

[श्रीमती प्रतिभा सिंह]

उन्नति करनी है तो हर एक चीज के लिए उन्हें सड़क चाहिए। ट्रैक्टरों को सही ढंग से ले जाने के लिए भी उनको सड़कें चाहिए। अपनी फसल को बाजार में ले जाने के लिए भी उनको सड़कें चाहिए। किसी भी प्रकार की उन्नति के लिए सड़कों का होना जरूरी है। आपने यह अर्थोमिटर बनाकर उनका मनोबल बढ़ाया है, उसको ताकत दी है क्योंकि हर एक चीज के लिए सड़कों की आवश्यकता है। यह किसी भी देश की लाइफ लाइन है। अगर कहीं पर उड़कर नहीं जा सकते हैं तो सड़कों द्वारा ही जाना होता है। युद्ध हो या शान्ति, पिछड़ापन मिटाना हो या किसी भी बात में प्रगति करनी हो, उसके लिए सड़कों की जरूरत होती है।

इसलिए उपसभापति महोदया, आपके माध्यम से मैं मंत्री महोदय से आग्रह करूंगी कि उनके मन में जो देश का विकास तेजी से करने की लगन है, उसको देखते हुए वह जो नेशनल हाइवे अर्थोमिटर बना रहे हैं, उसमें वह देखें कि जो दूसरे देश भी सड़कों से जुड़ रहे हैं उनकी ओर विशेष ध्यान दें ताकि हमारा व्यापार दूसरे देशों से बढ़ सके और किसी भी विशेष परिस्थितियों में हमको उन सड़कों की आवश्यकता हो तो हमें रास्ते की कमी न महसूस हो। इस भविष्य की इस कल्पना को देखकर उसका हम तेजी से विकास करें।

अभ्यवाद।

SHRI E. BALANANDAN (Kerala): I rise to support this Bill. While supporting this Bill, I have to invite the attention of the Minister to one or two points. The roads system in the country needs careful nursing. As the Minister also pointed out, in many States, proper maintenance is not there and proper attention to the construction of the roads is also not given.

I want to bring to the notice of the Minister the fact that Highway No. 17

of Kerala has been under construction for many years. I think it has been going on for past 10 to 15 years and it is now nearing completion. But I don't know whether the Centre has been able to allot the required funds for the construction of this road. To my knowledge, with regard to the State of Kerala, whatever money is given by the Centre, is being rationally utilised, and I have not come to know of any deficiency I urge upon the hon. Minister to see that Highway No. 17 is completed. For that purpose, two or three bridges are to be constructed. Kerala is a State where the number of vehicles, heavy trucks, motor-cars, three-wheelers etc. are more in the State if you make a comparison population-wise. Therefore, I request that the hon. Minister may kindly look into this—highway number 17—and see that it is completed within the shortest possible time. I do not have much to say about the Bill. I support the Bill.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you. This is the first time that somebody has concluded so quickly.

SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE (Maharashtra): We must applaud him for that.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The House is now adjourned for lunch and we will meet again at 2.30 P.M.

The House then adjourned for lunch at thirty-one minutes past one of the clock.

The House reassembled after lunch at thirty-two minutes past two of the clock, the Deputy Chairman in the Chair.

NATIONAL HIGHWAYS AUTHORITY OF INDIA BILL, 1988—CONTD.

SHRI RAOOF VALIULLAH (Gujarat): Madam, I rise to support the National Highways Authority of India Bill, 1988. National Highways are like

sinews and muscles of the country and we all want to build a strong and muscular India. A good network of highways is essential not only for trade and industry to flourish but also for national integration of this country. In the olden times there was the famous Grand Trunk Road. It was the only National Highway to be reckoned but now as we reach Calcutta by the Grand Trunk Road, encroachments on both sides of the road lead to hours of traffic jams, resulting in the loss of precious time and fuel. Savings in fuel only on this aspect would be a net saving and could be ploughed back in the construction of National Highways in this country. Therefore, the very first thing that occurred to me was that this congestion on the National Highways must be removed. Whether the encroachments are legal or illegal, they must be removed. The National Highways Authority should take care of this aspect and also not only undertake widening of the National Highways but also construction of bypasses to avoid cities, towns and big villages. I would appreciate if the total land on both sides of the National Highways is taken over by the appropriate department or agency of the Government. This kind of law exists as far as Railways are concerned. I would like to know whether Government is seriously considering to totally ban construction—whether legal or illegal—within a limited periphery on both sides of the National Highway.

Madam, the Minister referred to the National Highways as the arteries of this country. We all know that when arteries have cholesterol, the pressure on the heart increases. In the same way, if the national highways are congested, then the pressure increases on other parts where the goods do not go. Therefore, in the interest of smooth flow of traffic, something must be done to see that the national highways are cleared of all hazards whether of construction or otherwise. The Government has brought this Bill

because they felt that it was the need of the hour and a certain authority to construct and maintain national highways was necessary. Therefore, the Government has brought this Bill, though belatedly. The most important issue to be paid attention to is in regard to construction of quality highways in this country. Therefore, the first thing I would like to point out is the quality of works. We have come across a number of instances, read and heard, of bunglings in road construction works. I know it is the most lucrative work. Normally politicians go in after the construction contractors for road building because they think it is the most lucrative thing. Therefore, it has been very good that this kind of construction has now been taken over by a National Authority. This would curb tendencies of bungling and poor quality works.

Another thing is, that in the past, some highways were sanctioned some 20-30 years ago but the land could not be requisitioned, with the result that the cost went up ten times. I know, for instance, a national highway which was sanctioned at a cost of Rs. 3 crores which is today not complete and the cost has escalated to about Rs. 30 crores. Now this kind of thing in this country is very bad and, therefore, the National Highway Authority would also take care of it.

