

15.36 hrs.

STATEMENT RE. COMPENSATION FOR PROPERTIES OF INDIAN NATIONALS IN UGANDA

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Our good friend, Shri Bipin Pal Das, the Deputy Minister for External Affairs, had just returned from Uganda where he met President Idi Amin and received on behalf of the Indian constituents a cheque for U.S. \$1,627,114 cents 60. He wants to make a statement in the House, but as time is limited, I would ask him to lay it on the Table of the House.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI BIPINPAL DAS): I beg to lay the statement on the Table.

Statement

In response to a letter from the President of Uganda to our Prime Minister inviting a delegation to discuss the question of compensation for properties left behind by Indian nationals in Uganda in 1972, an official delegation from India led by Shri J. S. Mehta was sent to Kampala in October, 1975.

The relevant Ugandan Decrees, enunciating the principles of compensation had precluded individual claimants from dealing directly with the Ugandan Government; instead it was stipulated that the claims as filed could only be discussed with the Governments of the nationals concerned. In the spirit of the Ugandan laws and decrees the Indian delegation jointly with the Ugandan Valuation Committee scrutinised in detail the claims and finally reached an understanding on the quantum of compensation payable to the Indian nationals. In respect of certain items figuring in the claims the question of payment, restoration or reimbursement was left to be pursued through

diplomatic channels or established procedures. These items, *inter alia*, include shareholdings in companies not wholly owned by Indian nationals, gratuity, salaries, refunds of dues from Government or parastatal organisations, claims regarding baggage, insurance and freight, restoration of the contents left in safe deposit vaults, lockers etc. The items examined by the two delegations were, *inter alia*, buildings, plant and machinery, Uganda Government stocks, claims against Ugandan insurance policies, social security funds and blocked bank accounts.

After thorough joint examination of the claims, the two delegations agreed that a sum of U. Shillings 13,415,414/16 may be paid to the Government of India for disbursement to the claimants.

Subsequent to the return of the Indian delegation, our Government approved the agreement reached. At the invitation of the Uganda Government, I visited Kampala from 23rd to 26th January during which I participated in the Ugandan National Day Celebrations. On the 24th January, following my brief discussion with the Uganda Valuation Committee, the President, Field Marshal Idi Amin, received me formally and handed over a cheque for US dollar 1,627,114 cents 60, the equivalent of the agreed amount. Notwithstanding the fact that some items remain to be pursued subsequently, the amount now received represents a mutually satisfactory settlement for compensation for the assets already enumerated left behind by Indian nationals.

May I add that in his conversation with me, President Amin expressed not only satisfaction at this settlement but also his admiration for our Prime Minister and warm appreciation of the role which India has played in support of Africa and as a founder member of the Non-aligned Movement. In turn, I conveyed to him our appreciation of

[Shri Bipin Pal Das]

the spirit in which this settlement was reached and shared the hope that friendly relations and economic co-operation between our two countries can be developed further.

15.39 hrs.

**MOTOR VEHICLES (AMENDMENT)
BILL**

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING
AND TRANSPORT (DR. G. S. DHIL-
LON) I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Motor Vehicles Act, 1939, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration".

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I have pleasure in moving that the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill, 1976, which has been passed by Rajya Sabha after full consideration on 18-1-76, may be taken into consideration.

15.36 hrs.

[SHRI VASANT SATHE in the Chair]

As you are all aware, one of the measures included in the 20-Point Economic Programme is the removal of constraints on the movement of vehicles and the introduction, for this purpose, of a Scheme of National Permits. At present, the operation of goods vehicles (trucks) between two or more States is governed by agreements among the concerned States. Several administrative and procedural requirements (such as obtaining counter-signatures on permits, payment of taxes, etc.) are involved in operating vehicles on routes covering two or more States. In order to reduce the inconvenience, on this account, a Scheme of Inter-State Regional Permits popularly called Zonal Permits was initiated about ten years

ago. Four such Zonal Schemes have already been introduced. The fifth one has also been finalised and it is expected to be put into operation shortly. Under these Schemes 200 public carriers of each State within a Zone are authorised to ply in the other States in that Zone on the basis of payment of taxes for the Home State and a composite fee of Rs. 700/- per annum (in lieu of taxes) in respect of the other States. The composite fee is also paid in the home State. The procedural requirements have been further simplified in the National Permit Scheme, which envisages the issue of 5300 permits for goods vehicles by the various States and Union Territories. A national permit holder will have to choose a minimum of four other contiguous States for operation excluding the Home State. He can choose more if he wishes and his business demands such a course. An authorisation will be required to permit the operator of a vehicle covered by a national permit to use his vehicle in the other States. A fixed fee of Rs. 500/- per annum is to be paid for the authorisation irrespective of the number of States chosen for operation. The States have agreed as in the case of Zonal Permits, the Motor Vehicles tax payable by the National Permit holder to States other than the home State will be limited to Rs. 700/- only. This is a great advantage, considering the usual rate of M.V. tax for trucks which stands at about Rs. 5000/-.

The scheme was finalised after consultation with representatives of Road Transport Operators, State Governments and Union Administrations. The points of view expressed by them have been taken into account to the extent possible. As the implementation of the Scheme required amendment of the M. V. Act, 1939, and as the matter was urgent, the M. V. (Amendment) Ordinance was promulgated on 28-9-75. The M. V.