

SHRI GUMAN MAL LODHA(Pali):

Would the hon. Minister explain when the revoked passport was used by Shri Win Chadha for running out of India and whether a case has been registered, if so, against whom and on what date?

The intimation dated 15 November, 1991 had been sent to Switzerland from India and that being so whether the CBI sent this intimation...

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Justice Lodha, if the statement is made by the hon. Minister, is it open for clarification? Suppose, if the House is misled, under the rules of procedure you have got a provision and you can make use of it. Now, I call Minister of Surface Transport.

SHRI GUMAN MAL LADHA: Sir, today is the last day of the Session.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Because today happens to be the last day, can we violate the rules and disregard the traditions and customs of this House? This subject is closed now. Now, the hon. Minister for Surface Transport may speak.

13.55 hrs.

NATIONAL HIGHWAYS (AMENDMENT) BILL-CONTD.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): Sir, let me thank the Members who took part in the debate yesterday on the National Highways (Amendment) Bill. I want to thank the Members because they have given some very good suggestions. I could see that each Member who spoke and who has been speaking in the Lok Sabha as well as in the Rajya Sabha, has been wanting new National Highways and complaining about the roads not being in good condition. so many people have been wanting new National Highways. The Chief Ministers have been writing to us

asking for the new National Highways.

The working Group on the Roads for the Eighty Five-Year Plan, which was set up by the Planning Commission, had looked into the requirements for the improvement of the National Highways. The Group estimated that the National Highways. (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am sorry, there is some mistake. Shri Prataprao Bhonsle was on his legs and he had not concluded his speech.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI TEJSINGHRAO BHONSLE (Ramtek): I would like to thank the hon. Minister for bringing this Bill.

[English]

But I give up my right.

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: Sir, the Group had estimated that the (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI DAU DAYAL JOSHI (Kota): Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir the Hon. Minister has started delivering his speech but we have not been given chance to speak... (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: Sir, the Working Group had estimated that the improvement of the National Highways will cost Rs. 8,300 crores and there will be a saving of Rs. 1,500 crores in the vehicle-operating cost. Apart from this, the improved network will encourage movement of multi-axle vehicles on the National High Ways and this would also give a saving of about Rs. 800 crores. Thus, a total of Rs. 2,300 crores is expected to be saved by this investment. However, the Planning Commission has approved only Rs. 2,600 crores, out of which the on-going schemes will cost me about Rs. 2,500 crores and hardly have any money for

the new projects. I just like to inform the hon. Members that if I were to implement all the projects today, I require Rs. 41,000 crores, out of which I am getting not even Rs. 100 crores, a little less than Rs. 100 crores. With this amount, I cannot do what I am expected to do ... (*Interruptions*) I will finish it earlier, Sir.

All the Members had raised certain queries and I think once I bring this amendment to this Act, I would have some extra money and I think that would also go in for the improvement of the roads.

Since everybody is in a hurry and most of the Opposition Members who raised these points are asking me to hurry it up, I recommend that the Bill be passed.

SHRI ANANTRO DESHMUKH: Sir, I want to seek two clarifications from the Minister because yesterday I have spoken on them. One is that I had asked the Minister specifically what would happen to the amount that would be collected by the enactment of this legislation, whether it would form part of the Central Road Fund of that particular State and would be utilised for maintenance and undertaking of the new national Highways in the particular State.

The second clarification I want to seek is what has happened to the Resolution which had been taken up in this House on 13th May, 1988 regarding the enhancement of the percentage from 3.5 per cent to 5 per cent of the basic cost on the petrol and diesel, which the State Governments were to get in the form of new roads to be undertaken.

I would like to have clarification on these two points.

14.00 hrs.

