

15.58 hrs.

CUSTOMS TARIFF (SECOND AMANDMENT) BILL

MR. CHAIRMAN: We will now go to the next item, that is, Item No. 9 in the List of Business. Shri Pattabhai Rama Rao would move the Bill further to amend the Customs Tariff Act, 1975.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PATTABHAI RAMA RAO): On behalf of Shri Pranab Mukherjee, I beg to move :

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

The Bill seeks to amend Section 9 of the Customs Tariff Act, 1975 in order both to bring the provisions of this section in line with the international obligations assumed by India under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and to provide legitimate protection to domestic industries in India facing unfair competition from subsidisation or dumping causing material injury to established domestic industries in India.

India is a signatory to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and is a contracting party to the two multilateral agreements on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures and Anti-dumping which have been negotiated during the Tokyo Round of the Multilateral Trade Negotiations held at Geneva during 1973-79.

16.00 hrs.

[SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI in the Chair]

These agreements require that each Government accepting it shall take all necessary steps to ensure the conformity of its domestic laws, rules, regulations and ad-

ministrative procedures with the provisions of these Agreements.

At present, the Customs Tariff Act provide for the levy of additional duty on bounty-fed or subsidised imports. There is no provision for the levy of additional duty on dumped imports. The basic distinction between the two is that a product is considered to be bounty-fed when the Government of an exporting country grants subsidies on its exports in such a manner as to confer an unfair trade advantage on the exports of that country. A product is deemed to be dumped in an importing country when an individual firm in an exporting country, whether or not it is receiving subsidies from its government, exports its products at a price below the price at which it sells the same product in its own domestic market. Since a situation of dumping may arise for a variety of reasons, including the provision of subsidies by foreign governments, it is proposed to amend the Customs Tariff Act to provide for the levy of additional duties in situation of both subsidisation and dumping.

Our existing legislation in this area also provides for the levy of additional duty on those items which are otherwise dutiable on entry into India. However, since the GATT as well as the Codes on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures and Anti-dumping do not make any distinction between dutiable and duty-free articles for the purposes of levying additional duties on dumped or subsidised imports, it is proposed to amend our domestic legislation so as to provide for the possible levy of such duties on duty free articles also.

The underlying philosophy of both the Code on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures, and the Anti-dumping Code to both of which India is a signatory, is that, while subsidisation or dumping of exports can take place in a variety of situations, such trade practices, are to be condemned and action taken against them only after it is established that the subsidised or dumped imports cause injury to an established industry in the importing country, or materially retard the establish-

[Shri Pattabhi Rama Rao]

ment of such an industry. The Customs Tariff Act has so far not provided for this criterion of injury to be applied before the levy of additional duties on subsidised or dumped imports. Accordingly, the amending Bill contains provision with regard to an injury test on such imports. Naturally, we would extend the injury test only to such countries who in turn extend the injury test to our products before levying such duties. The Bill, therefore, provides that the injury test would be extended only on a reciprocal basis by India

The Bill seeks to achieve the above objects.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion moved:

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

SHRI E. BALANANDAN (Mukundapuram): Mr. Chairman, Sir, this Bill seeks to amend Section 9 of the Customs Tariff Act in order to bring the provisions of this Section in line with the international obligations, because India is a signatory to the General Agreement on Tariff and Trade and we are duty bound to meet the obligations cast on us as per the Agreement. As indicated in the Statement of Objects and Reasons, this Bill has been brought forward to make our law at par with the provisions of the General Agreement on Tariff and Trade.

Before I comment on the various provisions of the Bill, I would like to have a look at the present position. This Agreement on Tariffs and Trade is in sick bed.

PROF. N. G. RANGA: It is almost dead.

SHRI E. BALANANDAN: I don't say it is almost dead, but it can also be said. Nobody cares for that GAAT Agreement and its group. Now, we are bringing in the Amending Bill as per our commitments. Four years back we had certain commitments. What happened in four years has to be looked into closely.

