

should be paid fair remunerations I would also like to know the names of places where branches of these Tribunals are proposed to be set up ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

Mr. Chairman : I allowed him to speak, by way of exception, in the third reading

Shri M.V. Chandrashekhara Murthy : Sir in many cases, as per the recommendations of the JPC the Government have taken action and the Action Taken Report has already been placed on the Table of the House As regards the service charges it is for the banks & associations to decided on that

Mr Chairman The question is

"That the Bill, as amended be passed "

The motion was adopted.

15.25 hrs.

[English]

NATIONAL HIGHWAYS (AMENDMENT) BILL

Mr Chairman : Now the House will take up item No 13—the National Highway (Amendment) Bill 1995 Shri Jagdish Tytler

The Minister of State of the Ministry of Surface Transport (Shri Jagdish Tytler) : I beg to move

That the Bill further to amend the National Highway Act 1956 be taken into consideration

Sir with your permission I would like to say a few words while moving the National Highways (Amendment) Bill, 1995 for consideration and approval The activities of the National Highways and other matters connected therewith are governed by the National Highways Act, 1956, (48 of 1956) The total length of National Highways in the country at present is 34,058 km Though National Highway Network constitutes only about 2 per cent of the total road length in the country it is carrying nearly 40 per cent of the total traffic carried by all categories of roads In view of the constraint of budgetary resources and growing requirements of the Highway sector there is need to augment resources through mobilisation of extra budgetary resources for proper development and upkeep of National Highway system In this context, and in the background of the current environment of economic liberalisation, this ministry has initiated a number of measures to explore the possibility of involving private sector participation in the highway sector With this in view, the Government has taken a number of measures like declaration of road sector as industry, relaxation of provisions of the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act, declaration of road sector

as infrastructure and reduction of customs duties on import of construction equipments A number of private investors including foreign investors have shown interest in the proposals of the Government to open the road sector for private investment However, in the absence of an enabling provision in the National Highways Act 1956 to permit private participation it has not been possible to do so

Under Section 5 of the Act, it is the responsibility of the Central Government to develop and maintain in proper repair all National Highways The Central Government may by notification in the official Gazette direct that any function in relation to the development or maintenance of National Highways shall also be exercisable by the State Government or by an officer or authority subordinate to the Central Government or to the State Government This provision does not empower the Government to allow private sector to develop and maintain National Highways Similarly under Section 6 of the Act, the Central Government can levy and collect fees for the use of ferries, permanent bridges Sections of National Highways etc It is necessary that the private party is allowed to collect such fee for services or benefits rendered by him It is also necessary to authorise him to regulate traffic on the facility developed by him It is also necessary that the Central Government may, through suitable mechanism take effective measures for the prevention of encroachment and misuse of National Highways and punish any person found indulging in such activities

It has now been proposed add subsection 8A and 8B after Section B which will enable the Central Government

- (i) To enter into agreement with any person in relation to the development and maintenance of the whole or any part of a National Highway
- (ii) To levy fees and authorise the person who has undertaken to develop the whole or any part of a national highway to collect such fee,
- (iii) To empower such person to regulate traffic on such national highway, and
- (iv) To provide for punishment for mischief by injury to such national highways

In the circumstances, I now move the motion that the Bill to further amend the National Highways Act, 1956 be taken into consideration

Mr. Chairman Motion moved

"That the Bill further to amend the National Highway Act, 1956, be taken into consideration "

[Translation]

Shri Dau Dayal Joshi (Kota) Sir there is no doubt that the number of vehicles on roads is increasing day-by-day It was 3 lakh in 1951 and now it has gone up to more than 2.5 crore Sir, when I was very young, we used to raise a slogan My friend Uttambai Patel is sitting here

with red-cap. We had a socialist Party in Rajasthan which had a popular base. I was just a child and was a new entrant to politics. We used to raise the slogan, "Roti, Kapara aur Makan, mang raha hai Hindustan." This Government has not been able to meet these popular demands, people are dying of starvation even today. Today India is the only nation where people die of sun-stroke for want of roof over their head, where people die of cold while sleeping on footpaths, again for want of roof over their heads. This ineffective Government, inactive Government had not been able to meet the minimum needs of bread, cloth and house.