[*Translation*]

SHRI TEJ NARYAN SINGH (Buxar): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to ask the hon. Minister a question with reference to his speech proposing increase in taxes. I would like to tell him that in this country

people do not travel only by cars or trucks. In this country, a number of people earn their livelihood through several other means i.e. by running small shops called khomcha and selling goods etc. If this Bill is passed, it will confer a right on the Government to impose tax on them also. Therefore, I would like to ask as to what provisions have been made in this Bill in respect of the persons leading a life below poverty line. Some persons are engaged in business and some others earn their livelihood through vending etc. Will the Government give them exemption from taxes or not? As per the existing provisions of this Bill which you have passed, they will not get nay exemption from the tax burden. Therefore, the hon. Minister should also pay attention to it. (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: Let me answer. Probably I will be able to answer.

I would like to inform the hon. Member who has raised this question that there was a resolution in 1988 by both the Houses that the 5 per cent cess on petrol and diesel should be put. What we are charging today is a cess which was put in 1929. We hardly collect about Rs. 15 crores in the whole country out of which I get Rs. 9-10 crores which I have to spend for Central Road Fund programmes all over the country. That is not enough.

Therefore, we had gone to the Cabinet recently: that the resolution which was passed by both the Houses should be implemented. I would like to say that the hon. Prime Minister had recommended that a group of Ministers would sit and come back with a recommendation, quickly, so that something could be done. But out of the money so collected also, majority of the money will be going to the State Governments. Some money will be with the Central Government.

SHRI LOKANATH CHOUDHURY (Jagatsinghpur): Will it be retrospective?

SHRI JADGISH TYTLER: let us see. But I do not think so. Where is the money?

I would like to inform the hon. Members that not specific identification has been done. This will be done after consultations with the State Governments and then only we will decide what is to be charged and what is not to be charged. But these charges will be for the extra facilities which will be provided — like roadside facilities, tow-laning or four-laning of the roads or re-surfacing which would be new also. This is not about the present National Highways. I think we are not going to tax the poor people at all. You may please be rest assured. This will be on the petrol and diesel vehicles which are on the road and this will also be on those who will be invading the facilities. *(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is an amendment by Shri Rasa Singh Rawat. Are you moving it?

[Translation]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer): I beg to move:

"That the Bill be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by 30th October, 1992".

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to take two minutes only. I would like to say that the existing condition of the National Highways is very pitiable. The Central Govt. Spends the whole of amount on it through the State Governments. But you have no proper control over the Engineers who are directly under the employment of the State Govts. As a result construction takes under long time and meanwhile the material goes waste. Recently, I had gone to my village which is located at a distance of about 5 Kms away from the National Highway No. 8. The whole of this highway between Ajmer to Udaipur and adjacent to Jaipur is entirely in a miserable condition. Since the construction work has started, one or the other work on it is going on. Sometimes small bridges are constructed; some time levelling is done. Sometimes bases are elevated. As a result of it a number

of accidents occur there. There should be a time bound programme for all these works and the construction work should be completed within a stipulated period along with the prescribed specifications. And National Highways should be constructed according to their importance with properly investing all the funds in them. At so many places, the National Highways are in worse condition than the State highways. The Government should also pay attention to it.

I want to submit one more thing that the drivers are killed on the National Highways; it should also be kept in mind and the security arrangements should be made. At the time of the accidents the traffic jam is there. Arrangements should be made for providing mobile cranes to remove the vehicles and there should also be the arrangements of the mobile dispensaries to provide immediate medical aid to the injured people and victims of the accidents. If the Central Government is going to increase the toll tax by making more octroi Posts then its benefit should also reach to the people. My suggestions should be taken seriously and the National Highways should be developed. I take back my amendment. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: The issue raised by the hon. member was also raised by Shrimati Sumitra Mahajan yesterday that the roads are not constructed in time and the corruption is rampant. In this regard I want to submit that the Central Government sanctions the amount and the work of calling the tenders and quality control are done by the State Governments. We have already written to the hon. Chief ministers and we will write in future also that if they will not do this work properly then the Central Government will take over it. The Central Government will get the roads constructed under its supervision but till date this work is being done by the State Governments so we do not want to touch it, the Central Government does not want to take this burden. If the money is not utilised properly, if the contractors do not do their work properly and if the quality control is not maintained then a day will come when the Central Government will have to take over the work of construction

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please excuse me. We are virtually violating the existing rules. Whenever an amendment is moved, the Member who moved the amendment, whether he presses or otherwise is the real stage. We have crossed the stage of asking for clarifications and other things. Let us follow the procedure scrupulously.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT: I seek leave of the House to withdraw my amendment.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that the amendment moved by Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat be withdrawn?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes, Yes.