Everybody now knows that the capitalist system the world over is in crisis. Just before a month or two, there was an 'economic summit of European countries'

attended by no less a person than President Reagan. In that meeting many things were discussed and everyone of them sermonised that 'beggar thy neighbour' policy should not be adopted. If that kind of policy is adopted, the crisis like the greatest crisis of the 30s may come. In the so-called 'economic summit of EEC countries' Mr. Reagan told the European countries: 'friends, you don't supply oil pipes to the Soviet Union, even though you are contractually bound to do it.' And some of them asked: 'In that case why do you carry on your wheat trade with the Soviet Union?' This way they were quarrelling with each other and the result today is that every country who are Members of GATT is continuing the 'beggar thy neighbour' policy. Therefore, today there is no guarantee for this Agreement. There is no force in the GATT Agreement now of policing that this should be done this way and that way. And every country is trying to dump its goods on another country. They also may say that they will examine. What is the American position? To America, Japan and European countries are dumping steel and USA is now imposing big tariff hikes. And to meet that the European countries are thinking of limiting the American wheat exports to their country as a counter move.

Now what is happening in America? The biggest automobile industry in America is in a crisis. One lakh of its workers are laid off and the industry has been forced to cut back its production. They have also banned imports of small and best cars from Japan. They have imposed ceiling on its import. We were talking of America as one of the biggest and strongest countries from the point of view of its economic position. But there, the Manhattan Bank, the 40th biggest bank in America has crashed. In another economically strong country, West Germany, A.E.G. Telefunken, has now crashed. Ninetysix thousand workers of the Company have been thrown out. About Japan we always are talking that it is a country a model which has to be adopted. But now there the production is slowing down and they also propose to cut back their production. That way, Sir,

all these countries are doing things like that. And our Finance Minister, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee went to the Commonwealth Finance Ministers' Conference, where he had to declare two things. His first point was that to-day all the industrialized countries are facing a big recession. Secondly, he said that all the developing countries were having huge trade deficits. I only want to say that if that is the situation, what is our country doing to-day— in India?

Mr Pranab Mukherjee could say, in that meeting, that all the big, industrialized countries were facing a recession, and that they were trying to export so many goods to other countries. And that is why all these developing countries are having big deficits in their trade balances. But what are we doing in our country?

I will not quote much. But this is a Bill which is intended to put a stop to this dumping. What were you doing all along? Last year, we had a good fertilizer production. Our fertilizer consumption was not up to the mark. But we have imported 2 million tonnes of fertilizers in 1981-82. We are having a stock of 12.5 lakh tonnes of nitrogenous and phosphatic fertilizers. Still we are going to import more this year. Our country is going on importing these.

About steel, I told you that Germany, Japan and all other countries are dumping steel at subsidized prices to other countries; and India is importing steel, while we are having 1.2 million tonnes of steel in stock, 8.12 lakh tonnes of steel were imported in 1981-82. And for the last five months of 1982-83, further imports are being contemplated. And SAIL is finding it very difficult to carry on. That is the position of steel and fertilizers.

Coming to aluminium, it is a big story. I don't want to tell you that. Aluminium is also being imported.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Kindly cut short, because there is only one hour allotted for this Bill.

SHRI E. BALANANDAN: That is not the point. This is a Bill which has got a very important bearing on the economic policy of the country.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In that case, you should have asked for 4 hours for this, in the BAC meeting.

SHRI E. BALANANDAN: But when you are in the Chair, you should see that some points are made about this Bill.

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL (Jaipur): The Chairman is conscious that I am waiting for the next Bill.

SHRI E. BALANANDAN: That will not come today.

