

12.24 hrs.

STATUTORY RESOLUTION RE :  
DISAPPROVAL OF THE MOTOR  
VEHICLES (AMENDMENT)  
ORDINANCE, 1986 - *Contd.*  
MOTOR VEHICLES AND (AMEND-  
MENT) BILL—*Contd.*

[*English*]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Now we take up further discussion on the Statutory Resolution moved by Shri Janga Reddy and the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill. Shri Mool Chand Daga.

[*Translation*]

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA (Pali) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, 70 persons are killed daily in road accidents and in every 4 minutes one accident takes place. India tops in the number of accidents in comparison to other countries. It seems that the Hon. Minister has not arrived and you have given permission to proceed on this subject.

[*English*]

SHRI RAJESH PILOT : I am very much here.

[*Translation*]

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA : I thank the Hon. Minister because he is very alert... (*Interruptions*). He has done a good job. On the basis of the report of the National Transport Policy Committee, I would like to say that the Motor Vehicle Act, which has become outdated, should be amended. If it is not amended, our lives will always be in danger. I would like to quote some relevant portions of the report. I hope that the Hon. Minister will implement the recommendations of the report with promptness. In the Motor Vehicles Act, the main emphasis has been laid on the conservation of energy. The need of the hour is to conserve energy. In villages, bullock, horse and camel driven carts are used for travelling and other purpose and on the other hand you have made provision of agency for two-wheelers in a small town having a population of ten thousands. The Hon. Industry Minister says that in India,

automobile industry will be developed to such an extent that it will rank second in the world. Emphasis is also being laid on the conservation of petrol. (*Interruptions*). I would like to say that two-wheelers should not be encouraged in the villages but improvement should be made in the bullock, horse and camel driven cart on scientific lines. Otherwise, persons engaged in such modes of transport will be rendered jobless. The improvement to be made in them will save energy. It has also been suggested that the design of the new motors should be such as to consume less diesel and petrol. I would like to read out the major recommendation.

[*English*]

am reading from the Report of the National Transport Policy Committee, 1980, page 202 :

“For effecting fuel economy in road transport, an all-round effort is called for. This should include improvement and proper maintenance of the road system since bad roads reportedly enhance fuel consumption. Considerable reduction in the number of octroi checkposts, which lead to wastage of trucking time and to an extent of fuel, is another means of bringing about fuel economy. Further, substantial fuel saving possibilities exist through improvement in vehicle design, better driving skills, and proper vehicle operation and maintenance.”

[*Translation*]

The question of doing away with octroi is hanging fire for the last fifteen years. Time and energy are wasted at the octroi check posts. But nothing is being done to eliminate it. Nothing can be said as to when it will be eliminated. It is said that the States are not prepared for it. Will you tell us whether the Government will come with a policy without delay to do away with the Octroi ?

It is a welcome step that national permits are being issued. But you should see the condition of roads and bridges which are in a very bad shape. Every mode of transport like cars, tongas and other vehicles ply on them endangering our lives. It is a good step that you have issued 35,000 national permits.

The Regional Transport Authority and other big politicians used to pocket most of the funds concerning the issue of permits. The Hon. Minister belongs to Rajasthan and he detected this malaise in time and took steps to check it. The people of Rajasthan are considered competent and the Hon. Minister has proved this.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : You are more competent.

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA : Rajasthan people are more hardworking, honest and upright.

[Translation]

The step taken by you is highly commendable. The accidents which occur on the roads are the result of the carelessness of drivers. Have any training schools been opened for the drivers. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, you remain engrossed in books or at the most you go to the Constitution Club, but if you happen to pay a visit to the Transport Office along with Rajeshji then you will find that it is very easy to get driving licence after greasing palm. If one can grease the palm one can get licence. It does not matter whether the driver is competent or not.

In our country, 65 per cent accidents occur due to human failure. You have brought amendment to the Motor Vehicles Act to check accidents. As you are not giving me more time to speak, I will not say further on the national permit system. But I would like to say that the proposed amendment in the Act is a good step. Construction of roads is very necessary. The present roads are less wide. The engineers and the Contractors both are responsible for building the roads. In this country, the relation between engineers and contractors is like that of a bee and flower. Just as the bee sits on the flower and subtly extracts nectar therefrom, similarly the engineers are always on the look out how to fill their pockets although they do not invest anything. Consequently, the roads get damaged within 6 months and bridges collapse very soon. In this way the money of the country goes into the drain. Sir, at the time of issuing national permit, it should also be

ensured that roads are wide and in good condition. One can become efficient driver only after undergoing two years' hard training. But here drivers sleep while driving; they are found drunk, they consume smack and other intoxicants. We are at a loss to know how they are able to drive their vehicles. They are a class in themselves over which no one has any control.

It is a good thing that you have brought this Bill. The Motor Vehicle Act should be amended. If you go to Madras, you will find policemen at every place. They are not there for the protection of motor drivers but they demand money from them. They do not stop the vehicles of big people or Government. They stop those vehicles from which they can extract money. Such things should be checked. A complete and comprehensive Bill similar to that of Rialway should, therefore, be brought. The routes of the Railways and the buses etc. should be earmarked.

The Hon. Minister has suggested that one should travel only by bus for short distance and not train. But I would like to bring it to their notice that the fares of the buses are on the high side and, therefore, the poor prefer to travel by train. The fares of buses should be reduced.

Sir, with these words I concluded.

[English]

SHRI V. S. KRISHNA IYER (Bangalore South) : Sir, I welcome the provisions of the Bill, but I oppose the manner in which the Bill has been brought to the House. I find no reason why an ordinance should be issued on a subject like this. Heavens would not have fallen if the Government had waited for another 20 days. The Minister also in his opening remarks has not given a convincing answer as to why the ordinance was issued.

SHRI AMAL DATTA (Diamond Harbour) : The Minister agrees, he has nodded. Let that be recorded also !

SHRI V. S. KRISHNA IYER : There is no convincing reply.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : He will reply at the end.

**SHRI V. S. KRISHNA IYER :** This Bill is based on the recommendations of the Transport Policy Committee. Last year when me had a very lengthy discussion in this House on the Report, the then Minister had given a categorical assurance that a comprehensive Bill would be introduced at the earliest. But unfortunately, you see that only one section has been amended. So far as the other recommendations and concerned, I do not think they will be given a go-by, and I am sure the Government will give serious consideration to the recommendations and also to the suggestions made by the Members here.

This Bill seeks to remove the restriction on the State Governments for issue of national permits. To that extent, of course, it will reduce a lot of corruption and so it is absolutely necessary. But at the same time you should also take other precautions to see that the fleet moves without any hinderance and there is smooth passage of the fleet all over the country. All the Members of the House are aware that nowadays road transport has become very popular. The transportation of goods through the road is not only safer, but also quicker, though of course it is costlier than the railways. But many prefer the goods to go through road transport because all the articles will be safe and the delivery also will be quicker.

