

belonging to M/s. Hongkong Island Shipping Co., Hongkong, was seized by Cochin Customs on 21-5-1975 for indulging in smuggling activities. On rummage of the vessel, foreign currency amounting to U. S. \$ 2769, believed to be the sale proceeds of the smuggled goods was found and confiscated. The vessel also was confiscated but was allowed to be redeemed on a fine of Rs. 1.5 lakhs in lieu of confiscation. In this connection, penalty of Rs. 10,000 each was imposed on the Master and the Bosun-cum-Chief Steward of the vessel as well. Customs duty of Rs. 3,27,205.20 has also been ordered to be realized from the Master of the vessel. The case against other suspects in under examination.

Opium production and export

654. SHRI F. M. KHAN : Will the Minister of REVENUE AND BANKING be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that India is the only opium-exporting country in the world and if so, to what extent India exported opium and increased opium production during the last three years; and

(b) whether any, assistance has been extended by the U.N. Division of Narcotics to India to conduct research to improve opium yield, increase morphine content and arrest deterioration of morphine in the latex collected and if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF REVENUE AND BANKING (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) Yes, Sir. Presently India is the only country exporting licit opium to the world community. Statistics of export of opium as also opium produced during the last 3 years are given below :—

Year	Quantity produced (Metric Tonnes)	Quantity exported (Metric Tonnes)
1974-75 . . .	887	880
1975-76 . . .	1033	945
1976-77 . . .	1169	990
	(Prov.)	(Anticipated)

(b) The Government of India have not received any assistance from U.N. Division of Narcotics to improve the yield of opium.

However, Dr. V. S. Ramanathan, Chief Chemist, Central Revenues Control Laboratory, New Delhi had been offered by the United Nations a Special Service Agreement with the United Nations Narcotics Laboratory of the Division of Narcotic Drugs, Geneva for the financial year 1975-76 in his personal capacity to conduct research on opium poppy and opium. Dr. Ramanathan accepted the offer with the permission of the Government. He has so far received U.S. \$ 7,200 to meet the expenses of research conducted in the field and in the laboratory. The Agreement which was originally signed for one year ending on 31-3-76 was extended up to 30-9-76 and is likely to be further extended up to 31-3-1977.

Tourist at Kovalam Beach and Puri

655. SHRI BHAIKAB CHANDRA MAHANTI : Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) what is the number of foreign tourists who stayed overnight at the Kovalam Beach Complex and what is the income earned from them during the year 1975-76; and

(b) what is the number of foreign tourists who visited Puri during the same period and what is the average number of nights spent by them at Puri ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH) : (a) The information on number of foreign tourists who stayed at Kovalam and the income earned from them during 1975-76 is as follows :—

	Kovalam Hotel (commissioned on 2-1-1976)	Kovalam Grove	Total
1. (a) No. of foreigners . . .	836	2354	3190
(b) Guest nights spent by foreigners . . .	1910	5147	7057
2. (a) Foreign exchange directly earned and deposited in Bank . . .	Rs. 0.45 lakhs	Rs. 3.86 lakhs	Rs. 4.31 lakhs
(b) Through Travel Agents from foreign tourists only . . .	Rs. 1.41 lakhs	Rs. 1.22 lakhs	Rs. 2.63 lakhs
(c) Through exempted category of foreigners	Rs. 0.40 lakhs	Rs. 0.40 lakhs
(d) Through non-exempted cate- gory who paid in Indian Rupees	Rs. 0.07 lakhs	Rs. 0.07 lakhs
	Rs. 1.86 lakhs	Rs. 5.55 lakhs	Rs. 7.41 lakhs

(b) According to information made available by the State Government about 7737 foreign tourists visited Puri during 1975-76 and; the average nights spent by them came to 2 nights.

Simplification of procedure under the Income-tax Act, 1961

656. SHRI DHARAMCHAND JAIN : Will the Minister of REVENUE AND BANKING be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to simplify the procedure of assessment in the light of the amendments made from time to time in the Income-tax Act, 1961; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF REVENUE AND BANKING (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) with a view to simplifying and rationalising the provisions of Income-tax law, amendments have been made from time to time in the Income-tax Act, 1961 on the basis of the recommendations of various

Committees and Commissions. Although there is no specific proposal under consideration of Government at present to further simplify the procedure of assessment, the matter is kept under constant review.

(b) Does not arise.

Land purchased by Income-tax authorities at Ranchi for the construction of staff quarters

657. SHRI DHARAMCHAND IAIN : Will the Minister of REVENUE AND BANKING be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Income-tax authorities had purchased land at Ranchi about 15 years back for the construction of staff quarters; and

(b) if so, what progress has so far been made in the construction of the staff quarters ?

THE MINISTER OF REVENUE AND BANKING (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) and (b) Though land was purchased in 1957 and construction of staff quarters approved thereafter, no progress could be made due to the financial stringency and imposition of economy ban in 1962 and subsequently in 1973. resulting in