I will come to the point. Coming to aluminium, 1.18 lakh tonnes of it have been imported by Government in 1980-81, and another 1 lakh tonnes this year. We are having a stock of 30,000 tonnes of it with MMTC. I say this because Government is now saying that they are going to take some steps to stop this dumping. From 1975-76 negotiations were there in Japan. Now in 1982, you are bringing this Bill. What were you doing for the last 4 years? As per the editorial in *The Times of India*, there are people in the Ministries who are very much enamoured of import only. Who are they? They are the financial/economic advisors to the Government, the big people like Shri L. K. Jha. I do not want to name others because you may say something else to me. But this kind of people are advising the Government. For whom are they advising?

Today, everywhere in the world, the capital system is in a crisis; and every country in the world is trying to impose its crisis on others. So, if you want to prosper and be a country which can withstand all the on slaughts from abroad, you have to do something about it. I agree with your proposals. I have nothing to say against the Bill as such; but you are only late.

Coming to the Bill and its provisions, three things are being attempted: (1) anti-dumping duty; (2) counter-vailing duty; (3) and an exemption clause. All

[Shri E. Balanandan]

the clauses are good. I have no objection against them. But how is this being done? As per the Act, it is contemplated that in case of any goods being dumped in our country, we will have a temporary assessment and we will impose a duty and the goods imported will be sold; and at the same time, the authority who has to assess this amount may come after two months saying that the duty imposed was in excess and, therefore, they are refunding it. To whom do they refund? The goods imported have already been sold on the basis of a duty imposed by our Government; and our Government is going to refund a portion of the amount imposed finding that the amount imposed was higher. Who will get this money? Our consumers will not get this money. It will go to the exporters and those people who are promoting exports in the Ministries.

Today, the theory and prescription of Lord Keynes have gone to dogs; and the prescription now followed by Jha and others will not save you. Therefore, I request you to adopt a different policy. You cannot escape from the world's recession. Last time, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, our Finance Minister, took an objection when comrade Samar Mukherjee said that India is in the thick of recession. I do not want to prove it now. If I get a chance I will do this. But Mr. Pranab Mukherjee and others should know that they cannot live in an isolated place. The international recessionary pressure will be on you. You cannot resist it very easily. Therefore, by implementing this Act, you should not allow any official to take an undue advantage of imposing something which is unwanted and try to give back the importers the money pocketed by him. That kind of caution you should exercise. With these words, I support the Bill.

श्री राजेश कुमार सिंह (फ़्रीट्रेडवादी) :
सभापति महोदय, प्रत्येक देश की सरकार चाहती है कि उसके उद्योग का विकास हो और व्यापार बढ़े। इस विधेयक द्वारा विदेशी आयात में जो खुली छूट दी गई है वह बहुत अधिक है। जहाँ तक अमरीका और

जापान का सम्बन्ध है उनकी औद्योगिक क्षमता बहुत अधिक है और उसी के अनुसार उन्होंने अपनी नीतियाँ निर्धारित की हैं।

यह बिल बहुत देर से लाया गया है। इसे बहुत पहले लाया जाना चाहिए था। मुझे इस बिल की दो बातें बहुत अच्छी लगी हैं। इस बिल के स्टेटमेंट आफ़ आबजेक्ट्स एंड रीज़न्स में कहा गया है:-

'Further, the section also does not permit any exemption from the duty on bounty-fed articles in cases where the imports of such articles do not cause or threaten material injury to an established industry or materially retard the establishment of such industry in India. The Act does not contain any provision for the levy of anti-dumping duty on goods found to have been dumped by exporting countries.'

इसके बाद उसमें यह कहा गया है :-

'The section is also being amended to provide for the imposition thereunder of provisional duty and of the refund of excess amount where the final duty as determined under the section is found to be less than the provisional duty.'