Regarding the impediments in the smooth movement of goods transport, I would say that the national highways to which my friend, Daga Ji just now referred, are not in good condition. Most of the trucks run only on the national highways from Kanyakumari to Kashmir. In other words, more than 75 per cent of the trucks go by national highways. But the condition of the national highways, is not safe. So, it is very necessary that the Government of India should pay special attention to see that roads are maintained in good condition. There is a demand from the States that some of the important trunk routes should be taken away by the national highways. For example, in Karnataka there has been a demand for taking over many more routes because the number of route kilometres in Karnataka is the lowest when compared with other States. So, the trunk routes should be taken away by the national highways. The good condition of roads is very very important.

Another thing is, you should also look to the safety of not only the passengers, but also the welfare of the truck drivers and conductors. So far as the passengers are concerned, I quite agree that a number of Members suggested here that those who drive the trucks must have special training. I suggest that every State must be asked to have a special coaching school for the truck drivers and also every State must see that when issuing licence, a person must have not only the driving certificate, but also minimum qualifications. He must be educated. With regard to safety of passengers from accidents, every day, we are hearing about road accidents. That should be prevented. It is because generally drivers drive their trucks in the night. Another point which I would like to suggest to the Government is that we should also see the safety and welfare of the truck drivers. They would be rushing through their trucks because they may have to cover nearly 700 or 800 kms. Generally, they are driving trucks in the night. At night between one O'clock and 3 O'clock, any person will sleep. One, cannot go against nature. I would suggest that there must be halting places for the drivers with all the arrangements for taking food and also for going to sleep, That is necessary.

Another impediment in regard to the truck operation is with regard to levy of various taxes by the State Governments. So far as octroi is concerned, I remember, you have said very recently that almost all the States have agreed to abolish octroi. The States are ready to abolish octroi provided the Central Government compensates all the loss. In our own State, Karnataka, about a decade ago, octroi was abolished. The Central Government promised to give us compensation. Unfortunately, even today, not a single paisa was coming from the Centre. The State is losing the revenue. Of courses, they paid some compensation to municipalities and corporations. But they have to be compensated for octroi which they would otherwise get. For example, in the Bangalore city, they were getting Rs. 15 crores earlier as octroi. Now, they would have got Rs. 40 crores. But the State Government gives only Rs. 15 crores. So, they should be adequately compensated.

Even now, you find a number of toll gates *en route*. A lorry is supposed to stop

at every place. There are so many bridge taxes and entry taxes. So many levies are there. I request the Hon. Minister to take up this matter with the State Transport Ministers and the concerned Department so that the obstacle in the smooth passage of trucks is minimised. That is very necessary and that can be possible also. At the same time, I would request the Government to see that revenues to the State Government should not be lost because most of the States depend upon this only.

Another point is about maintenance. Whenever the national highway passes through municipalities, within the municipality town or village, the responsibility of maintenance is that of the municipality. But you know the financial position of the local bodies and municipalities all over the country. They cannot afford to maintain these things. Therefore, even that portion which falls within the municipal area should be maintained by the National Highway department.

Another point is, we find a number of level crossings on the national highways. That is a nuisance on the national highway. Between Pune and Bangalore, you find more than 20 level crossings. The Railway Department and the Transport Department, which is now under one Ministry, should see that at the level crossings, over-bridges are constructed. That is very very important.

Another point is, with regard to unmanned level crossings. We heard about the recent accident in Kerala. It is very unfortunate. It could have been avoided. That is on account of negligence. So, we find a number of unmanned level crossings and the accidents are increasing. So, as far as possible, there should be manned level crossings, though they may cost the railways a little more. But there should be manned level crossings, particularly when there is heavy traffic.

Another point is, in the city of Bangalore or in a number of cities, I find there is no fencing of the railway line which passes through the heart of the city. On either side, there is no fencing. Unfortunately, I was not

informed of the Minister's programme, when he was in the city the other day. I came to know only through the news. Otherwise I would have shown that thing to him. Hereafter, please see that a copy of programme is sent to us. So, I was talking about fencing and that is very necessary. I also asked my State Government about fencing. They said, they do not have funds. It is the responsibility of the Railways. In all the cities where the railway line passes through the heart of the city, you must see that fencing is done either by barbed wire or any other type. But it is a must.

With these suggestions, I am sure the Hon. Minister will very soon bring forward a comprehensive Bill keeping in view the recommendations of the Transport Policy Committee and the suggestions made by the Hon. Members in this House. I am sure he will bring the legislation in this Session itself.

[Translation]

SHRI P. NAMGYAL (Ladakh): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, while supporting this Bill, I want to submit a few points. I think, the most important achievement with passing this Bill will be that the corruption in securing National Permits, that has reached a high degree, will be eradicated. My second point is that the regions which do not have railway transport facilities will be very much benefited from this measure. You will ask how? It is because due to permit restriction many transporters who wanted to ply their vehicles in hilly and difficult areas for transportation of goods were not allowed to do so as long as they did not have a national permit and as a result of that those who had national permits used to monopolise. These national permits were issued to those who had more than one truck or those who had a fleet of 10 to 15 trucks, or to the moneyed people. Those who had only one truck were denied the national permit. The present step will greatly benefit the States like Jammu and Kashmir where the people totally depend on road transport for transportation of goods as the railway line is only upto Jammu. It will greatly help in carrying goods to and from the State. It will have a good impact on the economy of the State,

[Shri P. Namgyal]

because in Kashmir this problem is faced during the fruit season and at that time this problem aggravates further when all the transporters are not allowed to go into the valley. Only a limited number of national permit holders are allowed to go there. They too face a lot of problems in the hands of local traffic authorities while going beyond Srinagar. They do not allow them an easy passage. You know, the fruit is perishable commodity. Thus, the growers are not able to send the fruit to the mandis in time and due to non-availability of transport the fruit rot there. As such, the extension of the scope of national permits will greatly benefit the people of Jammu and Kashmir and will have a salutary effect on its economy.

My constituency is very far off even from Kashmir valley. The problem being faced there was that even the national permit holders were not being allowed by the local authorities to go there. They were at the mercy of the local authorities. In our area, seasonal stocking is done because the passage remains closed for six months in a year and as such the stocking of the essential commodities is done during the five or six months when the movement of traffic opens. This season clashes with the fruit season and the availability of transport at that time is only limited. Therefore, I think, with the passing of this Bill, we shall benefit to a great extent. The trucks which will go there with goods from different parts of the country will also return loaded with goods from there. Thus, it will help a great deal in transportation of goods. I consider it a revolutionary step and congratulate the Minister of Transport for this with the hope that he would also look into other small difficulties highlighted by my other friends and remove them.

With these words, I support this Bill.

[English]

DR. DATTA SAMANT (Bombay South Central) : While introducing this Bill my friend has said that this Bill replaces the ordinance issued on 28th January. When the Parliament is meeting on the 20th February, where is the urgency to issue an

ordinance ? I am not satisfied with the reason. This brings down the principles and the importance of this House because the permits come into operation from 1st January....