Madam, there is a common complaint that the maintenance amount given to the States is very meagre. Now that the maintenance will be taken over by the National Highway Authority, we hope that more funds will be allocated for this. I do not know why some of the Chief Ministers in the Transport Development Council did not agree to this suggestion of having a Transport Authority with more funds. I would like to know what went against the formation of this Authority and particularly the funds to be devolved in this Authority and why was this objected to by some Chief Ministers in the Transport

[Shri Raoof Valiullah]

Development Council? After all, it is a good measure and this Transport Authority would take care of the construction of the national highways. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether there was any point, whether they thought that State autonomy would be taken away, or they thought that the siphoning of funds for the national highways which they gave to other projects without caring for the national highways would be taken away. I would like to know from the hon. Minister what exactly transpired in the Transport Development Council.

Madam, in the Seventh Plan, the allocation for roads was Rs. 892 crores. I would like to know whether it is commensurate with the present requirements of the country. If it is not, whether the Minister will impress upon the Planning Commission and the Finance Ministry that roads are very essential for this country and require more funds from the Planning Commission and the Finance Ministry. I am very glad, and I congratulate the honourable Minister, that he has already crossed Rs. 892 crores. I do not know what the exact figure now is, but I think Rs. 1,400 crores have already been spent on national highways. *(Time bell rings)* Madam, this is national highways and so it will take some time.

**THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** National highways are for faster transportation!

**SHRI RAOOF VALIULLAH:** But what is happening is, today it is not so. Therefore, I am pleading that the congestion should be removed. *(Interruptions)*...

**THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** If he does not clear the way, others will have a blockade!

**SHRI RAOOF VALIULLAH:** Madam, in the sphere of finance I would like to know from the honourable Minister whether the proposal by some private sector undertakings, namely, Reliance and R. P.

Goenka, that they would construct bridges and national highways in this country and collect tolls, has been taken seriously or not. I raised this question about a year ago and they said that there was a proposal which the Ministry was considering. I do not know whether by setting up this National Authority these would not come into conflict, and I also do not know whether private sector undertakings should at all be given this kind of work of constructing bridges and national highways. The National Highways Authority would be fully competent and, if you give them adequate powers and adequate finance, I don't think it would be necessary to involve the private sector in this at this stage.

I would also like to know what has been the outside help. For instance, in Gujarat we are constructing an autobahn from Ahmedabad to Baroda, a distance of 90 kilometres. Now this World Bank aid is there, some aid has come from the Asian Bank and some more aid is in the pipeline. I don't know what exactly is the criterion for selecting certain patches of national highway—whether it is the density of traffic, whether it is the high industrialization of that belt or whether it depends on the flow of goods in that particular sector. Therefore, I would like to know from the honourable Minister how many projects are going on with World Bank and Asian Bank assistance, how they monitor the progress of these projects and what is the actual amount of money that is involved and how they are going to pay them back—by collecting toll or by raising the road cess. I would like to remind him that last time when the cess was raised, the Government, particularly his Ministry, got about Rs. 100 crores. Now, whether he is going to raise the cess once again to raise resources for this Authority, I would like to have a categorical answer from the honourable Minister. *(Time bell rings)*...

What is required in the sector of national highways is that some of these national highways should be taken into consideration *vis-a-vis* the recommendations of the National Commission on Urbaniza-

tion. The National Commission on Urbanization has identified about 25 such areas in the whole country where there is tremendous industrial advancement, and for 20 to 25 years these areas will grow very much in density, not only in industrial density but also *v.s.-a-vis* traffic. Now I would like to know whether the Ministry or the Authority will consider the recommendations of the National Commission on Urbanization and undertake widening of the national highways—four-laning and six-laning of these national highways—where the National Commission on Urbanization has already specified.

Madam, the road traffic in freight today is around 30 per cent. Railways and others constitute only 20 per cent of the total freight traffic in the country. Where passenger traffic is concerned, it is 50 : 50. Therefore, the importance of national highways in the next 25 years will be all the more and, therefore, this National Highways Authority of India is going to play a very, very, important role in the next three or four decades when traffic of freight and passengers is gradually going to increase. I want to know therefore, from the hon. Minister whether he has a perspective plan for, say, the 21st century. I also understand that ever since the independence, so in the last 40 years, the length of the national highways has not increased like the railways. Whenever we ask the Railway Minister whether you have added any length, the reply is that it is insignificant. Now I would like to know whether you have evolved a policy whereby you make the State highways national highways. What is the policy and will the State highways be made national highways and will they come under the purview of the National Highways Authority of India?

The final thing that I would like to ask the hon. Minister is this. About a year and a half ago he had answered to my question whether there is a proposal to set up a National Highways Finance Corporation. The National Highways Authority of India would also go for public bonds. He may correct me while replying

to the debate. I think, the Authority will go in for public bonds to raise resources. What will be the position of the National Highways Finance Corporation and the Authority and will adequate funds be allocated? This will be outside the Budget. Therefore, what will be the position of the National Highways Finance Corporation, if at all it is set up?

The last thing that I want to mention is....

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What is the difference between "final" and "last?"

SHRI RAOOF VALIULLAH: There are many agencies and departments. The Authority will have to come into conflict with them, and it will have to play a very important role in co-operation also. At times the State Governments will also differ from the Authority. At times there will be co-operation from other agencies. Now what is the *modus operandi*? Has the Authority ever thought of co-operating with the Tourism Department, particularly the ITDC, to set up hotels on the national highways? There are other agencies also from which the Authority will have to seek co-operation.

