

same time the canalisation aspect takes care other interests of the country. It is true that they charge commission, but we have our control on all the imports and exports, which is vitally necessary in the interest of the economy.

Spurt in smuggling activities

*35. SHRI MAHENDRA BAHADUR SINGH:

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI

KUMARI CHUNDAWAT:†

SHRI SAWAISINGH

SISODIA:

SHRIMATI MAIMOONA

SULTAN:

SHRIMATI RATHNABAI

SREENIVASA RAO:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND REVENUE AND BANKING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been a sudden spurt in smuggling activities since the lifting of Emergency; and

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken or propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND REVENUE AND BANKING

(SHRI H. M. PATEL): (a) No, Sir, Reports received do not indicate any spurt in the smuggling activities since the lifting of the Emergency.

(b) Although smuggling continues to be effectively contained, anti-smuggling measures have been reinforced and the field formations have been instructed to take stringent action against the smugglers under the normal law. These measures include strengthening of investigation and intelligence set ups, rummaging of ships arriving from sensitive ports and patrolling of vulnerable areas on the sea coast and the main transport routes.

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shrimati Lakshmi Kumari Chundawat.

श्रीमती लक्ष्मी कुमारी चूडावत : क्या यह सही है कि स्मगलर्स का किसी चमत्कार के कारण बड़ी तेजी के साथ हृदय परिवर्तन हो रहा है। क्या माननीय मंत्री महोदय एक जांच आयोग बैठा देंगे कि यह हृदय परिवर्तन किस दिशा में और किस गति से हो रहा है, यह देखने के लिए?

SHRI H. M. PATEL: Sir, I suppose the reference is to the fact that some one hundred smugglers took an oath in the words which I might mention, since no doubt you would like to know what oath they took ...

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: What was the pledge?

(Interruptions)

SHRI H. M. PATEL: If you are not interested in the pledge ...

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: We are. We would like to know the text of the oath. What was the oath?

SHRI H. M. PATEL: I was reading it, but another Member did not seem to be interested. I will accept your interest. The oath administered to the smugglers is as follows:

'With God as our witness, we hereby take ...'

Well, I do not know why the hon. Members are laughing. But God is always present.

(Interruptions)

SHRI HARSH DEO MALAVIYA: God obliges your side?

(Interruptions)

SHRI H. M. PATEL: I do not know if they mean that God is not present.

SHRI LAKSHMANA MAHA-PATRO: Smugglers are always present.

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA: For them MISA is God.

(Interruptions)

SHRI H. M. PATEL: Would they like the Maintenance of Internal Security Act to be substituted for God? I will read out if you wish to know. If you are not interested, then I will not.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: "With God as our witness . . .", then?

SHRI H. M. PATEL: "With God as our witness, we hereby take a solemn pledge that we will on no account indulge. . ."

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Another point you have missed. "With God as our witness and the blessings of the Janata Party on us . . ." That is missing.

SHRI H. M. PATEL: I do not know if Mr. Bhupesh Gupta was present when this oath was taken. I am reading the oath as it was administered, not any other.

"With God as our witness, we...."

It is not we, I am talking about the smugglers.

"... we hereby take a solemn pledge that we will on no account indulge in or help any activity connected even remotely with smuggling and will do out best singly and with the help of our fellow...."

SHRI LAKSHMANA MAHA-PATRO: Smugglers.

SHRI H. M. PATEL: "....fellow-citizens . . ."

I hope that you realise that even smugglers can be citizens.

"... fellow-citizens and the Government to dissuade and, if possible, to prevent others who are prone to indulge in, or countenance, such activities. We also take this opportunity to declare solemnly that we will not crave any indulgence on the part of the Government in

such legal actions as may be pending or deemed necessary in future by the competent authority for our actions in the past or our lapses in future. Like other law-abiding citizens, we will allow the law to take its course and humbly suffer such punishment as a competent court awards.

We seek the blessings of our great national leader and friend of erring fellowmen, Lok Nayak Jayaprakash Narayan on this great occasion to give us the will and strength to stand by our solemn pledge at all events and to resist all temptations, however alluring. So help us God."

Now, I may say . . .

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: On a point of order.

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA: Not during the Question Hour.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: This is the first time in the history of this Parliament that smugglers . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: First let him finish his answer.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I am asking whether we should put it on record. For the first time in the history of our Parliament, the smugglers' oath has been read out. All I ask you is whether this should be part of the proceedings.

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA: Yes.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: God is all right. God may be part of the proceedings. But what about the smugglers' oath?

श्री रवी राय : जे भूपेश गुप्ता प्रोसी-
डिङ्ग में जाएगा तो उनका भी जाएगा ।

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: The Chambal Valley dacoits took an oath, but we did not have their oath read.

out and put on record. But now it seems that times have changed. We have the smugglers' oath not only on record but acted upon by the Government and believed in by the Government.