SHRI AMAL DATTA : That will take us faster to the 21st century.

DR. DATTA SAMANT : Second thing is; the whole law is to be amended. It is a 1939 Act—the Motor Vehicles Act. These transport operators are all drivers, cleaners, etc. and the Police Department of the country is so much involved with each other and there is so much corruption and so much adjustment. Of course, corruption is now in the whole country but it is maximum there. I do not know. The whole Act needs revision because the Motor Vehicles Act is used by all men—by your Police, the RTO, etc. just for making money. There is no time to describe it.

But I have concrete examples how to do it.

I think this giving of national permits is good—by giving free permits to all those who are coming to Government. So far because of restriction, I know permits are sold by these particular people, the transport operators and many people in between are earning the money. So that purpose will be solved because of this law.

But I am afraid that the provision of giving all India permit to the operators only. It will benefit only the big operators. That is agony that by the Government coming out with free licensing the advantage will be taken by the big operators. Big operators are having 50 or 100 lorries. So I am of the opinion that some restrictions should be put because I have seen that big operators are not having all the trucks, they take the trucks from other people and use them and earn double or treble the amount on this because they are having the right contacts. So the particular big operators will earn more money and they are having right contacts at right places in your RTO office and the Licensing Authority. This Bill lead to more privatisation and more earnings of the particular people, by using

this facility. That is going to happen because of this Bill.

Now you are omitting the clause of giving permits to economically weaker sections which provision is there in the 1939 Act. I do not know why. It is a good provision. As per the existing Act the economically weaker people the backward people and the Scheduled Castes are given certain preferences in the issue of licences. That was Gandhi's time of 30 or 40 years ago. Now as per this you are totally dropping that provision in this Bill. I am of the opinion that your giving free licences will not go to the economically weaker sections and the Backward class people who are able to run the transport and in our country and the transport has increased considerably. Therefore, I am of the opinion that this provision should be maintained. While issuing these national transport licences, such people should be given preference and the existing big transport operators should be eliminated and they should not be given. Otherwise, I am afraid that the unemployed people about whom the Government are so much concerned will not get and you have now got an opportunity to help them. You should give permits to more and more of small people.

The third and the other important thing is that in the transport business, I do not know the exact number but to-day I think a crore of people are employed. Drivers, cleaners, clerks and in between people in small hotels are all involved. But there is no law in the country governing their working conditions. I think the Government is never bothered about them. There is no minimum wage for the drivers, for the cleaners and others employed in the business. There are ladies also employed and they are paid a meagre Rs. 200 or Rs. 300 or Rs. 400. They are not protected by the Bonus Act, they are not protected by the Gratuity Act. Even if accidents occur, it is very difficult for them or their families to get the compensation. It is too much. It is high time that Government really bothered for the poor people of this country. I think, you are bringing this Bill only to give licences to the big transport operators. Only the top sections will be benefited by this. People belonging to the economically weaker

sections, including the Scheduled Castes, will not be benefited by this. There are some lakhs of workers who are involved in these transport operations. Government is not bothered about them, they are not mentioning anything about them in this legislation. I would urge on the Government to take steps to protect their service conditions by law because these drivers and other operators are very poorly paid.

If you take a checking on the highways at night and test the blood of the drivers, you will find that 90 per cent of them are under the influence of heavy liquor. It is a danger to the society, it is a danger to the goods transported and it is a danger to the insurance company. Therefore, some alcoholic test must be conducted on these drivers. Even the drivers working in the public sector, in the State Transport,—I have seen them—are under the influence of liquor. I am not of the opinion that you ban liquor consumption as such, but at least the drivers operating this transport should not be under the influence of heavy liquor because it will cause lot of damages, it will cause lot of accidents in this country.

By this Bill you are privatising all your operations. The poor people, the Scheduled Caste people, people belonging to the backward classes, are going to suffer. Therefore, I suggest that you give licences to these poor people also.

[Translation]

DR. G. S. RAJHANS (Jhaniharpur) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, due to paucity of time. I have to make only a few points on this Bill. It is not proper on the part of the Opposition Members to oppose each and every Bill or ordinance only because they are in the Opposition. Discussion on this Bill took place on last Friday and it is continuing today also. My friends in the Opposition are opposing this Bill on the grounds that why was an ordinance promulgated when the House was scheduled to meet. I want to say that they should not criticise the good work done by us. Shri Rajesh Pilot has done a number of good things and this is one of them. The only bad thing he did was that he raised the D. T. C. fares. I should talk to him later in this regard. I would say to him

that he would come to know of the actual position if only once he travels in D. T. C. buses with his turban off his head. But I would talk to him later in this regard.

There is a shortage of wagons throughout the country today and at such a time by abolishing the permit system, he has done a very good job. On the one hand, the permit and quota system is looting the country and on the other, the engineers and contractors. By liberalising, he has really done a commendable job. If the benefit in the process goes to the big transporters, it should be ensured that the people belonging to the weaker section ply the buses and derive the benefit.

One thing I must submit to you. You might have heard that the eye-sight of 50 per cent of heavy vehicle drivers of Delhi is defective. This was also reported in the newspapers. I can show it to you. I think, 25 to 30 per cent drivers in the country have defective eye-sight. Have you ever got it tested? Have you ever tried to get to know how their eye-sight was? In foreign countries, the people set out for a travel in the night, but here in our country, the people feel frightened of night travel. This is very common to hear people saying that the truck runs on the road as if an army is on the march and as if the driver will crush somebody. I would say that their eye-sight should be tested. One thing more, the Members from both sides are saying that many often the drivers are drunk while driving. Surprise checks should be conducted to check it. But have you ever thought about the condition of the driver? From my own experience, I want to say that nobody is as much exploited in the country as a driver is. If a driver is killed in an accident and if his family members approach the truck-owner for compensation, he would say that he was not in his employment and that he might have driven the truck of his own accord. Neither the driver nor the helper is insured. In the event of death, only God will take care of his widow. You should pay attention to it.

Another thing which I want to mention is that the salary given to a driver by his employer is very meagre. They are hardly

paid Rs. 200, 300 or 400. You say that he resorts to over-loading in the truck. Why will he not do so? He loads the goods enroute and transports them to their destination. How will he keep the pot boiling for 10 to 15 members of his family. Therefore, my submission is that Government should pay full attention to the welfare of the truck drivers.

Another point which I want to mention is that there are a large number of people in each State who want to go in the driving line. The educated ones want to have driving licences. Therefore, I want that every State should have a Driving Licence Institute run by the State Government so that educated people could get licences from the Government. Today, I can say with challenge that anybody can get a licence for Rs. 500. I can help get one. I am aware of the fact that there are a number of States where such licences are issued. Now, when a person drives with such a fake licence, the accident is bound to take place. On the contrary, many unemployed graduates are ready to take up driving, but they are not given licences. Therefore, what I want to say is that a Driving Licence Institute on these lines should be set up in Delhi and other States wherein the people may get proper training and the travelling public may feel themselves safe.

You would say that roads are not the responsibility of the Centre. You cannot wash your hands off by merely saying that it is the responsibility of the States. Only God can take care of the present condition of roads and bridges. Every year, lakhs and crores of rupees are spent on their maintenance, but their condition today is that these bridges can collapse any moment if a truck passes over them. There are many bridges in the villages which are very weak and would cave in if a truck passes over them. You would say that you have advised the State Governments in this regard. But merely giving advice will not help. There are many States which have your own party's Governments. Why don't you sit together and thrash it out, because it concerns the lives of the people. Everybody knows who misappropriate the funds. Therefore, the work should be undertaken in such a way that the engineers and contractors are not able

to misappropriate the money and the condition of the roads and the bridges improves.

In the end, I would say that you should bring forward a comprehensive bill on the subject. I am in favour of bringing forward a comprehensive bill keeping in view the recommendations of the Transport Policy Committee so that the running of heavy vehicles is made efficient. Government should pay attention to these things.

I congratulate the Hon. Minister for bringing forward a very good bill and this, in fact, would help in removing the shortage that is created in the market. But I think, the Hon. Minister should bring forward a comprehensive bill so that all the loopholes are plugged. With these words, I conclude.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : We now adjourn for lunch to meet at 2 p. m.

13.03 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned for lunch till Fourteen of the clock.*

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*The Lok Sabha reassembled after Lunch at six minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.*

STATUTORY RESOLUTION RE :  
DISAPPROVAL OF MOTOR  
VEHICLES (AMENDMENT)  
ORDINANCE, 1986 and

MOTOR VEHICLES (AMENDMENT)  
BILL—Contd.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Before I call Mr. Sriballav Panigrahi to speak, I would like to request the Hon. Members to take five minutes only because at 14.30 hrs. the Hon. Minister would reply to the debate. There are yet 5 or 6 Members to speak. Now, Shri Sriballav Panigrahi to speak.

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI (Deogarh) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Bill. This is a good piece of legislation. This is a simple Bill and without any controversy in it. In fact, there is no point to oppose this Bill. I congratulate the Minister of State incharge of Surface Transport, Shri Rajesh Pilot for piloting this Bill. Sir, this Bill, as you know, is intended to do away with the restriction imposed on the number of national permits in different States and the National Transport Committee and the Transport Development Council, both these have recommended this provision, that is, removal of restriction on the number of national permits for the States. The National Transport Development Council where Ministers are also representing the States as members, have also recommended it unanimously. Therefore, there is nothing to oppose in it and it is a good measure. In fact, it is good that the Government have now realised the need to bring forward this amendment. It is a good thing because this system of having restriction on the number of permits was breeding corruption. A lot of corruption cases were there centering around itself as to who would be favoured because if a number is fixed and a large number of people come forward with their applications to obtain licence there is a lot of scope for corruption. The national permit system has been widely welcomed all over the country. The popularity of the system will be evident from this that in 1975, when this system was introduced, there were only 5300 national permits issued and in the course of a decade or so, that is, 9 to 10 years, this figure has gone up to 32,100 permits. Now that the Ceiling on the number of national permits will go it will further popularise and liberalise this system.

As we know, a lot of changes have taken place in the country in the economic field. The developmental activities and the economic activities have multiplied and naturally the number of trucks and other motor vehicles is going on increasing day by day. When such activities are increasing, the railways are over-burdened and over-pressed and there is a lot of delay in getting the bookings of wagons. We also come across a large number of complaints of pilferage, missing goods etc. The road transport system ensures quick transportation of goods which,

[Shri Sriballav Panigrahi]

in fact, is the need of the hour. Everybody wants his goods to be transported with speed and the delivery effected as quickly as possible. Further, with this facility, there is no harassment caused to the transport operators. Counter signatures in different States is not necessary. Tax is realised at one point. However, while supporting this Bill, I would like to sound a note of caution to the Hon. Minister. There is no limit on the number of permits to be issued. But those who apply will have to comply with certain conditions governing this system. This Bill has been introduced with a view to liberalise the transport system, but certain things need to be kept in view. It should not mean that the system gets monopolised in the hands of a few, a solvent few, the big transport operators and transport companies. Unemployment is growing very fast, alarmingly. Educated unemployed persons are looking for different kinds of jobs. They can be encouraged by giving such permits. I would request the Hon. Minister to have a close look at this aspect. The removal of restrictions should not become instrumental for monopolisation of the system in the hands of a few individuals, a solvent few.

Another disturbing factor is the increasing number of accidents. While going through the newspaper early morning, every day we come across news items of accidents in different parts of the country. Why are such accidents taking place in large numbers? The reasons will have to be gone through.

As I said, there is a fantastic growth in the number of motor vehicles, but correspondingly the conditions of roads are not improving. Due attention has to be paid to the improvement of roads. Of course, money is being sanctioned from time to time for this purpose, but there are complaints by different States including Orissa that adequate money is not being released for repairs, maintenance as also construction of new roads. Further whatever money is allotted, that should be spent properly. There should be qualitative improvement of work while undertaking repairs of road, or going in for new roads. Adequate funds should be provided for this purpose and at the same time, it should also be ensured that the money is properly spent

and not quite a bit of it is misappropriated or spent carelessly.

There is another factor. A large number of motor vehicles are held up because there are no over-bridges or railway bridges at many points even on the national highways. There is a condition now that if there is any proposal sponsored by the State Government, the State Government concerned has to pay 50 per cent of the cost involved. but because of paucity of funds, they are not in a position to bear this burden. Therefore, on national highways, and particularly when the national highways and railways pass through the heart of the town, it should be seen that such bridges are constructed and the Ministry should come forward to bear this burden.

As regards Orissa, there are some national highways which need to be widened. National highway No. 42 needs to be widened urgently. The condition of Talchar-Rourkela road is miserable. Both Talcher and Rourkela are industrial complexes and they have quite a large number of heavy industries. This is a very important industrial link and hence its condition should be looked into. Secondly, Sindoor Pank Chowk upto Bargaon on the Sudargarh Rourkela road going upto Bihar should be declared as a national highway. I request that the Hon. Minister should look into these things and see that these things are done.

I would like to give a suggestion about the training of drivers. There should be proper training for the drivers. We find that most of the road accidents take place between midnight and early morning...

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : You please conclude. All these points about training of drivers, etc. are already mentioned by several other Hon. Members.

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI : This is very important and it should be taken care of. As I said in the beginning, the Bill has very good provisions in it, but at the same time other factors should also be taken into consideration.

[Translation]

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY  
(Midnapore) : Mr. Deputy Speaker'

Sir, I have to say a few words regarding the Bill moved by dynamic Shri Rajesh Pilot. I fail to understand why it has been moved. The intention of the Government seems to ensure free flow of regular traffic in the country and this is good.

The Hon. Finance Minister has asked the people to cut down consumption of high speed diesel. You may be aware that transportation of goods through Railways is far cheaper than road transport. If Rs. 6 are spent on road transport, it is only Rs. 1 on Railways. According to the National Transport Policy which has been formulated by Government, the total flow of goods traffic in the country should be shared in the ratio of 70 : 30 by the Railways and Roadway respectively.

[English]

Knowingly or unknowingly, overtly or covertly you are simply distorting the issue.

[Translation]

This would belittle the role of Railways.

Last year, 14 million tonnes of high speed diesel oil was consumed and out of this, Railways consumed merely 2 million tonnes while trucks, buses and other road transport consumed 12 million tonnes. Moreover the Government pleads that the petrol prices are increasing because of higher consumption. It seems that these things are never discussed at the Cabinet meetings. The way National Permits are issued to trucks runs counter to this concept. I remember a story in this connection. Three blind men were shown an elephant, and all of them described it in their own way. One held the Elephant's leg and said it was a pillar. The other touched his trunk and said it was a big water pipe and the third touched his tail and said it was a broom. The Government should present the policy only after it has been finalised.

[English]

Are you really interested in bringing down the consumption of petroleum ?

[Translation]

My eyes are open. It is you who are blind. My eyes are open and that is why I see everything.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : He cannot even see and touch. That is the problem.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY : Our Deputy Speaker can see and touch both. That I cannot do.

[Translation]

I, therefore, submit that the Government should give the policy a concrete shape, otherwise the object with which the Bill has been brought will be defeated, and the consumption of petrol will increase. The good intentions of the Hon. Finance Minister will also be defeated.

Secondly, a State suffered a loss recently.....

AN HON. MEMBER : You speak about the first point, why do you want to speak about number two.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY : No, I did not mean number two, I wanted to submit my second point.....

[English]

This is point No. 2. I know that you are number 2. That I told you.

[Translation]

Sometimes National Permits are issued to parties having two, five or even seven trucks. Thereby the small transport operators pool their Vehicles and create a monopoly. The Government should look into this monopoly while issuing the National Permits.

Thirdly, so far as national highways are concerned, the national highway from Calcutta to Madras is in a dilapidated condition. Particularly at Basantpur in Midnapore district, several accidents take place every year. Our repeated requests to

[Shri Narayan Choubey]

improve the situation have been in vain. Early steps should be taken for its improvement. I would like to request the Government to take such steps so that accidents do not take place in future. There is need to see as to what can be done in this regard.

There is Orissa trunk road which touches Balasore via Midnapore. The traffic on this road has increased immensely after the construction of a bridge at Rajghat. The length of Puri-Bhubaneswar road has reduced but the Orissa trunk road has neither been widened nor declared as a national highway. This should be looked into. While replying to the debate, I would like the Hon. Minister to bear in mind my apprehensions regarding consumption of petrol and the extent of control of the monopoly on National Permits.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Shri Girdhari Lal Vyas. Three minutes for you.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY : I have kept my time.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Everybody has kept time.

[Translation]

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL VYAS (Bhilwara) : While supporting this Bill, I would like to point out to the Minister of State as to what has been mentioned in the Statement of Objects and Reasons.

[English]

"The scheme of national permits has become very popular with the transport operators who have been demanding increase in the number of permits to meet the growing requirements of long distance Inter-State movement of goods."

[Translation]

Much has been said about the popularity of the scheme but the other thing has not

been mentioned. The other side of the picture is that permits are sold at the rate of Rs. 50,000 each. Nothing has been mentioned in this regard. I would like to know whether the permit system has been introduced to gain popularity or to end corruption ? This has not been clarified in the Statement of Objects and Reasons. I demand an enquiry and action against all those erring officials in different States who have accepted the graft of Rs. 50,000 for this purpose in the offices of transport authority.

Secondly, what arrangements have been made to ensure that one does not indulge in corruption in future with regard to issuing of National Permits ? There should be some machinery to ensure this so that the persons intending to get permits do not face any difficulty in future.

Just now, it was mentioned that there are many big operators who own fleets of 200 to 400 buses and on that basis monopolise every/route. A provision for issuing licences to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes should also be made in the Bill so that they can play their role effectively. Special attention should be paid to this, otherwise the big operators will continue to be in nexus with the big officials of the transport department and corner all the permits whereas others will not be benefited by this scheme. Something effective should be done in this regard. There are no manned railway crossing on the national highways. The construction of two overbridges near Kishangarh and Saradhna on national highway No 8 is very essential. Whether it is constructed by the Railways or any other department, it should be done immediately to ensure free flow of traffic. Similarly, the State highway No. 4 which runs between Udaipur and Bombay via Ajmer, Bhilwara, Ratlam and Indore has greater traffic than that on National Highway No. 8. Besides, on return the same highway is used from Bombay to Ajmer via Bhilwara before taking National Highway No. 8. It is, therefore, necessary to declare State Highway No. 4 as National Highway. The Government has conducted a survey on it twice or thrice and have concluded that it has the heaviest traffic. It is, therefore, necessary to declare it as

national highway in order to improve the conditions of transportation.

One more submission is regarding head-light on the trucks which are so dazzling that it has a blinding effect on the driver coming from the opposite direction and this results in accidents. Therefore, immediate steps should be taken to ensure that upper half of the head-lights is blackened so that the accidents during the night can be prevented. This is very important.

It has been observed that the trucks are over-loaded and sometimes a 10 tonner truck carried even 15 tonnes of weight resulting in disturbing the balance of the truck. Therefore, provision should be made to have some restrictions on overloading.

I, therefore, request the Government to provide for these things in the Bill. With these words, I welcome the Bill.

[English]

**SHRI BHATTAM SRIRAMAMURTY** (Visakhapatnam) : I think I cannot afford to differ or disagree with the first Bill sought to be introduced by our young, dynamic and charming new Minister. I think I should agree with the general objectives and aims, as contained in the Bill.

But the basic thing is that this is more or less a half-hearted and truncated measure. There are quite a few recommendations of the National Transport Policy Committee. A comprehensive Bill could have been introduced. Instead of utilizing this opportunity for that purpose, only a particular aspect has been taken up, for introducing this piece of legislation. So, I say that this does not give a comprehensive, concrete or total picture. Hence, this is truncated. In any case, I hope the Minister will take the earliest opportunity to come forward before the House again, in the near future and introduce a more comprehensive Bill as promised in the House earlier.

In fact, at the cost of repetition again I will have to mention this fact that the Minister could have avoided taking recourse to an Ordinance. Just on the eve of the

Budget Session where was the special urgency in promulgating an Ordinance? This government unfortunately is often taking recourse to the executive fiat by-passing parliamentary process and procedure. As to why it is being done and under what circumstances, they will have to once again look into it.

Even on such an important occasion like the price increase, they overlooked the Parliament. That being so, this is a small matter, I cannot come down heavily on the Minister and say that this is wrong and extraordinarily bad and all that. Anyway, we expect something better from the Minister. Therefore, I do hope that hereafter he will not take recourse to overlooking Parliament in such serious matter like this.

The underlying principle is this. I am opposed to privatisation in general, and in the process, government are often banking to the private sector more and more; they heavily rely on them instead of public sector. For instance, take railways. Why not strengthen them, as far as cargo is concerned, for transport purpose? What is it that is being done for increasing or improving or strengthening the railway system for the purpose of transportation of cargo and everything else which is coming up for discussion on the Railway Budget. Now they throw open the door and allow the private transport system to flourish. I have no objection to that. In 1975, 5300 permits were given; in 1984, 32,100 permits were given. What an abnormal increase it is? Let them increase it further also depending on the demand and the requirement of the people. I have no objection for that. But, then the obvious fact is that the Finance Minister lays stress on the restrictions to be imposed for reducing consumption of petroleum products. Then how is it that you are going to serve this purpose to achieve this objective when you have given permits and licences for production of cars? Naturally the consumption of petrol is also increasing. When you multiply this, when you proliferate the number of buses and the lorries and things like that, then there will be an increase in the consumption of petrol. Therefore, even while the discussion on the budget is going on, you are violating the basic principle, your fundamental objective, as far as road transport and other transport facilities are concerned. Now, you have looked to the private sector

[Shri Bhattam Sriramamurty]

to come to your rescue. You are not going to strengthen the public sector which is available to you.

As far as central fund for giving compensation to the facilities of the victims in road accidents on the National Highways is concerned, people are not aware of the facilities available. The number of accidents is increasing. Therefore, it is necessary that wide publicity should be given so that people should know about the Central Fund, so that affected people will be in a position to utilize this fund I think that will certainly help those people who are affected by road accidents on the National Highways.

With these words, I conclude my speech.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, firstly, I must thank all the Hon. Members who really took interest in the subject and gave very valuable suggestions. I would like to cover each Hon. member's point with their name. The common points which have been raised by most of the members, I will cover first.

The Hon. Member, Shri C. Janga Reddy, who moved this Statutory Resolution, is not here. After that, most of the members pointed out what was the necessity to have the Ordinance ?

Sir, I must clarify this in the House that the Government did not have any intentions to cut short or undermine Parliament. When we decided in the TDC, Transport Development Council, it was a unanimous decision. Every Member from his State was there, or the Transport Minister of that State was there in that meeting. The National Transport Committee, which also recommended that this measure should be adopted. We all decided that up it should be done on a top-most priority.

When we checked up, there were some legal lacunae and it was felt that if we took a decision some legal obstruction might come up and some vested interests might obstruct

the operation of this decision, or what we really want to get, it might really become more difficult because of some legal difficulties. So, to clarify that, not to leave any doubt in the mind of the people, not to allow any vested interests to get into the way of this noble cause for the development of the country, we issued an ordinance so that no lacuna is there.

Secondly, I think the whole House will be with me that anything for the good of the nation, or anything which is in the interests of the nation, should be done, forthwith and there should be no two opinions, and we need not bother why it has not been done earlier.

DR. DATTA SAMANT : It is not convincing.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Let him finish.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT : You can challenge it. My point is, we have taken care of the legal loopholes. If there is a good cause the House will approve. The mood of the House also gives that impression every speaker who spoke has spoken in favour, and every one is in favour.

Lastly, I want to remind that we have promised to the people, that this is a Government which works faster, or this is a Government which moves faster, so anything for the good of the country, we will do, by cutting short the delays rules and regulations and we will reach the destination at the shortest possible time. We will not hesitate in that neither do we require any interests in the matter.

AN HON. MEMBER : What about Octroi duty ?

SHRI RAJESH PILOT : I am coming to that.

Mr. Janga Reddy also mentioned this.

[Translation]

He is not present in the House. He delivered his speech in Hindi. I am, therefore,

speaking in Hindi. He expressed his views on the Motor Vehicles Act, 1939. Other Hon. Members also have expressed their views on it.

[English]

We are also concerned about it. This is also the concern of the Government and we are very seriously working about it. There is also a Committee sitting on this and we are working on this, we are getting the information from the different sectors, the different users and the Government is trying to come up as fast as possible.

This is a very old Act, it was enacted in 1939, nearly 47 years back and the situation has changed, the requirements have changed. We will shortly be coming up with cohesive amendments to the original Act. We are really working it out to help the public. All the suggestions which we have received will be incorporated in it and we will certainly come to the House.

Another point which has been pointed out commonly by most of the Hon. Members is about the driving schools. This complaint is there from every State. Some of the States do have some driving schools. Under the Motor Vehicles Act we are trying to get them inspected, we are trying to curb all the wrong practices, and we are issuing necessary instructions that such driving schools which are not properly run be closed.

Unfortunately, most of the cases are from the driving schools located in Pune, the State from which Dr. Samat comes, and even Shri Janga Reddy also mentioned that people from Andhra Pradesh go to Pune, get their licences and go back. We are asking the State Governments to take suitable action in the matter, because this is something concerning the State Governments.

DR. DATTA SAMANT : But the Government is yours.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT : You are a Member of Parliament.

Another point which has been made is about Octroi. This is also a very serious matter.

Government is trying to follow a uniform policy. So far thirteen States have agreed to abolish the Octroi, and nine are still having it. We are trying to see that all the State Governments follow a uniform policy so that the State Governments are not put to trouble and achieve uniformity and some simple system can be evolved for the whole country.

These are the main points. Another point which Shri Janga Reddy also mentioned, is about highway checkpoints and the corruption among police people. He said that there was lot of corruption among the police personnel, in all the States. I shall write to the Chief Minister to take severe action, and certainly, we will also take action in the matter. I request Shri Janga Reddy that he should also take up the matter with his Chief Minister so that corruption in the State could be reduced.

Shri Reddy has also talked about some driving schools and he has also talked about the Ordinance. I have already explained these things in the first paragraph itself about the driving schools.

[Translation]

Shri Virldhi Chander Jain has also spoken about the drivers and the octroi. As I told just now, it is one endeavour to see that octroi is abolished in the remaining States as well. The States which have not abolished it, also include Rajasthan. I want that you should also help us in this matter. He has also referred to the National Highway—15 passing through Barmer and Jaisalmer which he said was important from defence point of view. I shall get it examined by the Ministry of Defence and see that maximum possible assistance is given by our Department. He has also spoken about widening the highways.

SHRI VIRLDHI CHANDER JAIN : The work of widening the roads is the responsibility of your department. National Highway—15 is important from defence point of view.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT : He has raised the question of widening of highways and the question of level-crossing.....  
 (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : You introduce double roads. At many places even widening would be sufficient. Double roads should be introduced.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT : We have selected some of the heavy traffic highways for this and in the Seventh Plan, we will be doubling the roads and on some roads, we will be having a fourth lane also, depending on the intensity of the traffic.

