

11.04 hrs.

NATIONAL HIGHWAYS (AMENDMENT) BILL*

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI MORARJI DESAI): I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to amend the National Highways Act, 1956.

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to amend the National Highways Act, 1956".

The motion was adopted.

SHRI MORARJI DESAI: I introduce the Bill.

11.05 hrs.

RESOLUTION RE: CENTRAL ROAD FUND

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI MORARJI DESAI): I beg to move:

"This House hereby resolves that the Resolution on Road Development regarding the continuance of the Central Road Fund, as adopted by the Lok Sabha on the 30th March, 1976, be amended as follows:—

In para 6(d) of the Resolution,—

(a) in lines 4 and 5, between the words 'anti-social' and 'elements' the words 'and criminal' shall be inserted;

(b) in line 5, the words 'like dacoits, Naxalites' shall be deleted;

(c) in line 6, between the words 'tourism' and 'etc.' the words 'agricultural marketing areas links' shall be inserted;

(d) in line 6, before the word 'road/bridge' the words 'part con-

tribution to programme for setting up drivers', conductors' and cleaners' road side resting places and passengers wayside facilities on State road etc.' shall be inserted."

This is a very simple resolution, almost a formal one. When this resolution was passed in March 1976 these amendments had been moved but for want of adequate notice, they could not be accepted. The then Transport Minister promised the House that these will be taken up in the Rajya Sabha. In the Rajya Sabha these amendments were accepted and that is how the resolution was amended in the Rajya Sabha and it remains to be amended in the Lok Sabha. That is why I have brought forward this resolution and I hope the hon. Members will accept it.

MR. SPEAKER: The resolution is before the House.

SHRI C. K. CHANDRAPPA (Cananore): I thank the hon. Prime Minister for moving this resolution, and especially for deletion of words like 'dacoits' and 'Naxalites'. In the former resolution, Naxalites were treated like dacoits and that is being removed. I would only like to add one thing. It is good that he has removed this in the resolution but in regard to their release, they should be treated like any other political detenus. I hope the hon. Prime Minister will take steps so that they may be released soon.

MR. SPEAKER: I do not think a discussion is necessary over this. May I put the resolution to the vote of the House?

The question is:

"This House hereby resolves that the Resolution on Road Develop-

*Published in Gazette of India Extraordinary, Part II, section 2, dated 18-6-1977.

†Introduced with the recommendation of the Vice-President acting as President.

ment regarding the continuance of the Central Road Fund, as adopted by the Lok Sabha on the 30th March, 1976, be amended as follows:—

In para 6(d) of the Resolution,—

(a) in lines 4 and 5, between the words 'anti-social' and 'elements' the words 'and criminal' shall be inserted;

(b) in line 5, the words 'like dacoits, Naxalites' shall be deleted;

(c) in line 6, between the words 'tourism' and 'etc.' the words, 'agricultural marketing areas links' shall be inserted;

(d) in line 6, before the word 'road/bridge' the words 'part contribution to programme for setting up drivers', conductors' and cleaners' road side resting places and passengers way side facilities on State roads etc.' shall be inserted."

The motion was adopted.

11.08 hrs.

STATUTORY RESOLUTION RE. INCREASE IN EXPORT DUTY ON TEA, COFFEE AND CERTAIN CATE- GORIES OF CHROMITE ORE

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND
REVENUE AND BANKING (SHRI
H. M. PATEL): I beg to move:

"That in pursuance of sub-section (2) of section 8, read with sub-section (3) of section 7, of the Customs Tariff Act, 1975 (51 of 1975), this House approves the following notifications of the Government of India in the Department of Revenue and Banking namely:—

(a) No. G.S.R. 171(E) dated the 9th April, 1977, levying an export duty on tea at the rate of Rs. 5 per kilogram under the new Heading No. 23 in the Second Schedule to the said Act,

(b) No. G.S.R. 193(E), dated the 26th April, 1977, increasing the export duty on coffee from Rs. 1300 per quintal to Rs. 2200 per quintal, and

(c) No. G.S.R. 234(E), dated the 11th May, 1977, substituting a new Heading and entries for Heading No. 12 and the entries relating thereto in the second Schedule to the said Act, so as to provide for levy of export duty on certain categories of chromite ore and for increase in the rates of export duty on certain categories of chromite ore concentrates, from the date of each of the notifications aforesaid."

As the Hon'ble Members are aware, prices of tea have been rising from about January 1977. The price of leaf tea which was around Rs. 13.50 per kg. in January, 1977 at Calcutta auctions went up to Rs. 30 in April, 1977. The London prices of tea also showed sharp increases during this period. While the price of Northern Indian tea in London auctions was around 107 pence per kg. in December, 1976, the price in April, 1977 was around 234 pence per kg. This sharp increase in prices was attributable to strong demand for Indian tea in world markets. In addition, the worldwide shortage and high prices of coffee have also contributed to a sympathetic rise in the price of tea. With a view to hold the domestic price line, which was rising in sympathy with international prices, and keeping in view the margins available to the growers and exporters, Government decided to impose an export duty at the rate of Rs. 5 per kg. on tea with effect from 9th April, 1977. Simultaneously the excise rebate and drawback payments available on export of tea were also withdrawn.

The House will be glad to know that the objective of the Government to hold the internal prices of tea has been achieved to a significant extent by this measure. The price of leaf tea at the Calcutta auctions came