

Corruption prevalent in Regional Passport Office, Ahmedabad and naighting of Chief Regional Passport officer by anti-corruption police in this regard.

SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT (Gujarat): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I draw the attention of the House to an incident in Ahmedabad. On 26.4.1997, perhaps, for the first time in the country, an appointee of the External Affairs Ministry, a passport officer, was caught red-handed by the anti-corruption police in his own house. Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, he was practically a despot. If MPs write a note, "Issue a passport to this person a little earlier," he would say, "I will not look into it." Mrs. Urmilaben Patel, who is an ex-Minister, once told him that her grand-son's fiance wanted to go abroad and wanted a passport to be issued, he said: "I have to check up. Now, anti-nationals go and therefore, it will take time." I also wrote a letter once when a man's passport was stolen at Bombay. He said: "People go on writing like this." Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, you may remember, in this House there was a discussion when the present Prime Minister was the External Affairs Minister and so many MPs rose from their seats and gave a suggestion that whenever there is a recommendation by an MP, the passport officer should expedite delivery of the passport. But this gentleman never believed in MPs' recommendations. He believed only in money and nothing else. What happened recently? Applications for ten passports were given and in the evening he gave ten passports to a travel agent with a condition that Rs. 1,000 for each passport be given for immigration and suspension stamp. When the money was delivered in his house, the anti-corruption police raided, and he was caught red-handed. It is interesting to note, Sir, that when the raid was going on, one gentleman came with a note indicating the account of how much is to be given against which passport, for which he had done some work earlier. So, the police took possession of those

notes. Incidentally some other gentleman entered his house and he also gave Rs. 30,000 or Rs. 40,000. That money was also taken away by the police. His house was searched and Rs. 2,47,000 were found in cash. My submission is. ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI): Your submission is for a CBI inquiry into the general working...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT: Sir, my submission is that this man even does not listen to the Members of the Passport Committee. Mr. Madhavsinh Solanki's son is a Member of the Passport Committee. I told him about this. He said, "He does not listen to me." This is the type of Passport Officer he is. Though instructions have been given by the External Affairs Minister that when there is any recommendation from an M.P., that case may be expedited, this man has never followed those instructions. He always takes money. My submission to the Government is this. I demand that this man should be transferred because there are many travel agents in the city and many people are going to the Gulf countries...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI): I have no doubt that the Government will take note of this kind of a situation. The Consultative Committee and the Standing Committee on External Affairs are seized of this matter. You have again highlighted it today. I am sure the External Affairs Ministry will take note of it. ...*(Interruptions)*....

SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT: My submission is that when this man was trapped like this, a lot of money was found like this, and documents were found like this, this man should be first transferred and suspended because if he is there other travel agents will not come forward to give more and more details about him. Therefore, immediate action is required to be taken. I demand trans-

fer and suspension of this man immediately. This is the minimum thing which the Government should do.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI): I think that this kind of a thing is normally done according to the law of the land. ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): Sir, I will alert the Ministry in this regard.

Special Employment Scheme for the Unemployed Youth in North-Eastern Region

SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH (Manipur): Sir, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to make a Special Mention though six or seven days have elapsed since I gave notice for it. Sir, the issue that I am coming to raise is with regard to the reluctance on the part of the commercial banks in financing the various employment programmes taken up by the State Governments as well as by the Central Government. It is a serious situation. In this connection, I would like to say that the situation in North-Eastern Region, particularly in Manipur, is becoming alarming because the Government departments are already over-crowded and the private sector is negligible due to lack of infrastructure facilities and geographical isolation of this region. The present law and order situation is also one of the main causes of such a situation. The other main cause is the socio-economic tension resulting in civic unrest, secessionism, drug addiction, ethnic clashes, etc. All these things are there in the North-Eastern Region, particularly Manipur. In consultation with the representatives of the commercial banks, the Government of Manipur prepared a special employment scheme for the year 1995-96. This scheme provides 35 per cent as State Government subsidy and 15 per cent to 25 per cent as beneficiary contribution. The maximum unit cost for a single venture is Rs. 3 lakhs and for a joint

venture unit it is Rs. 6 lakhs. The mechanism for safe recovery of loan as suggested by these banks was also built into the guidelines of the scheme. The scheme has been approved by the Planning Commission. All the formalities such as interviews for selecting the beneficiaries have been done. However, the schemes are not implemented due to the reluctance of the commercial bank. The State Government has already approached the hon. Finance Minister about giving special direction to the commercial bank now working in the State. In addition to that, when the hon. Vice-President, who is also the Chairman of our House, visited the State, the State Government submitted a Memorandum. The State Government also submitted a Memorandum to the then Prime Minister when he visited the State. But, till now, there is no response from the Centre. As you all know, Manipur is one of the problem-stricken States. The law and order situation is grave mainly due to unemployment. Now, I raise this issue again and request the hon. Prime Minister and the hon. Finance Minister to take up this matter and issue a special direction to the commercial bank working there so that the Special Employment Scheme which has been taken up by the State Government as well as the Central Government, and which is now pending in the State, can be taken up in time. Thank you.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI): You want all the schemes meant for the unemployed people in the North-East particularly, in Manipur to be implemented adequately and properly. I think, the other day, the hon. Prime Minister has also given an assurance to this House that these problems will be attended to. Mr. Soz will convey the feelings. The entire House shares this feeling that there should not be any sense of neglect so far as the North-Eastern States are concerned and the schemes should be implemented properly and adequately. Mr.