

The shortfall in production during 1987-88 was due to reduction in area under tobacco cultivation and on account of drought and incidence of pests which resulted in lower yields.

Seizure of Silver

1654. SHRI P.M. SAYEED: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a huge quantity of silver was recently seized from a Pakistani trawler;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the quantity and the cost of the silver seized, the origin from where it came and the destination for which it was meant; and

(c) the details of the persons involved in this case and the action taken against them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI A.K. PANJA): (a) and (b). On 2.6.89 the Coast Guard intercepted a UAE registered trawler 'Al-Redha'. This vessel was escorted to Port Blair and its search resulted in the recovery and seizure of contraband silver weighing 14 tonnes worth Rs. 10.00 crores (approximately). Investigations revealed that the seized silver was shipped from Singapore and was meant to be landed near Masulipatnam on the Andhra Coast.

(c). 10 Pakistani crew members have been arrested and detained under the provisions of the Conservation of Foreign Exchange and Prevention of Smuggling Activities Act, 1974.

Loss in Import Duty on Solar Crystals

1655. SHRI BHADRESWAR TANTI:
SHRI ABDUL HAMID:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be

pleased to state:

(a) whether the Customs Authorities have facilities to distinguish solar and non-solar crystals;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are aware that solar crystals are being imported in the name of non-solar crystals resulting in loss in import duty; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI A.K. PANJA): (a) and (b). The Custom Houses do not have facilities to distinguish solar and non-solar crystals. The term 'solar crystals' and 'non-solar crystals' do not find mention in the technical literature available. Crystals are natural or synthetic piezoelectric or semiconductor materials. Piezoelectric crystals/semi-conductors are used in electronics or in solar cells but there is no separate classification as solar or non-solar crystals.

(c) and (d). No, Sir. There is no difference in the import duty based on classification as solar and non-solar crystals.

Conference of Chief Electoral Officers

1656. SHRI SHARAD DIGHE:
SHRI P.M. SAYEED:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a two-day Conference of Chief Electoral Officers was held in Tirupati in June, 1989;

(b) whether the question of finalisation of electoral rolls, introduction of electronic