यह प्रश्न बड़ा जटिल बना गया है। रिफ़ंड किसको होगा? आयात और निर्यात करने वाले को फायदा होगा, क्योंकि एबसेस ड्यूटी रिफ़ंड होगी, लेकिन देश और देश के लोगों को क्या फायदा होगा, यह मेरी समझ में नहीं आता। मंत्री महोदय को इस बारे में स्पष्टीकरण देना चाहिए।

डेलिगेटिड लेजिस्लेशन सम्बन्धी मेमोरेंडम में कहा गया है :-

'Clause 2 of the Bill seeks to amend subsection (2) of section 9 of the principal Act to empower the Central Government to make rules thereunder for the purpose also of identification of bounty-fed articles

which are otherwise liable to duty and for the assessment and collection of countervailing duty upon the importation thereof in accordance with the provisions of sub-section (1) of the section as proposed to be amended by sub-clause (a) of clause 2 of the Bill.'

इसको थोड़ा सा साफ़ करना चाहिए। सरकार कुछ नियम तो बनाती है और फिर कुछ संशोधन आता है। 1-7 अप्रैल को कस्टम्स टैरिफ़ एक्ट में संशोधन किया गया है। सरकार बार-बार संशोधन करती है। इसके बजाए सरकार को एक पूरा संशोधन लाना चाहिए और कस्टम्स टैरिफ़ के बारे में एक साफ़ नीति अपनानी चाहिए, क्योंकि वह देश की अर्थव्यवस्था पर बड़ा प्रभाव डालती है।

इस समय जिसको सबसिडी मिल रही है, उसपर दूसरी ड्यूटी लगवाई जाएगी। जिन देशों के साथ हम यी ट्रीटीज हैं, वे हमारे बारे में क्या रुब्र अनाएंगे, इन मुद्दों पर विचार करना चाहिए।

SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA (Madhubani): Sir, with regard to the Customs Tariff Amendment Bill, first I would like to draw the attention of the House, the Minister and of the Government to one aspect of the problem which had been troubling us very much. At no stage, since the advent of freedom, could we be in a position to say that we are able to effectively implement the customs tariff. Not only there are loopholes, but there are also malpractices at the policy level and at the implementation level. At both these levels the country had been the sufferer. Our national interests have been suffering and some persons inside the administration and Government or outside have been profiting at the cost of the nation. We know very much about customs laws on our shores. Seldom this problem is talked about in this House. On our northern borders we have got a fraternal country, Nepal. There are families of professional smugglers, who are having one concern or firm on this side and another on the other side of the bor-

der. They do not only dis-service to the country but also strain our relations with our fraternal neighbour, Nepal, by indulging in smuggling activities. We have got a treaty with Nepal that whatever is produced in Nepal can be brought to India. But these elements do not help Nepal in any way—neither in setting up any industry there nor doing any help in the industrial development of Nepal. They import goods from outside countries like Japan, U.K. and even China and then smuggle the goods into our country. Because of their activities our relations with our neighbour are getting strained. Our machinery has been totally ineffective in tackling the problem. Whenever the people take the law into their own hands, they are not penalised. When officers resort to smuggling for their personal use or family use on a big scale—I do not say that many of the officers do it for business sake—this slackness is bound to be there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This Bill relates to dumping of goods.

SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA: I am giving some background.

That is why, I say that we must go into the heart of the problem so that the law is made more effective. Otherwise, mere technicalities do not take us too far. Similar things are happening on the other side of the border, on the sea side. Very often the matter has been talked about in this House. In such a situation, the present Bill simply touches the fringe of the problem relating to GATT etc. and the basic problem or the policy issue is not touched at all. So, I am neither in a position to oppose it nor support it. After going through the Bill, I feel that no real work has been undertaken regarding its implementation. That is why, I am neither in a position to oppose it nor support it. It is neither harmful nor helpful. Through this Bill the Government cannot go into the heart of the problem. This Bill does not help serve our national interest. By passing this Bill, the smuggling of goods from abroad, from Arab countries, will not be stopped. They have to be dealt with firmly for the good of the country. I will not go into the clause, because the aims and

[Shri Bhogendra Jha]

objectives of this Bill are limited, to deal with the GATT problem. But that is insufficient. So, I would request the Minister that at least on a future occasion he should go into the heart of the problem and come forward with a Bill, which is effective, which will serve the objectives the House has in view.