The second important need of mankind is of roads, electricity and water. These are the essential needs to lead a good life. It is true that roads are the parameters of development.

[English]

Mr. Chairman : Mr. Joshi, you can continue your speech next time.

15.30 1/2 hrs.

[English]

RESOLUTION RE : STEPS TO PREVENT ATROCITIES ON SC/ST—Contd.

Mr. Chairman (Shri Sharad Dighe) : Now, the Private Members' Business. We shall now take up further discussion on the Resolution moved by Shri Satya Deo Singh on the 16th December, 1994.

Shri Rajveer Singh may speak.

[Translation]

Shri Rajveer Singh (Aonla) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I support the motion moved by Shri Satyadeo Singh. Today, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, particularly the latter, have become most convenient places for committing atrocities on women and poor. The situation has worsened to the extent that women in Uttar Pradesh do not feel safe in going out with honour. We have the instances of atrocities committed on women, harijan women in Allahabad, Fateh-pur, Hamirpur during the past one and a half years where politicians stripped women and paraded them nude. These misdeeds received the support of State Government there.

Sir, the culmination of these atrocities was the incident of Rampur ka Tiraha in Muzaffarnagar, when the batches of women who were demanding Uttarakhand and coming to Delhi to put their demand before the Centre were raped by none else, but the police men on orders from their officers. These policemen did the job of goondas. Buses were stopped on the main road crossing and the women folks were dragged out and taken to nearby cane fields and

raped. Their clothes were torn and they were lathi charged leaving dozens of them injured.

The Government ordered a CBI inquiry into it. Mr. M.P. Sayeed is sitting here. The CBI report confirmed that women were raped, molested, tortured, men were lathi charged, fired at, but no action has been taken thereon so far.

This is the weakness of our law. Committing such atrocities on women is a sin, a crime.

This Parliament has passed the Panchayat Raj Act which provides golden opportunity to women for participation in Panchayats. But there also, women were misbehaved. You must have read a press report that a woman who was the candidate for the office of Chairman of Lucknow Zila Parishad was kidnapped. She was taken to the house of a Minister and was molested, her clothes were torn. Still the Minister says, does not matter, we will get her a new Sari. The Minister is still in council of Ministers. This is the situation in Uttar Pradesh.

Sir, thereafter, elections to District panchayat were held in the neighbouring district Ghaziabad. A women voter Umlesh Chauhan, had been permitted by the High Court to cast her vote. Voting was to be over by 12 O'Clock. So she wanted to reach the polling station before 12 noon, but in the presence of women police, the muslemen threw her out and did not allow her to vote. This is the Panchayat Raj, where women are prevented from casting their vote and dishonoured and misbehaved. After all, where will this country go? We talk of entering 21st century. While woman is being rendered helpless. They do not dare go out without the company of their husband, brother and other family members. There are reports, Even foreign women are not spared. They are raped. But Government is sitting mute. It is not taking suitable action. How long this jungle rule will continue to prevail in India?

Mr. Chairman, Government must make some law in this regard. This Bill should be passed and most stringent punishment should be awarded to these culprits. The plight of women is pitiable. It is deteriorating. We do not take these things very seriously. The incident of rapes are more in respect of poor women who work in fields, in factories. A report has appeared that a father, not an ordinary man, but a Government officer, raped his own daughter. What phase of progress is it? Why such things are not being checked. We have completed 50 years of our Independence and have set very high standards and traditions. Still, where all women are seen as mothers, a father is committing rape on his own daughter. The woman today is considered an commodity, an object of entertainment. Somebody has to think over this, somebody has to make a legislation for this. At the same time, we must educate our society, we must flush out this filth. I would request both this House and the Government to adopt this Bill and make laws which may provide for such rigorous punishment to the culprit as he would remember through out his life and as would deter others from doing such acts. Some State Government for