I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether all these things have been taken into account because this is a comprehensive Bill, and when a national highway is constructed or widened many things will come into operation. Therefore, hon. Minister would, please, throw some light on the issues that I have raised.

Thank you.

SHRI PUTTAPAGA RADHAKRISHNA (Andhra Pradesh): Madam, Deputy Chairman, there is no problem with the Bill. We support the Bill. There is no problem with the Bill being passed by this House. The problem is only with its implementation. The implementation goes wrong. There we differ. Mr. Rajesh Pilot is piloting the Bill. He is a good pilot, no doubt, but the poor pilot is made to look after the roadways. Therefore, there is some difficulty, it seems. He is a nice gentleman, we know. But there

[Shri Puttapaga Radhakrishna]

is some difficulty in the pilot maintaining the road ways. That is the difficulty. He is a pilot piloting the Bill. He is piloting the roads instead of the airways. So, my point is this, Madam. The Bill is good.

It is a very important subject. The standard of communication of a country, including transportation, will show the standard of civilisation of the country. Mr. Gurupadaswamy has also stated this.

Madam, according to the Director-General, his own department, one-third of the road traffic of the country is using the national highways. It is a very enormous amount of traffic that is using the national highways. In that case, I say that the national highways, rather the roads themselves, are very neglected. It should be a major item in the Plan. We have agricultural industrial and other sectors. In the same manner the road transport must also be taken up as a big sector in the Plan. Rather we are ignoring that sector. Recently there was a World Road Congress. There they observed that the condition of the roads in India is very bad compared to the world standard. Ours is a developing country but our roads are more under-developed. This state of affairs should not continue and the conditions of the roads should be improved. It is also estimated that to bring our national highways and other roads at par the required standards Rs. 6,000 crores is needed. I think the hon. Minister knows well how much more money is required for improving the roads.

In the very object of the Bill the hon. Minister has stated that the agency system has failed. Keeping that in view, he has brought this Bill in the House. I think there is nothing wrong with the agency system. Wrong is actually with the Government of India. I would like to give some instances in that regard. As per the Government of India's norms, Rs. 12/- crores are required for maintenance of these national highways by those agencies, but against that amount only Rs. 4/- crores have been allotted. It means one-

third of the requirement has been met by the Government of India. So, how can there be anything wrong with the implementing agencies in the States? That is why I say this allegation of the Minister seems to be wrong. I agree with the hon. Minister that the road transportation must be improved. We must take up the development of the roads at par the development we have achieved in other fields.

Secondly, I understand the urban links need more than Rs. 32,000 per kilometre, but the Government of India has allocated only Rs. 16,000. These are the reasons for the failure of the agency system. There is nothing wrong on the part of the States.

I don't remember exactly, but I think two years ago, the MPs of Andhra Pradesh had gone to the hon. Minister, Shri Rajeh Pilot, to represent the problems of our State. He received us very smilingly and offered us coffee and cold drinks. He treated us very well and cordially, but I must point out that our problems remain where they were. I don't know why the Minister, who is so sweet in his deliberations, is a little bit bitter in work. I would like to narrate some problems of Andhra Pradesh. As per the Government of India norms, there should be 5,500 kilometres of National Highways in Andhra Pradesh. Against this only 2,300 kilometres of National Highways are there. The Government of Andhra Pradesh has proposed ten roads to be taken up by the Government of India to convert them into national highways. They may be national highways or simply taken over by the Government of India. I don't know whether there is any difference in these but ten roads have been proposed. I came to know the Government has recently decided to take up the Kakinada-Jagdalpur (in Madhya Pradesh) road via Rajamundhary, Bhadrachalam and Venkatapuram. How far it is true, I do not know, but it has not been finally communicated. But we hear that the Government has taken a decision. We also came to know that another road has been taken up by the Government. This road is Chittur to Bhadrachalam via Kudappa, Markapuram, Marcherla, Nagarjuna Sagar,

Khamman. All these ten roads put together, as per the proposal of the Government of Andhra Pradesh, work out to 3,200 kilometres only. Our entitlement is roughly that much. I am thankful to the Minister for taking up these roads. At the same time, I reiterate my request and our representation made two years ago to take over the remaining eight roads also. I think, it is within the norms prescribed by his Ministry for the States.

One more important problem is there. The Central Road Fund scheme is there and it was established in 1929. The rate of fund given to the States was fixed in 1929, keeping in view the rates of fuel in those days. After all these years, the rate of fund has not been revised. All the rates have gone up and the rates should be revised. It is not at all justified to continue this rate. That is why I request the Minister to consider our request for increasing the rate of Central Road Fund. He should simply update it.

Madam, I want to bring to your notice and through you to the Government of India that since the State was formed in 1956, not a single road was taken over by the Government of India.

Madam, there is an acute necessity of constructing a road from Itchapuram to Thada in the Coastal area all along the sea. We have been requesting for construction of this road in every representation and even the Member of Parliament hailing from that place also represented several times but nothing has been done so far. This road is very important from the relief work point of view when cyclone takes place and we can also take preventive measures. Apart from this, the defence strategic point is also there. Our Naval forces can make the best use of the road. In that aspect also construction of this road is very essential.

Madam, as I said earlier, I welcome this Bill. After the Bill is passed, I request him to implement it properly. I request the Minister to look at the pro-

blems of Andhra Pradesh favourably and not view them from political angle. Thank you.