[Translation]

I shall get the question of widening of National Highway—15 examined and let the hon. Member know about it. Shri Satyagopal Misra has also said that 'with the passing of this Act, the private parties will get more time and that Government's sympathy is with the private parties. I want to tell the House in no uncertain terms that the Government have no intention to entertain private parties and that we are not much interested in extending them help. We have provided a safeguard that no company would be able to get more than seven permits and no individual would be able to get more than three permits. We have abolished this system. But this has been done to ensure that there is no monopoly. Those who have money and resources try to monopolise. Through this order, a poor man will have the right to buy a vehicle of his own, get it registered in the State where he lives, pay tax and ply his vehicle in whatever State he wants. You have viewed it from a different angle but our objective is totally different. Dagaji has spoken about corruption. He has referred to M.V. Act of 1939. I have just now said that octroi should be abolished in all States. He has also asked for a school for the drivers. He has also said that complaints have been received about construction of roads. The Central Government allocates funds to the State Governments for the construction of National Highways. The State Governments get this work executed through their respective P.W. Ds. We have received some complaints that no work is being done. We are getting them examined. We want that a Central Government representative should be present at the time of opening of

each tender by the State P.W.D. so that he could ensure that proper procedure is followed and the funds of the Centre are properly utilised.

[English]

Mr. Krishna Iyer has said that the length of national highway in Karnataka is less in comparison to other States...

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : On national highway number 7, from Bangalore to Hosur there is a very heavy traffic. So, it is necessary to widen that road, rather make it double. As of now, it is not possible to go on this road from Bangalore to Hosur.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT : We have tried to cover in the Seventh Five Year Plan those States where we find that necessity is more, where the criteria for national highway is applicable.

Another point that he has mentioned is about the drivers. He has said that the drivers driving long distances get tired. We are evolving some such system whereby after every 50 or 60 kilometres we have some sort of a small motel or rest room and where will have a first-aid post, even a police post, a petrol pump and a small workshop. We are trying to do it with the help of the State Governments. If they come forward, we can give them whatever can be given by the Centre. But it is going to be a very big project. Financial resources are a very big question. So, this is under our consideration. The idea which you have mooted out today is very good and we are seriously thinking on that line.

Another point which he has mentioned is about the bridges and the level crossings on the railway lines. I will take up this point with my sister department and we will certainly see to it that wherever funds permit us, we will do that.

Shri Namgyal has mentioned some points about Jammu and Kashmir. I do share with him that this will facilitate the State of Jammu and Kashmir, specially when fresh fruits are to be sent to other parts of the country. This will give them more facilities.

Shri Datta Samant has also talked about the urgency of this Ordinance. He also mentioned about corruption. Both of his points I have replied to.

DR. DATTA SAMANT : What about the service conditions of the workers ?

SHRI RAJESH PILOT : I am coming to that. He mentioned about the dropping of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and the Backward Classes quota. When there is no restriction, quota is not really required. The intention behind this Ordinance and the intention behind this move is that no one should have an obstruction. Up-till now a poor Scheduled Caste was really finding it difficult. No doubt it was reserved for him but actually it was not reaching him in the form it should have reached. This has also compelled us to make it free so that a Scheduled Caste can walk into any office and say, "Well, under the Government's policy I have bought this truck and I want to operate it between such and such places". Now if a Scheduled Caste or a Scheduled Tribe person opens a small industry, he does not have to depend on transporters. He can buy his own truck and help his industry in his own way and does not have to depend on other transporters. So, the idea which the Hon. Member wanted to convey is already in our mind and that is why we have made it free.

Another point which he has raised is about the labour laws. He said there is no law about the minimum wages of drivers, cleaners and others. I cannot throw much light on it but I will certainly get in touch with the Labour Department and the Labour Minister...*(Interruptions)*.

DR. DATTA SAMANT : Lakhs of workers are involved.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT : Those who are in the public sector there is a system for them but for the private operators, the private owners, I do agree that there may not be a comprehensive law, but I will check it up with the Labour Department, or you can raise this question directly to the Labour Minister. He can really educate you better on this subject, but from my side also I will

write to him the feelings which you have conveyed to me.

He has also mentioned that the people get drunk. I have really got confused. On the one hand you say that the wages of these people are very low and on the other hand, you say that they all get drunk. Anyway, this is one of the things that you have pointed out. We have started working on a plan to have highway patrolling. We are starting this in sectors with the same intention, that is, 100 kilometres as the first step so that sensitive highway is patrolled for the simple reason to give security to the driver and to the passenger and also that they should know that somebody is checking them. These days the trucks are overloaded badly. Sometimes during the night we find the luggage is trailing behind the trucks. Trucks are so badly overloaded that the driver has hardly any space to sit. So, because of all this, we are starting highway patrolling.

Shri Rajhans has also said the same thing about drivers. He has given a suggestion about the medical check up of drivers. In some of the State there are driving schools and some other States do have their medical check up system. But this is one of the sore points which is coming from all sectors. The Government, while amending the M.V. Act, will keep this in mind and will make sure that safeguards are kept whereby we can check them up.

[*Translation*]

Secondly, he wanted me to travel in the D.T.C. buses.

[*English*]

I have already said about this. I always travel once a month in DTC buses, to see the position myself. There are officials dealing with the DTC who are also supposed to travel twice a month. So, we see that what we are trying to implement in the DTC is fully getting implemented.

[*Translation*]

Thirdly, he made a mention about DTC bus fares.

[Shri Rajesh Pilot]

[English]

I had already explained this in *Janvani* and other programmes. Government was put in such a condition that if we have not resorted to this step after 3 years, may be, we are not in a position to give service to the commuters of Delhi. Because, from 1948 onwards, there has been no fare change in the Delhi Transport System. A commuter who was travelling for 31 paise in 1948 has been travelling for 40 paise in 1986. Therefore, we could not have continued with this system. Today, we are transporting 42 lakhs of people daily. We are covering 11 lakh kilometers per day. 5400 buses are in operation. Day by day the demand is increasing. The buses have gone old. They require a change. You have got to replace them. We felt it that the common man will get a pinch. He has been paying 40 paise for ages. Suddenly if he has to pay one rupee he will feel the pinch. We had this feeling. With a heavy heart we have to resort to this. This was required for the betterment of the services and for the safe journey of the commuters. Then, Mr. Panigrahi talked about the increase in accidents and funds for roads. I do share his feeling that Road sector requires extra allotment and more attention. I would like to inform him that Government is concerned about it and putting efforts and resorting to measures whereby the entire road sector will be given more priority.

[Translation]

Shri Choubey has said that difficulties in getting a permit have increased. He has also told a story in Hindi that three blind persons were going to see an elephant. Let me also tell him a story although he is not present in the House. When I was elected for the Parliament in 1980 for the first time, I noticed an Opposition leader objecting even to right things. One day, I asked that Opposition leader why he always objected even to good points of the Government. He called me to the lobby and told that if he did not do so in the House, who would bother about him outside the House. Then only I could understand why that leader raised objections. It is all right if that kind of intention is behind raising these objections and if it was with this intention that he narrated that joke, it does not pinch me.