श्री हरीश कुमार गंगवार (पीलीभीत) मान्यवर, जैसा कि इस बिल के उद्देश्यों और कारणों में दिया है कि जनरल एग्रीमेंट आन टैरिफ्स एंड ट्रेड एंड मल्टीलेट्रल ट्रीटी है, उसमें हम सिगनेट्री हैं। मल्टीलेट्रल नेगोसिएशन जनेवा में हुई, उसमें भी हम सिगनेट्री हैं। इस लिए हमारे देश में जो भी कानून सीमाशुल्क के बारे में है, उसमें समानता लाने के लिए यह विधेयक लाया गया है। इसका मैं समर्थन करता हूँ और स्वागत करता हूँ। इसमें ऐसी कोई बात नहीं है, जिसका कि विरोध किया जाए।

मैं इस अवसर का इस्तेमाल इसलिए करना चाहता हूँ कि सीमाशुल्क के नियमों का उल्लंघन करने से हमारे देश को बहुत बड़ी हानि हो रही है। मैं इस संबंध में केवल एक बात कहना चाहता हूँ।

जैसा कि हमारे भाई ने जिक्र किया कि नेपाल के साथ लगे बार्डर पर बहुत बड़े पैमाने पर स्मगलिंग हो रही है। गोरखपुर से लेकर मेरे जिले पीलीभीत तक बनवसा शरदा नदी का पुल या घनारघाट, लखीमपुर खोरी और गोरखपुर से लेकर बिहार के इलाके तक स्मगलिंग होती है। उस समय से हम मांग करते आ रहे हैं कि इस पर पाबन्दी लगाई जानी चाहिए। सही तरीके से

देखभाल करनी चाहिए, जिससे विदेशी सामान हमारे देश में आकर हमारे देश की अर्थ-व्यवस्था को चूर-चूर न कर दे।

इस बार्डर को मैं इसलिए महत्वपूर्ण मानता हूँ क्योंकि चीन, जापान, रूस, अमेरिका, कोई ऐसा देश बचा नहीं है, जहां से माल नेपाल में आकर इकट्ठा न होता हो और वहां से फिर दूसरी जगहों को जाता हो। नेपाल की अधिकतर आमदनी इस व्यापार के कारण है या फिर दूसरे रूप में वहां जंगल है और तीसरे तरह से नेपाल को कोई आमदनी नहीं है। घड़ी, रेडियो, कपड़ा, कितनी ही चीजें मैंने देखी हैं, जो कि घड़ल्ले से हिन्दुस्तान में आ रही है। जितने भी अधिकारी इस बार्डर पर हैं, उनका ईमान अच्छा नहीं लगता है। हमेशा लोग कहते हैं कि ये लोग मिलकर नेपाल से सामान बाकायदा स्मगलिंग कराते हैं। कोई भी आमदनी गाड़ी में सामान लेकर निकल जाता है। कोई पूछने वाला नहीं है। जिसने नहीं पूछा है वह पकड़ा जायगा, बाकी सब कान्ट्रैक्ट बेसिस पर चल रहा है- इतना परसेंटेज आफिसर का और उतना परसेंटेज उसका और दे दिया जाता है तथा स्मगलिंग चलती रहती है। हमारे पुलिस आफिसर भी इसमें शामिल हैं। गोरखपुर में बहुत से लोगों के खिलाफ मुकद्दमें भी चल रहे हैं। बहुत से लोगों को विजिलेंस लगा कर पकड़वाया है, लेकिन यह धन्धा बन्द नहीं हुआ है।

मैं आपका ज्यादा समय न लेते हुए आपसे अनुरोध करूंगा कि नेपाल बार्डर पर अपने कस्टम आफिसर को सचेत करिए।

अधिक लोगों को वहां लागाएँ और अधिक फोर्स को व्यवस्था करें। अधिक चौकियों को व्यवस्था करें, जिससे नेपाल से आने वाले सामान से जो हमारी अर्थ-व्यवस्था चौपट हो रही है, उसको कुछ कम किया जा सके, क्योंकि रोकना तो आपके बस की बात नहीं होगी, इसमें बड़े-बड़े लोग रैकटियर के नाम से शामिल हैं। इसी प्रकार से जो पंजाब से लगे हुए पाकिस्तान की सीमा है, उसकी ओर भी मैं आपका ध्यान आकर्षित करना चाहता हूँ।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Gangwar, this is about dumping.

SHRI HARISH KUMAR GANGWAR: Yes, but I have taken this opportunity only for saying this. I know that limitation.

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: He is taking the liberty of your being in the Chair—a more liberal Chairman.

श्री हरीश कुमार गंगवार : इसी प्रकार से हमारा समुद्र तट है। कितनी बदनामी होती है जब बार-बार अखबारों में आता है कि स्मगलिंग हो रही है। इनकी तरफ ध्यान जाना चाहिए। जितना टेरिफ आपकी मिलना चाहिए वह आपकी नहीं मिलता। हाजी मस्तान, बखिया वगैरह-वगैरह क्यों इन सबका नाम अपनी लिस्ट में शामिल करते हैं—ओपनली। प्राइवेट तरीके से रहने दीजिए तब भी अच्छा है, लेकिन आप तो ओपनली शामिल कर रहे हैं। तो इनका कुछ उपाय कीजिए। देश की अर्थ-व्यवस्था चौपट हो रही है, मैं बड़े अदब के साथ निवेदन कर रहा हूँ। इन शब्दों के साथ मैं इस बिल का समर्थन करता हूँ।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, the Minister may reply.

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY (Calcutta South): Sir, the Treasury Benches are already deserted. What is happening there? Are they boycotting the Parliament?

SHRI PATTABHI RAMA RAO: No, no. When you are standing there, they thought better they stand aloof.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You kindly go ahead.

SHRI PATTABHI RAMA RAO: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am thankful to all the four Members...

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: You should be thankful to those who have not spoken.

SHRI PATTABHI RAMA RAO: My special thanks to you.

I am thankful to Mr. Balanandan, Mr. Rajesh Kumar Singh, Mr. Bhogendra Jha and Mr. Harish Kumar Ganguar, who have spoken on this subject and supported the Bill quite strongly. But they have made certain suggestions. I may tell Mr. Balanandan that GATT is the only agency implementing the international trade rules. These rules are most important for developing countries like India. It is essential for us to strengthen the GATT, we should not go and weaken it ourselves. There is a need for providing protection to our indigenous industry against unfair trade practices and GATT provides the authority for such an action. In respect of particular commodities such as you have mentioned, like fertilizers, aluminium and steel, we should say that the Bill has the very object which the hon. Member is referring to, that is, prescribing the procedure to stop foreign commodities from being dumped at low prices in India and thus injuring our domestic industry. It was pointed out by Mr. Balanandan that there was delay in bringing this legislation. We have an import policy which enables us to afford legitimate protection to our industry. However, as we are liberalising our import policy, we are now to ensure that the price undercutting does not take place. This is what the Bill seeks to achieve. The GATT rules in this area are themselves in a process of evolution and we did not want to change our domestic legislation in ways which would be unfavourable to us. We are not late. On the other hand, we are one of the few countries who have got in this legislation in fulfilling our international obligations.

[Shri Pattabhi Rama Rao]

The last speaker Shri Harish Kumar Gangwar has said about smuggling. That does not come under this Bill. I can assure him that we are taking all proper care to see that proper officers are posted there, very able officers are posted there, honest officers are posted there so that such things do not happen. Always there is good and bad in life. Probably, there may be one bad officer somewhere might bring discredit. Even that we shall try to....

SHRI SUNIL MAITRA: Officers should not themselves become smugglers.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Smugglers should not be made officers.