श्रीमती सत्या बहिन (उत्तर प्रदेश)  
उपसभापति जी, पहले तो मैं माननीय परिवहन मंत्री जी को बधाई देना चाहती हूँ कि यह बिल लाये हैं और जैसी कि इस बिल में व्यवस्था है, इसके आधुनिकीकरण करने के लिए और यातायात के साधनों को और अधिक सुगम और दुर्घटनारहित बनाने के लिए प्रस्ताव लाये हैं, इससे यातायात के लिए संसाधनों की प्राप्ति होगी और उसका सही तरीके से सदुपयोग हो सकेगा।

निश्चय ही हमारे दैनिक जीवन में राष्ट्रीय राज मार्गों का देश के आर्थिक विकास के लिए बहुत बड़ा योगदान है, बहुत बड़ा महत्व है और इस बात को दृष्टिगत रखते हुए इसमें अथारटी या प्राधिकरण बनाने की बहुत अधिक आवश्यकता है।

मैं पुनः मंत्री जी को बधाई देते हुए कुछ सुझाव प्रस्तुत करना चाहती हूँ। इसमें राज मार्गों के विस्तार और सुधार दोनों की काम अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण हैं।

सड़कों की मरम्मत जोकि नेशनल हाईवेज हैं उनकी मरम्मत हाट-मिक्स प्लाट के द्वारा की जानी चाहिए।

इसके साथ ही मैं यह निवेदन करना चाहूंगी कि सड़कों पर जो बड़े-बड़े रोड-रोलर या दूसरे उपकरण खड़े रहते हैं, जिससे दुर्घटनाएँ होती रहती हैं, उन पर प्रतिबंध लगाया जाए और सड़कों के बीच लगे हुए पेड़—मैं समझती हूँ कि पेड़ों का हमारे सामाजिक जीवन में बहुत महत्व है, लेकिन मानव जीवन का भी महत्व कम नहीं है, जिससे बहुत सी दुर्घटनाएँ हो जाती हैं।

उन पेड़ों को और साथ ही जो विजली के खंभे सड़कों के बीच लगे हुए होते

## [श्रीमती सत्या बहिन]

है, उनकी हटाया जाए ताकि रात और दिन में चलने वाले वाहनों को कोई समस्या पैदा न हो और दुर्घटना रहित हो सकें।

इसके साथ ही चालकों के लिए बनाये गये नियमों का सख्ती से पालन किया जाए।

मैडम, ट्रकों आदि पर नम्बर प्लेट्स जो स्टैंडर्ड साईज के होने चाहिए, वे नहीं होते हैं और वह बहुत ही तेज रफ्तार के साथ चलते हैं, जिससे छोटे वाहन वाले दुर्घटनाग्रस्त हो जाते हैं। उन पर प्रतिबंध लगाया जाए और उनके नम्बर को स्टैंडर्ड साईज का और विधिवत बनाने के लिए कार्यवाही की जानी चाहिए। और सड़कों के किनारे लग 3.00 P.M. हुए विज्ञापन, जो लोगों का ध्यान आकर्षित करते हैं, उन पर प्रतिबंध लगाना चाहिए। अगर पूरी तरह से प्रतिबंध लगाना संभव नहीं तो बहुत हद तक ऐसे स्थानों पर अवश्य प्रतिबंध इन विज्ञापनों पर होना चाहिए, जो भीड़भाड़ वाले क्षेत्र हैं।

महोदया, एक और सुझाव यह देना चाहती हूँ कि जो वीडियो कोचेज हैं, जिनमें टी.वी. लगे हुए हैं, उन वाहनो के बीशे पर पर्दे अवश्य होने चाहिए ताकि पीछे या आसपास चलने वाले वाहनों के लोगों का ध्यान उनकी तरफ आकर्षित न हो क्योंकि इससे भी दुर्घटना की संभावना बढ़ जाती है।

महोदया, मैं एक और बात की तरफ भी ध्यान दिलाना चाहूंगी कि राष्ट्रीय राजमार्गों के बीच में जहाँ मार्ग शहर के बीचों बीच से निकलते हैं, वहाँ बाइपास बनाए जायें। जैसे हमारे यहाँ सुविख्यात जी. टी. रोड है उत्तर प्रदेश में मेरे संभाग के अलीगढ़ और एटा शहरों के बीचों बीच से इसका रास्ता है, जो भीड़-भाड़ वाला इलाका है, जहाँ दुर्घटनाएं होती रहती हैं। अतः मैं चाहूंगी इन मार्गों पर बाइपास बनाकर तथा चौड़ा कर दुर्घटना रहित बनाया जाये।

महोदया, नेशनल हाइवे नंबर "दो" पर जो आगरा से होकर निकलता है, वहाँ जमना नदी पर एक पुल "जवाहर पुल" है, जिसे बने अभी केवल थोड़ा ही समय हुआ है, वह क्षतिग्रस्त हो गया है और लगभग एक वर्ष से लगातार उसकी मरम्मत का काम हो रहा है।

उस मरम्मत के कारण आगरा जैसे इस बड़े शहर में जहाँ पयटकों का आवा-गमन रहता है, वहाँ बहुत ही गम्भीर समस्या यह हो गयी है कि भीड़भाड़ के कारण पुल पार करने के लिए एक-एक डू-डेड घंटा इंतजार करना पड़ता है। अतः ऐसे दोषपूर्ण निर्माण कार्यों को करने वालों के खिलाफ कार्यवाही की जानी चाहिए और उसकी क्वालिटी पर अवश्य ध्यान दिया जाना चाहिए। खराब निर्माण कार्य करने वाले ठेकेदार, इंजीनियर तथा इससे संबंधित प्रशासनिक अधिकारी कर्मचारी, जो भी उत्तरदायी हों, उनके विरुद्ध कड़ी कार्यवाही की जानी चाहिए क्योंकि इससे सरकारी धन का भी दुरुपयोग होता है, जो निश्चित रूप से अप्रत्याचार का कारण होता है।

