

Rs. 20,000 (of the value of Rs. 10,000 each) issued in the name of Bharat Sadh_u Samaj. However, the matter is under investigation of the Central Bureau of Investigation.

Control of news media by big business houses

1085. SHRI ARVTND GANESH
KULKARNI: SHRIMATI
LEELA DAMO-
DARA MENON; SHRIMATI
USHI KHAN: SHRI GURUDEV
GUPTA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the reports appearing in a section of the Press to the effect that big business houses and some foreign agencies are controlling the news media by investing huge funds in the national dailies published from Delhi, Bombay and Madras; and

(b) whether it has recently come to Government's knowledge that the Associated General and Goenka Groups have received huge funds from anonymous sources; if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI ZULFIQUARULLAH): (a) and (b) The requisite information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Excise duty remission granted to the Indian Tobacco Company and the Ahmedabad Advance Mills

1086. SHRI ARVTND GANB6H
KULKARNI: SHRIMATI USHI
KHAN:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Tobacco Company and the

Ahmedabad Advance Mills were granted special favour by Government on the 19th March, 1978 by quashing the demand notices issued by the Central Excise and Customs Department;

(b) if so, what is the quantum of concessions obtained by these two firms along with the other firms between the 1st March, 1977 and March 1978; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take to stop such drain on public funds?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATISH AGARWAL): (a) On a representation received in the Department of Revenue from the Indian Leaf Tobacco Development Company against a demand for customs duty issued by the Madras Custom House, an *ad hoc* exemption order was issued on 19th March, 1977, after obtaining the orders of the then Minister for Revenue and Banking. A representation received from M/s Ahmedabad Advance Mills Bombay, against a demand for customs duty issued by the Bombay Custom House was also examined and the orders of the then Minister for Revenue and Banking were taken for the issue of an *ad hoc* order granting exemption from the duty demanded by the Bombay Custom House. This exemption order was also issued on the 19th March, 1977.

(b) As regards the quantum of the concessions, the duty demanded by the Madras Custom House from the Indian Leaf Tobacco Development Company was Rs. 90.77 lacs. However, the Government, at that time, took the view that, on the basis of the use to which the goods were put, the correct customs duty equal to central excise duty leviable thereon, should have been Rs. 11.40 lacs and not Rs. 90.77 lacs as demanded by the Custom House Madras.