SHRI PATTABHI RAMA RAO: One thing I can assure my hon. friend who spoke last that we are taking proper precautions to see that smuggling is brought to the lowest ebb possible. As I have said we are posting honest officers. I lived myself honest all my life. I shall see how best we could do. (*Interruptions*).

MR. CHAIRMAN: Kindly conclude.

SHRI PATTABHI RAMA RAO: We will try to safeguard their interest.

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: You do not worry about the officers. They are being taken care of in the Department. They are taking care of themselves. You take care of the politicians who are indulging in smuggling activities.

SHRI PATTABHI RAMA RAO: Politicians are from all parties. What can I do?

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: Why helplessness? You have to do that even though to whatever party they may belong.

SHRI PATTABHI RAMA RAO: I shall set my foot very hard in that matter as I have said.

SHRI K. P. UNNIKRISHNAN (Badagara): I would invite your attention to the three articles which had been published in the Indian Express last week on Porbander. What is going on at the haloed place where Mahatma Gandhi was born? I would request through you that the Minister should go through these articles.

SHRI PATTABHI RAMA RAO: I can assure you that we shall take proper care of that. Now that the articles have come, it will strengthen our hands in taking action provided there is truth in the articles. That is most important. As a matter of fact, some-times, we cannot go by mere newspaper reports. We shall get them verified and certainly we would do our best.

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: You will have our full support.

SHRI PATTABHI RAMA RAO: I thank you all and I request you to support the Customs Tariff (Second Amendment) Bill. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY: The Minister has said that the criticism strengthens the Government.

SHRI PATTABHI RAMA RAO: Please do not put words in my mouth. We shall certainly take note of this. (*Interruptions*).

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

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

The motion was adopted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now the House will take up clause by clause consideration of the Bill.

There is no amendment to Clauses 2 and 3.

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

SHRI PATTABHI RAMA RAO: I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is: "That the Bill be passed."
The motion was adopted.

16.45 hrs.

INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND AND BANK (AMENDMENT) BILL

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, we shall go to next item, International Monetary Fund and Bank (Amendment) Bill. A Bill further to amend the IMF and Bank Act, 1945.

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL (Jaipur): I rise on a point of order. So far as item No. 10 is concerned, with regard to the consideration and passing of this International Monetary Fund and Bank (Amendment) Bill, I had written a letter as back as... (Interruptions)

SHRI K. P. UNNIKRISHNAN (Bada-gara): Where is the Finance Minister?

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: He is not concerned with this Bill.

SHRI K. P. UNNIKRISHNAN: You can go. You are not concerned with this Bill. (Interruptions).

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Who is piloting the Bill?

SHRI K. P. UNNIKRISHNAN: You cannot pilot this Bill.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please, have patience.

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: We are taking exception to the Finance Minister's absence.

SHRI K. P. UNNIKRISHNAN: An international treaty is involved in this Bill.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please.

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: It is the Finance Minister who is concerned with this Bill. It is the Finance Minister who is piloting this Bill. (Interruptions).

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is an announcement.
(Interruptions).

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: Sir, I am on a point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is about the health of the President.

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: That has not been circulated to the Members.

AN HON. MEMBER: This should not be a controversial thing.

16.47 hrs.

STATEMENT RE: PRESIDENT'S MEDICAL CHECK-UP AT HOUSTON (U.S.A.)

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I informed the House yesterday regarding the President's medical check-up in U.S.A. According to the latest information available, the Specialists at the Texas Heart Institute U.S.A. have advised on the basis of investigation, that the President should undergo surgery which is scheduled for tomorrow. I am sure the House will join me in wishing him speedy and complete recovery

16-48 hrs.

INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND AND BANK (AMENDMENT) BILL— Contd.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, what is your point of order?

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL (Jaipur): Mr. Chairman, Sir... (Interruptions).

AN HON. MEMBER: Who is piloting the Bill?

SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: This is the International Monetary Fund and Bank