अंत में इस विधेयक का समर्थन करते हुए मैं सरकार से यह निवेदन करना चाहूंगी कि इस व्यवस्था का पूरी तरह से व्यावसायीकरण न किया जाय अर्थात् केवल लाभ प्राप्त करने का नजरिया न अपनाया जाय बल्कि इसका अधुनिकीकरण किया जाय, सुविधाजनक और दुर्घटनाहित बनाया जाय। लेकिन जनता के ऊपर ज्यादा टैक्स या ज्यादा किराया न लगाया जाय क्योंकि हमारी बेलपेयर स्टेट है और कल्याणकारी राज्य में कुछ ऐसी बातें भी होती हैं कि सरकार घाटे में भी चलती है, लेकिन जनता की उन्नति के लिए उनकी सुविधाओं को सुगम और अच्छा बनाती है, इस बात का ध्यान रखा जाए। पुनः मैं मंत्री जी का धन्यवाद करती हूँ।

SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY (Assam): Madam Deputy Chairman, we all know that National Highways are

the lifeline of the country and it is true that the responsibility of the nation is there. It is a welcome move on the part of the hon. Minister but it is difficult to accept all these points without giving certain amendments. It is because if the State Government is completely neglected without giving any chance of consultation, then this would be unfair on the part of the Central Government. So, I hope, while constituting the National Highways Authority, proper representation of the States would be there because the States will gain some sort of experience and moreover, local expectations are also there. We have seen it in the railways. (*Interruptions*).

**THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** She wants to go early and the Chair has a right to do so. Don't ask such questions, Mr. Matto.

**SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY:** I hope, this will not be there while constituting the said authority. What we have seen in Assam and the entire north eastern region, the condition of the National Highways is beyond description. From Gauhati to Silchar, from Gauhati to Imphal, from Gauhati to Kohima, all these roads are in bad shape. To go from Gauhati to Silchar which is hardly 200 kms, it takes more than 14 hours during rainy season and more than 12 hours during winter season. Such is the condition with each and every National Highway in the State. Moreover, it is known to the hon. Minister that Assam is a flood prone State. From April till September, major part of the roads are covered by the flood water and this causes a serious problem in the Highways. Moreover, National Highways are not maintaining due standard of elevation. Even in low-lying areas, national highways are laid without taking into consideration the condition of the areas. The roads from Guwahati to Naongong, Lakhimpur, Jorhat and Dibrugarh are examples of this. At some places, the difference of levels is even four metres.

Moreover, the north-eastern capitals are not linked by rails. So there is im-

mense pressure on the highways connecting them. Heavy trucks carrying all sorts of goods ply on these roads. So, if the original construction itself is poor, the roads get more and more damaged by floods and heavy traffic when periodic maintenance work is also not up to the mark. Sometimes because of breaches, an entire region gets cut off from the rest of the country. This is very common during rainy seasons. Madam, I want the hon. Minister to take note of all these points while constructing national highways.

Considering the factors mentioned above, an additional national highway is a must for Assam. This additional highway must be constructed on scientific basis taking into account the nature of the terrain and the climatic conditions obtaining in these parts of the country. That will prevent periodic damages to the roads and disruption of communication. Also additional grants must be given for carrying out repairs. A research and development wing must be set up in the north-eastern region to deal with road construction plans. I request the Minister to accept the proposal for an additional highway in the region. I would also request him that at the time of constituting the Authority, political clout of persons should not count. It is better if people in politics are not given much role to play there. Instead, technical people should be given greater place. Army personnel who are experienced in laying roads, in border areas may be taken in.

The construction of bridges in Assam and the entire north-eastern region takes much time. Sometimes it takes even 10 to 15 years. I request the Minister to expedite the completion of bridges in this region by adopting modern methods. I hope the road projects of Assam will be cleared early.

As we have seen, the number of accidents in hilly areas like Jammu and Kashmir is very high. The main reason is illmaintained roads. If some money is spent on repairs and maintenance a lot of lives can be saved.

There is another point which I would



[Shrimati Bijoya Chakravarti]

like to refer to-Mr. Valiullah also mentioned it-and that is privatisation of bridges. As it will develop a sort of colonialism, it should be stopped and discouraged. Now, I conclude with the plea that there should be more national highways.

**श्री विठ्ठलराव माधवराव जाधव (महाराष्ट्र) :** माननीय उपसभापति महोदया, मैं आपके माध्यम से मंत्री जी को धन्यवाद देना चाहता हूँ कि वह यह राष्ट्रीय महामार्ग विधेयक लाए। वह जो बिल लाये है, उससे यह साफ है कि माननीय मंत्री जी राष्ट्रीय महामार्ग का काफी अच्छी तरह से मेंटेनेंस और व्यवस्थापन करना चाहते हैं। उस लिहाज से मैं एक बात इस सदन के माध्यम से मंत्री जी की नजर में लाना चाहता हूँ। हमारे देश में 62 हजार किलोमीटर रेल मार्ग है और उसकी तुलना में 38 हजार किलोमीटर नेशनल हाइवे है। वैसे देखा जाये तो राष्ट्रीय महामार्ग ज्यादा होना चाहिए मगर हमारे देश के आकार और क्षेत्रफल को देखने के बाद ऐसा लगता है कि हमारे देश में राष्ट्रीय महामार्ग बहुत कम है। उपसभापति महोदया, दूसरा प्रश्न है इस राष्ट्रीय महामार्ग के व्यवस्थापन का। यह राष्ट्रीय महामार्ग हमारे देश की प्रगति का महामार्ग है, ऐसा मैं मानता हूँ। अगर इस महामार्ग को बढ़ाया जाय, अच्छी तरह से रखा जाये तो हमारे देश की तरक्की हो सकती है। हमारे देश के सामान्य नागरिक या सामान्य जन के लिये मार्ग से ही चलना यातायात का एक बहुत बड़ा माध्यम है। उस लिहाज से मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से कहना चाहता हूँ कि हमारे पास दो बातें हैं। पहली बात यह है कि जो हमारे पास महामार्ग है उसकी व्यवस्था अच्छी तरह से रखी जाए और दूसरी बात यह है कि हमारे पास जो परपोजल आये हैं स्टेट से, कि स्टेट हाइवेज को नेशनल हाइवेज में बदलने के बारे, उसके बारे में उसका कोई निर्णय लेना व त जल्दारी मैं मानता हूँ।