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA: This is on record at the insistence of Mr. Bhupesh Gupta.

SHRI H. M. PATEL: Mr. Deputy Chairman, the pledge was read out at the instance of the honourable Member. Let him not forget that fact. It is at his instance that this pledge was read out. This pledge was taken by a relatively small number of people, about a hundred. But the number of smugglers who were released immediately before demitting office by the former Government was over 2000. The former Government withdrew the Internal Emergency on the 21st March and simultaneously released over 2000 of the smugglers without taking any steps whatsoever to see where they would be going, what they would be doing, etc. I would just like to add that for the information of the honourable Member.

SHRIMATI RATHNABAI SREENIVASA RAO: May I know whether Government's attention has been drawn to the reports that gold smuggling has again started in full swing and that gold is now being smuggled in the form of biscuits and bars which has resulted in crashing of gold prices in the local market? If so, what is the Government's assessment about the quantum of gold smuggled into the Indian market during the past three months?

SHRI H. M. PATEL: As I have already said in my reply, we are keeping a close watch on the situation and taking all steps necessary to prevent smuggling from increasing or once again resuming its course. Our information is that smuggling is at present under quite effective check. We have no information about gold

being smuggled into the country in large quantities.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: According to the information just given 2000 smugglers were released. Of them 100 have taken oath. Nineteen hundred have not taken oath. I do not know what kind of an oath they were taking and where. But I should like to know what happened to the others. Do they have any information about their activities—apart from those who have taken oath? Then I should like to know from the Government another thing. We saw a photograph, a newspaper picture, where Prime Minister Morarji Desai was almost shaking hands with Haji Mastan—oath-taking smuggler, I believe...

SHRI HARSH DEO MALAVIYA: Yusuf Patel was behind Haji Mastan.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: In the past Haji Mastan used to appear in the darkness of night and disappear. Now the times have changed, it seems. Openly, in the broad daylight, he goes and shakes hands with the Prime Minister. I should like to know: was there any talk between the Prime Minister and Haji Mastan? If so, what the results of such talk from the point of view of smuggling, whether Haji Mastan made any proposal or the Prime Minister made any proposal? Or, was it just a sort of courtesy meeting, and so on? This is very important for us to know because after all the Prime Minister of the country met the Prime Minister of the smuggling world, Haji Mastan. The two Prime Ministers met, one of the smugglers' world and the other of the Constitution. I should like to know what the outcome was of that hand-shake.

SHRI H. M. PATEL: I have no information whatsoever about this particular incident. If there was a photograph, I have not seen it. But since the honourable Member says so, there must have been an occasion when

Haji Mastan met the Prime Minister. It is a good thing that such people meet in the open so that you are aware of any such meeting when it takes place, whatever might have been the outcome...

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Are you not aware of it?

SHRI H. M. PATEL: No, because it is quite obvious that Haji Mastan met as any ordinary citizen would also want to meet the Prime Minister.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Sir, my question has not been answered. He says he is not aware. As far as I know the television has not shown it. I hope the television would not showed such things nowadays. All I wanted to know was whether he will find out and tell us what was the talk and what they discussed. We are interested in that.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please table another question for that.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: How can I do that? All right.

SHRI KALI MUKHERJEE: I would like to know whether Haji Mastan is going to be included in the Ministry.

SHRI CHARANJIT CHANANA: In reply to question 35(a) the hon. Minister has said that smuggling has been brought under control. We do not know what is the index of measuring this control on smuggling. Of course we can appreciate the hon. Minister's reply in answer to a question by an hon. Member on the smuggling of gold that the Government does not have any machinery to collect data or analyse statistics on the smuggling of gold. But then there are items in the open market which the common man can see such as ci-

garettes smuggled into the country. During the emergency these were not seen.....

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please ask a specific question.

SHRI CHARANJIT CHANANA: What is the indicator or index for saying that smuggling is under control in view of the fact that smuggled items are seen in the market?

SHRI H. M. PATEL: There are some indicators and among the indicators one is that the foreign remittances have not gone down; instead, they have increased. Another indicator is that the quantum of smuggled goods that are seized, whenever these smuggling prevention operations take place, is steadily going down. These are some indicators on the basis of which one can say that smuggling is not on the increase, but is increasingly coming under control.

SHRI CHARANJIT CHANANA: If the quantum of seized goods goes down, that means there is some leakage because you find these things in the market.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Next question.

Committee to examine workings of I.T.D.C.

*36. SHRI SHRIKANT VERMA: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to set up a committee to examine the workings of the India Tourism Development Corporation and to suggest ways to attract more tourists to India; and

(b) if so, what will be the composition of the said committee?