*Amendment No.2 was, by leave,
withdrawn*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, I call Mr. Dau Dayal Joshi. Are you pressing your amendment No. 4?

[Translation]

SHRI DAU DAYAL JOSHI (Kota): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, roads, water and medical facilities are the State subjects. The responsibilities of those things, which are utilised by the people, should be carried out properly. (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Ayub Khan, This is not the procedure to be adopted in this House. The Minister should answer.

[Translation]

SHRI DAU DAYAL JOSHI: I have moved the amendment on the Bill to elicit public opinion thereon by the Government in the matter of roads which is commonly used by the people.

I would like to make one more submission that a time limit should be fixed to do away with the collection of toll tax at the posts set up for the same.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Joshiji, please excuse me. I have to run the House according to Rules. You cannot speak whenever you like. The question is: Are you pressing your amendment? If you want to press the amendment, say 'Yes' and if you do not want, say 'No'. That is all you have to say. There is no chance for you to explain.

[Translation]

SHRI DAU DAYAL JOSHI: I withdraw my amendment notice on the Bill.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that the amendment moved by Shri Dau Dayal Joshi be withdrawn?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes, Yes.

*Amendment No. 4 was, by leave,
withdrawn*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the National Highways Act, 1956, 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 and 3 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted

Clauses 2 and 3 were added to the Bill.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question

"That clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Long Title stand part of the Bill"

The motion was adopted

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

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That the Bill be passed."

DR. ASIMBALA (Nabadwip): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the accidents are increasing day-by-day on the National Highways and the vehicles are also increasing manifold, but the length of the National Highways remains the same. The single lane sections should be made double lane carriage way. then, now-a-days, the road construction is decreasing. The share in the Plan also has declined from 1.4 per cent in the First Five Year Plan to 0.7 per cent in the Seventh Five Year Plan. Moreover, the Minister is going to impose a tax in this Bill which will affect the lower categories of people like rickshaw pullers, auto-rickshaw drivers and those who carry heavy loads in horse carts and bullock carts. So, if there is some restriction on the tax imposed for these categories of people, it would help them. So, I would request the Government to take this step so that the lower income groups are helped.

SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is true that the National Highways constitute only 2 per cent of the total road network in the country. The accidents do take place for various reasons, because 15 per cent of the National Highways is single lane carriage way. We have not

been getting enough funds. If I were to get the total money I require for the proposals which the Chief Ministers have sent, it would be something over Rs. 41,000 crores, but I have got only Rs. 2,600 crores and out of that the on-going projects will cost me about Rs. 2,500 crores. That means, I have only Rs. 60 to Rs. 70 crores to spend in the whole year on the roads. That is why, when the hon. Member from this side had mentioned about the Resolution passed by the House, I said that the Cabinet is considering it. I am happy to say that the Prime Minister has constituted a committee with the Finance Minister, myself and one or two other Ministers to come out with what possibly we could do? Only after then, I would come to the House. Also out of the money so collected, more than 60 per cent—about 65 per cent will go back to the States because major portion of the road network is under the State Governments.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed".

The motion was adopted

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura): what about Zero Hour?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: We will have it. Do not worry. let us take up Papers to be laid on the Table. shri Vidyacharan Shukla.

14.16 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

Statement Correcting reply to unstarred. No. 1726 dated 20th July, 1992 *re: reservoir schemes submitted by States and the reason for delay in correcting the reply.*

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS
AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND