

12.26 hrs.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE (AMENDMENT) BILL*

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Representation of the People Act, 1950.

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Representation of the People Act, 1950."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ: I introduced the Bill.

12.27 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair]

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

*[English]***(i) Need to ensure early Conversion of Hospet-Hassan-Mangalore narrow gauge Railway line into Broadgauge**

SHRI K.G. SHIVAPPA (SHIMOGA): A company in private sector has now proposed to set up an integrated Steel Plant at Mangalore with a capacity of one million tonne, which is estimated to Rs. 2000 crores. The State Government has decided to provide all necessary support and assistance to this ambitious project.

This Steel Plant will depend on imported coal making use of the port facilities at Mangalore, however, the entire iron ore requirement will have to come from Bellary-Hospet area. This would mean movement of around 1.2 million tonnes of iron ore from Bellary-Hospet.

Presently Mangalore is connected to Bellary-Hospet area by meter gauge line via Chitradurga and Hassan large quantities of iron ore transported from Bellary-Hospet to Mangalore have to be transhipped from broad gauge to meter gauge at Hassan. This would explain the amount of difficulty posed to the Railways as well as to the operation of the Steel Plant. It is felt that with such constraints as Integrated Steel Plant may not really become viable.

I, therefore, urge upon the Hon. Minister of Railways to take immediate steps to convert the Hospet-Hassan-Mangalore line to broad gauge on top priority basis which would be a boon to the many large industries proposed at Mangalore.

*[English]***(ii) Need to protect crops from Rojes (Neelgai)**

SHRI GUMAN MAL LODHA (Pali) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, there has been growing menace of Rojes (Neelgai) who enter the agriculture fields in large number and eat away the standing crops of the farmers in Rajasthan, particularly in its Pali district. The Department of Forest under the Government of India has not

succeeded in solving this problem despite its continuous efforts for the last 5 or 6 years.

Sir, the farmers of Rajasthan, and especially the farmers of Pali district are too worried to sleep and they have to keep vigil on their fields for whole night yet their standing crops are destroyed and they are left weeping on their helplessness but the Government does nothing to solve this problem.

Sir, I request the Central Government to construct fenced enclosures for confining these Rojes and the farmers should be accorded suitable rights to combat this menace and protect their crops.

*[English]***(iii) Need to take early steps for modernisation, electrification of Sealdah-Lalgola Railway Section of Eastern Railway**

SHRI PRAMOTHES MUKHERJEE (Berhampore): The prevailing condition of Sealdaha-Lalgola Railway Section in West Bengal under Eastern Railways fails to cater to the growing needs of the passengers. No step has yet been taken to modernise this section. Since independence, no attempt has been taken to fulfil the increasing demand of the people for electrification of the railway-line from Krishnanagar to Berhampore or for the extension of electrification of the same line up to Lalgola. Even, people's demand for D.M.E.U. from Ranaghat Jn. to Lalgola Station in expectation of more benefit to be given to daily passengers, has not been accepted for a long period. It is a fact that this Sealdaha-Lalgola Section is having some special importance.

I, therefore, urge upon the Central Government to ensure modernisation, electrification and total development of this section.

(iv) Need to promptly investigate the Mumbai Bomb Blasts case and to book and try the culprits expeditiously

SHRI RAM NAIK (Bombay North): It is now two years that severe bomb blasts in Mumbai (Bombay) on 12 March, 1993 killed more than 300 persons, injured thousands and property worth crores of rupees was destroyed. The Prime Minister and the Home Minister affirmed that Pakistan have masterminded these bomb blasts and that the Government would promptly investigate and book the culprits. 196 persons were chargesheeted for different offences including the offence of waging war against the State.

Though two years have elapsed, all the accused have not been arrested so far. The trial is moving at a snail's pace. Just a few months before the Mumbai blasts, there was a similar blast in U.S.A. The offenders have not only been arrested, but have also been tried and punished. The inordinate delay in the case of Mumbai blasts is causing concern and anguish in the minds of the countrymen, particularly of Mumbai.

The Judge trying the case has also recently received threats from the Dubai based suicide squad.

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I, therefore, request the Central Government that all the accused be arrested promptly and tried expeditiously.

(v) Need to release adequate funds for early construction of road across river Jolokia Suti, Assam

SHRI BALIN KULI (Lakhimpur): There is a small river Jolokia Suti flowing from Arunachal through Assam crossing the National Highway 52 in Jonal sub-division under Dhemaji district of Assam. During monsoon season this river is flooded causing many problems including disruption of traffic. The National Highway 52 was under Border Roads Organisation earlier, but it is now under the Ministry of Surface Transport. Due to lack of funds, the construction of road across the river and concrete bridge on this river has come to a standstill.

As this road serves two States, namely, Arunachal Pradesh and Assam, it deserves immediate attention of the Government. I, therefore, request the Hon. Minister of Surface Transport to provide funds to ensure early completion of the construction of the road.

12.34 hrs.

[English]

STATUTORY RESOLUTION RE: DISAPPROVAL OF CUSTOMS TARIFF (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE; AND CUSTOMS TARIFF (AMENDMENT) BILL

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The House shall now take up Item Nos. 11 and 12 of today's Order Paper together. The time allotted to this subject is one hour. Shri Jitendra Nath Das to move the Statutory Resolution.

SHRI JITENDRA NATH DAS (Jalpaiguri): Sir, I beg to move:

"That this House disapproves of the Customs Tariff (Amendment) Ordinance, 1994 (No. 14 of 1994) promulgated by the President on December 31, 1994."

In this regard I would like to state something. This Ordinance has come as a result of the Uruguay Round Conference and negotiations. You know the people of our country are very much agitated about this. They have been agitating from the very beginning on this issue. Therefore, we would like to disapprove of the issuance of this Ordinance.

Though this Bill carries some restrictions, it is nothing but a sugar coated bitter tablet.

Sir, the restrictions on imports have been removed and custom duties have been reduced with a view to making the Indian industry efficient and to ensure its smooth interaction with the world economy. But what is the present position of India? India is lagging behind in the field of industry. Our imports are coming down at present. Perhaps, India's imports form 0.5 per cent of the world imports at present, whereas in the 50s it was about 2.5 per cent. This figure is undoubtedly alarming.

In the field of industry, we are still backward. The Indian industry needs protection to become self-sufficient. I

am sorry to state here that our Finance Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh had stated in the Thirty-fourth Meeting of the Customs and Central Excise Advisory Council that protection to the Indian industry would have to be reduced. This reduction in protection emerges perhaps in the context of the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations. At the same time, the Finance Minister is assuring us that the small scale industries would not be hurt. According to Dr. Manmohan Singh, the people of our country will have to prepare themselves to fight against the multinationals which are coming to our country because we have opened the doors of India for them to come in. This fight is between inequals. I have no doubt that this fight will lead to the liquidation of our country.

The consumer goods manufacturers in our country cannot survive without any protection. They would not survive if they have to operate on the same terms and conditions as are applicable to the multinationals. The present Budget is giving a death signal to the small scale industries and to the consumer goods manufacturers in our country.

India cannot accept the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations as perfect. All international agreements reflect the interests of multinationals and the interests of the developed countries of the world. The Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations are motivated by the needs of the multinationals in order to find new markets in the world. They have selected India as the best market. A new international institution, the World Trade Organisation has been established recently as a result of the decision taken in the Uruguay round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations. The World Trade Organisation has become a symbol of fear in the minds of our people. These fears are expressed more clearly in the emerging domination of multinationals.

Ultimately, I think, our country will be ruled by the multinationals. The time has come for that. Now, the fate of our people is wholly dependent on the whims and fancies of the multinationals.

Under the circumstances, I demand not only to disapprove this Customs Tariff (Amendment) Ordinance, but also to withdraw the acceptance to join the World Trade Organisation and also to withdraw the agreement in the Uruguay Round of negotiations at an early date.

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI MANMOHAN SINGH): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Customs Tariff Act, 1975, be taken into consideration."

Sir, the Bill is a very simple Bill. Shri Jitendra Nath Das referred to our country coming under pressure as a result of the Uruguay Round of negotiations. This Bill seeks to protect our industry against unfair competition from any other members of the World Trade Organisation. I would say that this is not a controversial Bill; it seeks to protect the Indian industries against unfair competition, against other countries trying to dump their goods in our country.