

SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI: There are two questions involved. One is the inter-State sales tax which is a Central tax. So far as that is concerned there will be a margin between that and the tax in other States, margin of about 1 per cent, or 1½ per cent, that will be there.

SHRI SANTOKH SINGH: Just now I mentirified about the sound economy of Delhi. As for the Master Plan of Delhi, it is very difficult to have small-scale or large-scale industries, and it is because of the fact that there is no land available in Delhi, and, secondly, Delhi is the capital of India. Under these circumstances the Delhi State depends only on the distributing character of its structure. So, with the revision of the sales tax how is it going to affect Delhi's distributive character?

SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI: Really the trade of Delhi should not suffer, if the trade is a legitimate one. What happens is that persons round about Delhi come here not as traders but as local consumers and they pay the sales tax which is lower in Delhi and take that away. They are not registered dealers and, therefore, they have not to pay sales tax. But if they come as regular traders, then definitely the margin between inter-State tax and Delhi is going to be maintained, and Government will take into consideration this idea that because Delhi is a distributing centre it should not suffer. Some difference is already there between the sales tax in other places and in Delhi.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA: May I know why the Government does not bring the sales tax at Delhi at par with the neighbouring States? Delhi is a small pocket surrounded by Punjab, Rajasthan and U.P., where the sales tax rates are very low. The result is that all the wholesale trade from these three States is shifting to Delhi, which is improper.

SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI: Actually what the hon. Member from U.P. has said was the idea. The other States, Punjab U.P. and Rajasthan, complained that the sales tax in Delhi was less than in the adjoining States. Therefore, they suffered. It was therefore that we thought that the sales tax in Delhi also should be raised, and we had convened a conference of

representatives of the various States concerned and we thought that the sales tax in Delhi also should be raised. The traders did not like that. They said that the Delhi's trade would suffer because it was a distributing centre. We arrived at a compromise and wanted to raise the sales tax in such a way that there was some margin, but not that great difference which existed today.

RELEASE OF SHEIKH ABDULLAH

*227. SHRIMATI LALITHA (RAJAGOPALAN):f PROF. SATYAVRATA SIDDHANTALANKAR:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government's attention has been drawn to the recent plea by Shri Jaya Prakash Narayan for the release of Sheikh Abdullah; and

(b) if so, what is the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI GULZARILAL NANDA): (a) The Government have seen the press report about Shri Jaya Prakash Narayan's statement pleading for release of Sheikh Abdullah and his colleagues.

(b) Government have not decided to remove restrictions imposed upon Sheikh Abdullah.

SHRIMATI LALITHA (RAJAGOPALAN): Sir, may I know how many associates of Sheikh Abdullah are in detention and whether any have been released and, if so, on what grounds?

SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI: It is not a question of associates; those persons on whom restrictions have been placed have been detained.

SHRI M. GOVINDA REDDY: Before coming to a decision in this matter, would the Government keep in mind the prejudicial activities of Sheikh Abdullah when he was released once before?

SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI: The Government is not at all proposing to take decision on this. This has arisen because of some newspapers reports and letters from Shri Jaiprakash Narain.

The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shrimati Lalitha (Rajagopalan).

SHRI OM MEHTA: I would like to know the names of the persons who have met Sheikh Abdullah since detention and what was •

SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI: I do not think I could have the list of all the people because the Madras Government also are entitled to grant the interview if they so choose.

SHRI OM MEHTA: I would like to know, with your consent.

SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI: Sir, two representatives from Sarvodaya met Sheikh Abdullah.

SHRI OM MEHTA: What was their mission ?

(No reply)

PROF. SATYAVRATA SIDDHANTA-LANKAR: Is it not a fact- and I think the hon. Minister will admit that it is a fact—that Shri Jaiprakash Narain, when he speaks, is heard with great respect all over India and even across the borders of India?

AN HON. MEMBER : Especially in Pakistan.

PROF. SATYAVRATA SIDDHANTA-LANKAR: Now he has made this plea and I the underlying idea under that plea is that 'man's mentality changes, Sheikh Abdullah has seen a great war, he has seen all his hopes and dreams shattered. Now, is it not possible. . . •

AN HON. MEMBER: Not yet.

PROF. SATYAVRATA SIDDHANTA-LANKAR: Let me put the question. Is it not possible that he might have changed his outlook and to ward off all the obstacles for his release, will it not be proper for the Government once and for all to come out with a statement that under these stipulated conditions only he would be released and not other.

SHRI GULZARILAL NANDA: I do not know whether the hon. Member himself has some kind of touch with the mind of Sheikh Saheb and if he can guarantee that there is a change, that also will not suffice because we must have a direct response from Sheikh Saheb as to what he thinks of his role in this country. And SO far, from all the sources that we were in touch with, I do not think that any such

change for the better has occurred. That is as far as our present knowledge goes. Change can take place any moment. Whenever that happens, certainly we will not be found wanting in making a response. But it has to be very definite and it cannot be just something conjectural.

"KALA NAOAR"

*228. SARDAR RAM SINGH: Will the Minister of EDUCATION be pleased to State:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Lalit Kala Akademi has a scheme to set up a 'Kala Nagar' near Delhi to perpetuate the memory of late Jawaharlal Nehru; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION (SHRI BHAKT DARSHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Akademi's proposal, still under examination, envisages the establishment of an Art Village near the Capital, in which foreign countries will be invited to put up permanent pavilions. The Village will be the venue of international exhibitions of art to be held once every two or three years on the lines of famous biennales of world art held in Paris, Venice, Sao Paulo, and elsewhere.

श्री गोडे मुराहरि : यह कला नगर है या काला नगर है ?

श्री भक्त दर्शन : यह 'कला नगर' है काला नगर नहीं ।

SARDAR RAM SINGH: May I know how much aid the Government is going to the Center and who will be managing it, the Lalit Kala Akademi? SHRI BHAKT DARSHAN: Sir, The Akademi is still at the examination stage; no financial implications have been worked out and it will be arranged by the Lalit Kala Akademi.

SHRI M. P. BHARCAVA: May I know whether Art village has been selected?

SHRI BHAKT DARSHAN: No Sir, not so far. The negotiations are going on with the Delhi Development Authority.