उपसभापति महोदया, मैं सिर्फ कुछ प्वाइंट बताना चाहता हूँ। ज्यादा भाषण करना नहीं चाहता। जो बम्बई, पूना, कोल्हापुर, बंगलौर महामार्ग है। बम्बई इस देश का सबसे बड़ा शहर है, यह कमर्शियल कैपिटल है, आप भी बम्बई से आती हैं, बम्बई से पूना का मार्ग 190 किलोमीटर है, मगर पहले

साढ़े तीन घंटे में जाते थे, अब सात घंटे लगते हैं क्योंकि वह महामार्ग पूरी तरह खराब हुआ है, भारी वर्षा के कारण रोड में बड़े-बड़े खड्डे हो गये हैं वहाँ बहुत बड़े एक्सीडेंट होते हैं और उस महामार्ग में एक मिनट में 120 गाड़ियां चलती है, एक सैविड में दो गाड़ियां चलती हैं। हमारे हिंदुस्तान में सबसे ज्यादा रश उसी महामार्ग पर है। तो मैं मंत्री जी से आप के माध्यम से विनती करना चाहता हूँ कि बम्बई, पूना, कोल्हापुर बंगलौर, इस महामार्ग की दुरुस्ती जल्दी से जल्दी की जाये और उसमें जो भ्रष्टाचार होता है उसको भी अच्छी तरह से रोका जाये। दूसरी बात यह है कि बम्बई में ईस्टर्न हाइवे एक्सप्रेस और वेस्टर्न हाइवे एक्सप्रेस है जो सांताक्रुज तक जाती है। कई घटनायें पिछले छः महीने में घटी हैं। एक सब-इन्स्पेक्टर बेचारा स्कूटर में जा रहा था, रात को अंधेरे के कारण उसको दिखाई नहीं दिया, उसका एक्सीडेंट हो गया और उसकी मौत हो गई, तो ऐसी बहुत सी बातें होती हैं रोज। 2-3-4 एक्सीडेंट बम्बई में कुलाबा से लेकर सांताक्रुज तक या विले पारलतक रोज हाते हैं या डैथ हांती हैं। उसका भी मेंटेनेंस अच्छी तरह से किया जाये। जब हम बम्बई और दिल्ली का कम्पेरिजन करते हैं तो दिल्ली में पर-कैपिटा 1 स्वेयर मीटर रोड आता है और बम्बई में .1 स्वेयर मीटर रोड आता है। तो इतना डिफरेंस है दिल्ली और बम्बई में मैं नहीं कहता कि दिल्ली में कम किया जाए। मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ बम्बई की बढ़ती हुई आबादी, औद्योगिक दृष्टि और व्यापारिक शहर को देखते हुए वहाँ रोडअगर बढ़ नहीं सकते तो रोड को बढ़ा किया जा सकता है, उसे मेंटेन किया जा सकता है और समुद्र में भी टनल निकालने की कोई योजना है आपके पास ? अगर आपके लिये यह मुमकिन नहीं है तो प्राइवेट कम्पनियों को टोल टैक्स देकर उन्हें अच्छी तरह से सुधारा जा सकता है। अगर बम्बई में रास्तों की, मार्गों की परिस्थितियां अच्छी नहीं रही तो बम्बई का सारा जीवन तबाह हो जायेगा। किसी रोड साइंटिस्ट का कहना है कि सन् 2000 तक सांताक्रुज से चर्चगेट तक आने के लिए डाई से तीन घंटे लगेंगे। अभी एक या डेढ़ घंटा लगता है और 10 साल पहले

सिर्फ 30 या 35 मिनट में हम जा सकते थे, तो इतना ट्रैफिक बढ़ गया है। तो जरूरी है कि आप इसके बारे में ख्याल रखें।

