider banning these advertisements so that it will not lend a helping hand to those who want foreign goods, to purchase them, so that at least it will act as an effective check. Some people will say, "You bring me this and you bring me that," after seeing the advertisements and knowing the latest things.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Naturally.

SHRI PILOO MODY: Why do you want to prevent competition in smuggling?

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN: Chairman, Sir, I have myself noticed it. It is a suggestion for action. I will have it examined.

SHRI SADASHIV BAGAITKAR: Sir, I am surprised with the answer the hon. Minister has given. Smuggling is one of the major roads for corruption, and the methods to curb smuggling or end it altogether need to be reviewed. The hon. Minister has said about the decision made by the earlier Government to destroy the smuggled goods. The destruction did not involve currency or gold; it

involved computers or watches or such other things instead of passing them on to the co-operative chain stores and creating a sort of screen for all types of smugglers to come on to the foot path and sell it. That was the intention, I believe, of the previous Government. Would the hon. Minister tell us why this decision was reversed? And is it not a fact that because of your new policy, it has encouraged certain VIPs and other important persons also. The other day in this very House ** name was taken, and watches or goods are still lying with you. It has been confirmed by the Finance Ministry. He has not claimed the bag in which the watches were there. That was mentioned in this House. Therefore, I would like to know...

MR. CHAIRMAN: It does not arise out of this question.

SHRI SADASHIV BAGAITKAR: I would, therefore, like to know from the hon. Minister that the new policy which the Government has evolved to give protection to all kinds of smuggling and all types of... (Interruptions)

SHRI SITA RAM KESRI: Since you say that, ** is a Member of the other House... (Interruptions)

SHRI PILOO MODY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, no smuggler should be allowed to participate in the Question Hour. (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am myself reaching the conclusion that you are straying from the question.

SHRI SADASHIV BAGAITKAR: No. What I am saying is that the new policy is giving a helping hand to all those elements who want to bypass the laws to use their position, use their status and indulge in some sort of smuggling in this country. Would the Government consider taking stric-

**Note recorded.

ter measures to ban this activity? This is my question. This policy has failed already.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is permissible, but you cannot mention names.

SHRI SADASHIV BAGAITKAR: Sir, the names were mentioned in this very House in the debate on Friday last. I am not making any new point. You can go through the record and find it out.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I know. That was probably wrong then also.

SHRI SAWAISINGH SISODIA: It is improper to involve a Member of the other House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please do not start it again. I have ruled it out. Why are you bothered about it?

SHRI SAWAISINGH SISODIA: There is no question of **being connected with any act of smuggling. We have got no information. No record is with us. (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think you have got it more strongly than it should be. You better answer this question whether you are going to tighten up the thing.

SHRI SAWAISINGH SISODIA: It is incorrect. It is wrong. There is no proof and without any basis he should not make such wild allegations. As far as the question of intention of the Janata Government is concerned, of course, the hon. Member was part of that Government and he knows the intention. But as far as the records go, no such intention is there, and we do not agree with such propositions. This Government has not taken any step to attract the smugglers or to create any attraction towards smuggled goods. Whatever action has been taken—I have given the details—is only to take anti-smuggling measures through the proper procedure and channel. Therefore, there is no question of attracting smugglers or...

SHRI NAGESHWAR PRASAD SHAHI: Antulay.

SHRI SAWAISINGH SISODIA: ...smuggling activities. So, "intention" and "attraction", these are all irrelevant questions which he has put. and * * * is not involved in this (Interruptions).

SHRI SADASHIV BAGAITKAR: The intention was not the Question. (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think he has answered it in his own way and I cannot help it.

SHRI R. R. MORARKA: Once you allow a question, how can he say it is irrelevant?

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर : क्या मंत्री जी को मालूम है कि बहुत से डिप्लो-मेट्स भी स्मगल करते हुये पकड़े गये हैं ? 'इंडिया टुडे' का जो लेटेस्ट इशू है उसमें है कि सितम्बर में 10 हजार से ज्यादा वाचेज रशियन डिप्लोमेट्स से पकड़ी गयीं । इसी प्रकार से 'नवभारत टाइम्स' में खबर है कि रशियन डिप्लो-मेट्स कई हजार वाचेज और कई लाख का सोना लेकर हवाई अड्डे पर उतरते हुये पकड़े गये । ऐसे माल का क्या किया गया है ? ऐसे जो डिप्लोमेट्स हैं उनके खिलाफ आप नार्मल कार्यवाही नहीं कर सकते, इसलिए क्या कार्यवाही कर रहे हैं ? दोनों केसेज में रशियन डिप्लो-मेट्स

श्री सभापति : जरा एम्फेसिस कम रखिए ।

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर : वे जहाब नहीं देते ।

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN: Sir, it is unfortunately true that some of the people who enjoy immunity have been found to have brought contraband goods. Government will take appropriate action through diplomatic channels as well as under the law.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Last question now—Mr. Mohanarangam.

SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR: What about the goods? Are they confiscated in the normal way or are they deposited with the Embassy?

MR. CHAIRMAN: What have you done about the goods?

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर :
गुड्स का क्या होता है ?
Are they with you or with the Em-
bassy? मैंने दो केसेज बताये हैं रशियन
एम्बेसी के । उनकी गुड्स का क्या हुआ ?

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN: I told the hon. Member that Government will take action through diplomatic channels as well as under the law, whatever is possible under the law.

SHRI PILOO MODY: The answer lies with the Russians.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You can't dig very deep. Yes, Mr. Mohanarangam.

SHRI R. MOHANARANGAM: Sir, our hon. Minister has stated that some of the confiscated goods like gold and currency would be transferred to the Reserve Bank of India. But there are certain goods, very important goods, seized by the customs officers and they say that they are sent to the co-operatives and the customs godowns. But I know it fully well—I am staying very near the airport—that most of the goods in the customs offices are taken away by the customs officers, and the confiscated goods which are left by the customs officers are sold to the public. I want to know from the hon. Minister what action has been taken on the reports made by the public against customs officers who take away certain important goods, valuable goods. The second part of the question is that you have said that the confiscated goods are sent to the co-operatives and the customs godowns. But the goods can be divided into two categories; one, very valuable goods and two, goods which are easily available in the market. The valuable goods are taken away by the customs officers. What action have you taken against the customs

officials and what is the exact stage at which the matter stands at present?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Instances are not there.

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN: Sir, there is a rule in the service of the Customs Department that the customs officers shall not buy any confiscated goods from the customs outlets. There is a rule and if there is a violation, we will take action against them. If there are people who violate the law, then certainly we will take action.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Always there are people who violate the law. Next question.

SHRI R. MOHANARANGAM: There should be a procedure as to whom the goods are to be sold. If there is a list as to whom the valuable goods are to be sold, then it will be very easy, whether the people involved are customs officers or anybody else.

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN: Sir, the hon. Member does not know the procedure, I am afraid. There is a little confusion. We sell certain goods through the co-operatives and the customs outlets. If there had been no such rules, it would have been possible for the customs officers to buy these things. But there is a definite rule that the customs officers or officials shall not buy from the customs outlets.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am trying to smuggle this question out now. (Interruptions) It must go out now.

Import of Portable Generators

*422. **SHRI ABDUL REHMAN SHEIKH:**†

SHRI B. SATYANARAYAN REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that through a public notice issued on July 27, 1981,

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Abdul Rehman Sheikh.