

**Correction of Answer to Unstarred Question No. 1083 dt. 21st November, 1977 reg. Utilisation of sale proceeds of Tickets sold at historical places in Agra**

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION, SOCIAL WELFARE AND CULTURE (DR. PRATAP CHANDRA CHUNDER): In the reply given in Lok Sabha on 21st November, 1977 to unstarred question No. 1083 asked by Shri Ramji Lal Suman regarding utilisation of sale proceeds of tickets at historical places in Agra, the 1st para may be corrected to read as follows:

(a) and (b). The Archaeological Survey of India charges an entrance fee of fifty paise only per visitor at the four centrally protected monuments in Agra. This is done under the Rules framed under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958. The amount thus recovered is credited as revenue to Government. There is a separate budget provision for maintenance of the monuments.

12.09 hrs.

**STATEMENT RE: THE PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO NEPAL**

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI MORARJI DESAI): Mr. Speaker, as the House is aware, I returned from Nepal yesterday and I would like to make a brief statement on my visit to our friendly neighbour.

In the wake of the change of Government in Nepal in September this year, the new Prime Minister of Nepal, the Rt. Hon. Kirti Nidhi Bista, was kind enough to extend to me an invitation to visit Nepal. Considering the great importance we attach to improvement of relations with our neighbours, I readily accepted the invitation. I was accompanied by and had the benefit of advice of my colleague the Foreign Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

We are bound to Nepal by ties of geography and mutual economic interests, and by religious, social and cultural bonds between our two peoples in a unique fashion with no close parallel anywhere in the world.

I was glad to have had an opportunity to convey on behalf of the Government of India to His Majesty, his Government and through them to the people of Nepal that India cherishes the friendship of this ancient kingdom and seeks to promote our relationship in a manner which respects their independence, advances mutual interests and brings benefits to both. I was deeply touched by the spontaneity and the warmth of the reception from all sections of the people and His Majesty's Government of Nepal. I also met His Majesty the King and had extensive discussions with Prime Minister Bista. The Joint Communique issued at the end of my visit and placed on the Table of the House indicates the wide range of discussions that took place and the mutually advantageous agreements reached.

As the hon. Members will observe from the Joint Communique, there was acknowledgement on both sides of the urgent need further to strengthen our economic cooperation on the basis of equality and mutual benefit. In this spirit we agreed that priority should be given to projects on the rivers linking our two countries for multiple benefit; and the Devighat Power project to which the Government of Nepal attaches great importance. The scope, significance and urgency of such co-operative effort cannot be exaggerated and the loss to both by delaying this cannot be minimised. Nature's bounty from the Himalayas can be immense and neglect can be very injurious to our interests in future. Specific measures have been agreed to set in motion the process of expeditiously executing four projects on the rivers Karnali, Mahakali, Rapti and Trisuli.

Hon. Members are aware that the Indo-Nepalese Treaty of Trade and

[Shri Morarji Desai]

Transit of 1971, which had expired in August 1976, had been allowed to roll on while finalisation of new arrangements for this purpose was pending. Discussions at official level had been held in the past to workout new arrangements. During my visit we reviewed the discussions held so far and it was agreed that while trade was a bilateral matter, arrangements for Nepal's transit trade with third countries were separate subjects.

There is a special feature in our economic relations arising out of the open common border. While neither country can deny the other's independent right to determine economic and trade policies, the Prime Minister of Nepal and I readily recognised that we must make every effort to curb in the interests of both our countries unauthorised flow of goods which might cause injury to our economy. We have therefore decided that a separate agreement should be reached which would embody effective measures to control such flows across our open border. The decision to have two treaties and a separate agreement is a reflection of the spirit of respect of each other's independence as well as sensitivity that each country's economic policies do not harm the other.

Hon. Members are well aware that both India and Nepal are committed to the policy of non-alignment and peaceful co-existence. The two Governments are also pledged to adhere to the principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of each other. These principles are most conducive to creating a climate of trust and confidence and imparting an assurance of our friendly interest in the well-being of each other. The further strengthening of Indo-Nepal ties would be in accordance with our deliberate effort to promote true cooperation and thus peace and stability in the entire region.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to His

Majesty's Government and the Prime Minister of Nepal for the warmth of hospitality and cordiality of reception that they extended to me and the members of my delegation during our stay. I would also like to extend my very sincere thanks to His Majesty the King and the Queen of Nepal for their hospitality and for the very cordial and frank discussion I had with His Majesty on subjects of common concern. My visit, the discussion which I had and the general atmosphere of warmth and cordiality lead me to believe that apprehensions and misgivings about India's attitude have been removed. The relations have to be restored to one of trustful friendship, as is appropriate between countries whose abiding compulsion must link us in peace and progress.

#### **Joint Communiqué Issued at the Conclusion of the Prime Minister's Visit to Nepal**

At the invitation of the Prime Minister of Nepal, the Rt. Hon'ble Shri Kirti Nidhi Bista, His Excellency Shri Morarji Desai, the Prime Minister of India paid a goodwill visit to Nepal from the 9th to 11th December, 1977. The Prime Minister of India was accompanied by the Foreign Minister of India, His Excellency Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, Shri V. Shankar, Foreign Secretary, Shri J. S. Mehta and other senior officials of the Government of India. In his talks with the Prime Minister of India, the Prime Minister of Nepal was assisted by His Excellency the Foreign Minister of Nepal, H. E. Prof. Krishna Raj Aryal, the Foreign Secretary of Nepal, Shri U. D. Bhatt, and other senior officials of His Majesty's Government of Nepal. The Royal Nepalese Ambassador in New Delhi, H. E. Shri Vedanand Jha and the Ambassador of India in Kathmandu, H. E. Shri N. B. Menon, also participated in the talks.

2. The Prime Minister of Nepal appreciated the fact that the Prime Minister of India was able to visit

Kathmandu soon after the receipt of his invitation. The Prime Minister of India recalled with warmth the visit of Their Majesties the King and Queen of Nepal to New Delhi soon after the assumption of office in March 1977, by the new Government in India.

3. His Excellency the Prime Minister of India was received in audience by His Majesty the King of Nepal during which wide-ranging discussions were held. The two Prime Ministers had to rounds of comprehensive discussions.

4. The Prime Minister of India was accorded a Civic Reception by the Kathmandu Nagar Panchayat and attended a meeting arranged in his honour by the Nepal-Bharat Maitri Sangh. The Prime Minister of India, the Foreign Minister of India and the entourage accompanying the Prime Minister, paid their homage to Lord Pashupati Nath.

5. The conversations held during the visit of the Prime Minister of India were not only frank and cordial but indicated ready and full understanding on a range of international issues and bilateral problems between the two leaders. The leaders of the two countries recognised that consistent with the traditional relations based on culture, religion and customs, India and Nepal must strengthen their economic cooperation on the basis of equality and mutual benefit. The measure of the identity of their views led them to believe that, based on good will and trust, a new chapter could be opened in the relations between the two countries.

6. The two Prime Ministers recalled that both countries subscribe to the tenets of non-alignment and peaceful co-existence and adhere to the principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of other nations. They welcomed the fact that an improved atmosphere conducive to beneficial cooperation prevailed in the entire

region. They shared the sincere hope that this improvement would enable all countries in the area to bend their energies and resources to economic progress and thus consolidate the structure of peace in the region. The Prime Minister of Nepal recalled the proposal for declaring Nepal as a zone of peace. The Prime Minister of India pointed out that he was fully of the view that peace must prevail in the entire area to which India and Nepal belong.

7. The two Prime Ministers readily accepted that mutual cooperation can be enlarged and intensified. The Prime Minister of India affirmed India's determination to continue to participate fully in the developmental programmes of Nepal. In the spirit of this understanding the two Prime Ministers agreed on the following decisions in respect of projects which have been under discussion in the past:

(a) *Karnali Project*: India affirmed its desire to purchase the surplus power from the project. As a first step, it has already been agreed to establish a Committee to examine the preliminary issues with regard to the execution of the project. India has already nominated her representatives for this Committee. It was now decided that the terms of reference would be settled and the Committee will meet within a period of three months and submit its recommendations within one year.

(b) *Pancheshwar Hydro-Electric Project*: Both sides decided to nominate their representatives within a period of three months to start the Joint investigations relating to the Pancheshwar Hydro-Electric Project, to be located on the borders of India and Nepal, on river Mahakali (Sarda). It was also agreed that both the countries will give all facilities and assistance for the early completion of the investigations.

(c) **Rapti Project:** It was noted that the feasibility of a multi-purpose project on river Rapti at Bhalubhang in Nepal has been established and in keeping with their desire for the early execution of the project for the benefit of the two countries, it was agreed that experts of the two sides should meet within one month to finalise the arrangements and to prepare detailed project estimates within two years.

(d) **Devighat Hydro-Electric Project:** India agreed to execute, on a turn-key basis, the Devighat Hydro-Electric Project utilising the tail-race waters of the Trisuli Hydro-Electric Project for the exclusive benefit of Nepal. It was agreed that the formal agreement to enable commencement of the work should be signed as soon as possible.

8. The two Prime Ministers agreed that separate treaties to cover trade and transit may be concluded expeditiously. It was further decided to provide, at the same time, for effective measures to control unauthorised trade from one country to the other.

9. The two sides agreed that detailed ground surveys should be undertaken in as efficient and expeditious a manner as possible of the Dolaghat-Bhankuta Road.

10. Though the visit of the Prime Minister of India was brief, both sides felt satisfied at the purposeful discussions and the ground covered in these discussions. The visit reinforced the recognition of the value of frequent contacts at higher levels between the two countries. Apart from functional cooperation between officials of the various Ministries and the planning bodies of the two countries, the Prime Ministers agreed that annual consultations should take place between the officials of the two Governments.

11. The Prime Minister of India expressed gratitude for the warmth

and hospitality he and his party received in Nepal. He extended an invitation to His Excellency Shri Kirti Nidhi Bista, Prime Minister of Nepal, to visit India at a mutually convenient time. He was pleased to accept the invitation.

KATHMANDU:

11th December, 1977

12.15 hrs.

#### STATEMENT RE. APPOINTMENT OF A COMMITTEE ON PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS.

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI MORARJI DESAI): I would like to inform the House that Government has today appointed a Committee, with Shri Asoka Mehta as Chairman, to inquire into the working of Panchayati Raj Institutions. A copy of the Resolution, which contains the composition of the Committee as well as the terms of reference, is placed on the Table of the House.

#### RESOLUTION

The Government accords the highest priority to rural development, so as to increase agricultural production, create employment, eradicate poverty and bring about an all round improvement in the rural economy. The Government considers that the maximum degree of decentralisation, both in planning and in implementation, is necessary for the attainment of these objectives. It has accordingly been decided, in consultation with the State Governments and Union Territories, to set up a Committee to inquire into the working of the Panchayati Raj Institutions, and to suggest measures to strengthen them, so as to enable a decentralised system of planning and development to be effective.

2. The composition of the Committee is:

1. Shri Asoka Mehta. *Chairman*
2. Shri Karpoori Thakur, *Chief Minister, Bihar.*