अब मैं अपने क्षेत्र की तरफ आता हूँ। उपसभापति महोदया, आप जानती है कि मराठवाड़ा एक पिछड़ा हुआ हिस्सा है। मराठवाड़ा महाराष्ट्र का 1/3 ज्योग्राफिकल एरिया है, किंतु वहां कितना महामार्ग है? सिर्फ 50 किलोमीटर महामार्ग है पूरे महाराष्ट्र में। जो आधे से ज्यादा एग्रीकल्चरल इन्कम देता है बड़े-बड़े थर्मल पावर स्टेशन भी लगे हैं, आजकल उद्योग भी आ रहे हैं, मगर वहां महामार्ग नहीं है। वह 50 किलोमीटर महामार्ग भी महाराष्ट्र और कर्नाटक के बॉर्डर से गुजरता है। तो हमारी महाराष्ट्र गवर्नमेंट ने कुछ परपोजल भेजे हैं आपके पास स्टेट हाइवेज की नेशनल हाइवेज में बदलने के लिए। तो पहला परपोजल यह है कि सोलापुर, उस्मानाबाद, बीड, औरंगाबाद और जलगांव, यह जो स्टेट हाइवे है उसको राष्ट्रीय महामार्ग में बदलने के लिए परपोजल है। दूसरा है नासिक, औरंगाबाद नोदेड़, निर्मल और हैदराबाद यह जो स्टेट हाइवे है उसको नेशनल हाइवे में बदलने का परपोजल है। तीसरा है, रत्नागिरी कोल्हापुर, सोलापुर, नोदेड़, यवतमाल, वर्धा, नागपुर, यह स्टेट हाइवे को नेशनल हाइवे में बदलने के बारे में तो मैं मंत्री महोदय से विनती करना चाहता हूँ इस संबंध में मैंने इस सदन में क्वेश्चन भी उठाया था जिसमें उन्होंने कहा था कि सातवीं योजना में उसे ज्यादा पैसा दिया जाएगा, मगर सातवीं योजना देखने के बाद हमें पता चला कि सातवीं योजना में तो उसका कोई जिक्र भी नहीं है। मैं मंत्री जी से दरखास्त करता हूँ, विनती करता हूँ कि 8वीं योजना बनने जा रही है, तो इस महामार्ग को एक्सेप्ट किया जाए जो महाराष्ट्र सरकार ने आपको भेजा है। इसको एक्सेप्ट करने से हमारे यहां 500 से 600 किलोमीटर महामार्ग आ सकता है। अगर पिछड़े हुए इलाकों के विकास पर खर्च करना है, अगर वहां कृषि क्रान्ति लानी है वहां पर औद्योगिक क्षमता की

व्यवस्था निर्मित करनी है तो यह काम बहुत जरूरी है। मुझे आशा है कि हमारे राजेश पायलेट साहब बहुत ही कार्यशाली एवं कर्तव्यशाली मंत्री हैं, वे जिस काम को हाथ में लेते हैं उसको अच्छी तरह से करते हैं। तो मैं उनसे दरखास्त करता हूँ कि महाराष्ट्र सरकार ने जो प्रस्ताव, जो प्रपोजल्स आपके पास मंजूरी के लिए भेजे हैं उनको आप स्वीकार कीजिए।

महोदया, मैं एक और बात आपके माध्यम से कहना चाहता हूँ कि एक मार्ग जो हमारे यहां के बहुत ही पिछड़े हुए इलाकों से जाता है वह पूना से अहमदनगर, बीड, परली, कंदा, मुख्ये देवलोक और हैदराबाद को जाता है। यह महामार्ग महत्व का है। यह कहीं अच्छा है कहीं टूटा है। यह महाराष्ट्र सरकार ने नहीं भेजा है मगर मैं मंत्री महोदय से यह विनती करता हूँ कि इसके बारे में सर्वे कराया जाए और देखा जाए कि यह कितना पिछड़ा हुआ इलाका है। यहां से हैदराबाद और बंबई का डिस्टेंस 200 किलोमीटर कम हो सकता है। यह महामार्ग बनाया जाए तो मैं समझता हूँ कि महाराष्ट्र और उससे भी अधिक हमारे मराठवाड़ा को उचित न्याय मिलेगा। इसके साथ ही मैं यह भी कहना चाहता हूँ कि इस महामार्ग के निर्माण के लिए नई टेक्नोलॉजी का, नए साइंस को इंट्रोड्यूस किया जाए मैंने जापान और साऊथ कोरिया में देखा है कि वहां पर 2-3 किलोमीटर का महामार्ग एक दिन में बनाया जाता है मगर हमारे यहां रोड्स को रिपेयर करने में महीनों लग जाते हैं। जब हम हवाई जहाज बना रहे हैं, स्पेस में जा रहे हैं तो जो नई साइंस और टेक्नोलॉजी है उसका इस्तेमाल रोड बनाने के लिए नहीं किया जाता है। अगर यह टेक्नोलॉजी हमारे पास नहीं है तो हम उसे विदेशों से मंगा सकते हैं। यह एक बुनियादी जरूरत है। You can borrow it from any of the countries and introduce it.

तो मैं आपके माध्यम से मंत्री जी से कहना चाहता हूँ कि नया शास्त्र,

[श्री विठ्ठलराव माधवराव जाधव]

नया तंत्र राष्ट्रीय राजमार्गों के निर्माण के लिए अपनाया जाए।

आखिरी बात मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि महाराष्ट्र में महामार्ग बनाने में इंजीनियर लोग पैसा खाते हैं, उनकी बड़ी बड़ी विलिडिंगें हैं। इसलिए उसमें होने वाले भ्रष्टाचार को रोका जाए बहुत बढ़ रहा है। आज 60 प्रतिशत भ्रष्टाचार में जाता है और 40 प्रतिशत केवल काम में लगाया जाता है। तो इस मिशनमेंजपेट को रोका जाना बहुत जरूरी है। इन्हीं शब्दों के साथ मैं अपना भाषण समाप्त करता हूँ और इस बिल का समर्थन करता हूँ।

SHRI V. RAMANATHAN (Tamil Nadu): Madam Deputy Chairman, I am glad for the opportunity given to me to speak a few words on the subject.

The National Highways Act as well as are present Bill introduced both say what is a national highway. A national highway is a highway that is notified by the Government of India. But there are no norms, under what norms national ways are constructed. There are no norms given in any of these. Before taking up any road as a national highway, we must go into what the traffic condition is, what are the roads that should be taken over by necessity, what are the essential traffic conditions and other conditions. These must be looked into. But what are the norms being adopted is not given in this Bill, Madam.