The step taken by Government is commendable as the decision to abolish the quota of national permits has been taken with a good intention.

He has referred to monopoly. Now no individual can get more than three permits and no company can get more than seven. Apart from this, he also spoke about Orissa Trunk Road I shall reply to him separately if he gives me all the details in writing.

Shri Girdhari Lal Vyas had also spoken about corruption in this regard stating that there were a number of malpractices in it and that the permits, etc. were not being given to the deserving applicants. It is in view of these feelings that this step has been taken. Now the national permit has been made free. There is no loophole left in it now for anybody to indulge in malpractices. Now, nobody is required to approach anybody. You buy your truck, get it registered, pay tax for the State in which you want to ply your vehicle and there is no need now to get special permission for that. He too has touched the question of monopoly. As of now, no company will be able to keep more than 7 trucks and no individual will be able to keep more than three.

He has also raised the matter of National Highway No. 8 and railway crossings. I shall take it up with the Ministry of Railways. However, it will be better if he directly writes to the Railway Ministry. They will let him know about it. Earlier, he gave some suggestions with regard to State Highway No. 4. I shall examine them. Next time when State Highways are selected for conversion into National Highways and if that highway fulfills the required norms and if the State Government of Rajasthan also puts up a demand to this effect, we shall certainly pay attention to it.

[English]

Then, Mr. Ramamurthi talked about comprehensive Motor Vehicles Act. I do agree with him that we require a change in this old Act which has been there from 1939. I have already assured you that Government is coming up with a comprehensive amendment to the old Bill which will take care of all the present requirements for safe driving

637 *St. Res. re : Disapproval PHALGUNA 13, 1907 (SAKA) St. Res. re : Disapproval 638*  
*of Motor Vehicles (Amdt.) Ordinance of Motor Vehicles (Amdt.) Ordinance*  
*and Motor Vehicles (Amdt.) Bill and Motor Vehicles (Amdt.) Bill*

and whatever we feel is needed for the safety of the transport system now.

Another thing was pointed out about the Parliament which I mentioned to you. We have no intention of cutting short or undermining the Parliament thing. The intention was to do it as fast as possible, so that, when it is a good cause for the nation, we do not hesitate to take all steps which are necessary.

Regarding fuel consumption, you have mentioned this. The idea is that obstruction in the present system should be removed. When you have good competition, the price-line will also come down. When you have good transport competition, the price of anything there will certainly contribute towards that factor and prices will come down. Because, there is good competition. So, with these intentions we have done this.

Regarding giving publicity, I do agree and I also request through you Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, that all Members of Parliament irrespective of their political ideologies and political parties that about the policies of the Central Government which are made for the common man, it is our duty to go and tell the people that 'this is the Central Government policy, this is the State Government policy, this is good for you, you please utilise these policies for your benefits.' So, I would request all the Members of Parliament to help us and tell the people that 'this is your privilege, this is meant for you, you go and take it from the Government, the Government is supposed to do this for you'. Instead of depending on the publicity by the press and other people, we also, as public representatives, must reach the people and tell them what the Government is doing so that they are aware of what the Government has done and what the Government is taking care of.

With these words, Sir, I have covered all the points which the Hon. Members have mentioned.

SHRI SATYAGOPAL MISRA (Tamiluk) : What about oil consumption? How are you going to cut it down?

SHRI RAJESH PILOT : No, no. There is no intention that you have to increase the numbers of fleet. The idea is to remove the obstruction in the system. I am not saying at the moment that it is free and everybody will buy. You have to have money to buy this. You have got to have some scope to buy a truck. You just cannot buy a truck and put it at the crossing. You have got to have some resources with you. So, this is not going to increase the resources. This is only to remove the obstruction in the way for a smooth functioning and for a better economy of the country.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Since Shri Janga Reddy is not present, I shall put the Statutory Resolution moved by him to the vote of the House.

The question is :

"That this House disapproves of the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Ordinance, 1986 (Ordinance No. 4 of 1986) promulgated by the President on the 28th January, 1986."

*The motion was negatived*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I shall now put the motion for consideration of the Bill to the vote of the House.

The question is :

"That the Bill further to amend the Motor Vehicles Act, 1939, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

*The motion was adopted*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : The House will now take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

The question is :

"That clauses 2 to 5 stand part of the Bill."

*The motion was adopted*

Clauses 2 to 5 were added to the Bill  
Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and  
the Title

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : The question  
is :

“That clause 1, the Enacting Formula  
and the Title stand part of the Bill.”

*The motion was adopted*

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and  
the Title were added to the Bill

SHRI RAJESH PILOT : Sir, I move :

“That the Bill be passed.”

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : The  
question is :

“That the Bill be passed.”

*The motion was adopted*

14.58 hrs.

RAILWAY BUDGET, 1986-87—  
GENERAL DISCUSSION

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : We shall  
now take up item No. 19—General discussion  
on the Railway Budget.

[Translation]

SHRI BALKAVI BAIKAGI (Mandsaur) :  
Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Budget is so  
good that it does not call for any discussion.  
It should be passed without discussion.

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY  
(Nalgonda) : In case it is good for Shri  
Bairagi, is it good for the people also ?

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : If people  
want to say something on it, let them do it.

Others may like to say something, Perhaps  
they want to add some more points to make  
it more *achha* !

Now, Mr. Sobhanadreeswara Rao may  
initiate the discussion.

14.59 hrs.

SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO  
(Vijayawada) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thank  
you very much for giving the opportunity  
to initiate the discussion on the Railway  
Budget.

Sir, I need not explain in detail what  
an important role the Railways play in the  
economy of this country. The fact that it is  
the largest in Asia itself speaks of how  
important this organisation is in our country's  
development. But for the Railways, the  
movement of coal, minerals, ores and other  
raw materials that are necessary for several  
industries as well as power generating plants,  
would not have been possible.

15 00 hrs.

[SHRI SOMNATH RATH *in the Chair*]

Similarly, since our country is still  
mainly dependent on agriculture, Railway  
play a very important role in the transport  
of seeds and fertilizers. In the matter of  
supply of food items for the common people  
also, the Railway is playing a very important  
role. It is the cheapest mode of transport for  
common man to reach from one part of the  
country to the other part. Still it is most  
unfortunate that the Government is not  
paying that much attention which should be  
given to the railway sector. In fact, the  
expenditure on Railways, as a percentage of  
total plan expenditure, is steadily going  
down. While in the first plan, it was about  
11.05 per cent, it increased to 15.43 per cent  
in the second plan, and 15.45 per cent in  
the third plan. And then, from 4th plan  
onwards, it went down. In fact, the Railway  
Convention Committee which has gone in  
detail into this aspect has expressed a lot of  
disappointment and distress over the reduc-  
tion in the allocation for Railways.

The present allocation of Rs. 5100 crores  
in the Sixth Plan looks to be very big. But  
when we examine that, the total plan outlay