I find there are some discriminations also. For example, in Tamil Nadu there is only one highway, Highway No. 45. There is no other national highway in Tamil Nadu. The problem is that the Tamil Nadu Government has asked for so many roads to be taken over as national highways, particularly highway from Cuddalore-IV to Salem steel plant. It is the main road with very heavy traffic. In between there is Neyveli, a major lignite project. There is a big road, a highly essential

road, that was asked by the State Government to be taken as a national highway. It is not considered. Subsequent to this National Highway 45, no road is taken up as a National Highway. Therefore, through you, Madam, I ask the hon. Minister to consider this and take up all the roads referred to by the Government of Tamil Nadu as a National Highway because Tamil Nadu is one of the States in India which has motorable roads to almost all the villages in the State. Financially, the State Government is under very high pressure. Many roads have been taken up by the State Government to link all the villages with motorable roads. There is this financial constraint for the State Government to maintain all the roads. At least, if some roads are taken by the National Highway, it will somewhat lessen the burden of the State, and it will be easier for the State Government to maintain the other roads. Therefore, through you, Madam, I ask the Government to consider this also.

Apart from that, after 40 years of independence, we have so far only 32,000 and odd KMs under the National Highway. It is a very poor figure. We should not hesitate to take up more length of roads under this scheme. The Government may say that the resources are very limited. In this connection, what I submit is that you have taxed petrol. Previously, when the legislation was introduced, only petrol was in use. Now diesel is also used. All the lorries, all the movable vehicles are using only diesel. Large quantities of diesel is being used. You can tax diesel also for this purpose. There is no problem for the vehicle-owners to pay this tax. There is no difficulty in it. All the automobiles are put to a very heavy loss if the roads are not maintained properly. By putting tax of diesel, you can have some more money and if the roads are maintained properly, it will not only save the time, but it will also save the automobiles and it will also save the fuel consumption. Therefore, putting some more tax on diesel is not going to affect many. Therefore, that too may be taken up for consideration.

Madam, in Tamil Nadu, East Coast Road was suggested long back. It was said that the scheme was under the consideration of the Government of India to form that road. Madam, East Coast Road is not only useful for the movement of the vehicles and other transport, it is also a strategic road. They should also consider forming that road.

Now, coming to the abolition of the agency system, what made the Government to abolish the agency system? If they say that the agency system is not working well, then how is the present system going to work? Government officials are doing the same work there. Here, you are going to entrust the work again to the Government officials. Therefore, you can give the work to the State Government also. With some control on the agency, you can do the work well. It is very difficult for the Authority to go and see all the roads throughout the country. You can leave the work under the agency system. Further, Madam, the new legislation seeks power to maintain the road, to control the road, to regulate the traffic and everything as if the Authority is a monopoly, as if the road is an exclusive property of the Transport Authority or the Government of India. This is not their exclusive property. Suppose a State Government needs some tax to be collected through the highway, then they must ask the Authority, and the Authority alone can collect the taxes. The State Governments are treated as if they are not concerned with it. If any law and order problem arises, the State Government comes in. If any emergency arises, the State Government comes in. But when the tax is to be collected, only the Authority can go and collect it and the State Government has no right to enter into that. This is too much, Madam. About road safety, a Committee on Road Safety was constituted. I don't know whether the Committee is working. Madam, every year 30-40-50 thousand people die in road accidents. What is that Committee doing? These road accidents are mainly due to bad conditions of the roads, bad condition of vehicles, overloading and overspeeding of these vehicles

etc. Is there an agency to supervise and control all these things? Then, Madam, there are RTOs everywhere which issue licences and certificates for the vehicles. In my view, RTO office is a goldmine. If you want any amount of money, you can go to any RTO office and you will find thousands and thousands of rupees are being collected as bribe everyday. You will find thousands of rupees in the table's drawers. Nobody will deny it. All the motor vehicles have to go to the office of RTO to get a licence or get a certificate and they have to pay heavy bribes and get any licence or certificate that they want. In my opinion this is also one of the reasons for the road accidents. This position has to be corrected. If all these things are taken into consideration and set right, I think road accidents can be avoided. Condition of roads must be improved. We don't have to go to the World Bank or to the Asian Development Bank or any other agency for aid for our development. If only we could improve our roads, it will not only help in the development of the country but will also be useful in many other ways, including our strategic fronts. With these observations, I conclude.

#### SHRI GHULAM RASOOL MATTO:

Before I speak on the Bill, I have to say that our State, Jammu and Kashmir, is one of those unfortunate States not entirely linked by railways. We have only railway link only up to Jammu onwards it is only the road link that we depend upon. We had the worst kind of road traffic blockade this year even in August and September. The main link to Kashmir, Nihal Cart Road as they used to call it, was constructed by the then Maharaja and was named as Nihal Cart Road for the purpose of carts only. Now we have to ply heavy vehicles there. But with a sprinkling of water, or rains, the road gets off and we do not have any road traffic for days together. It is not a phenomenon for winter alone; it is a phenomenon in summer also. This year, we had three such blockades during summer time and one was in the month of August which lasted 15 days. We could not get our vegetables; we could not get petrol for our motor cars; we could not get

[Shri Ghulam Rasool Matto]

diesel for the buses. I may tell you, Madam, that I had to ride on a bicycle for the first time in 30 years during the month of August because there was no road, and no petrol available for the vehicles. This was the situation.

I have great faith in Mr. Rajesh Pilot. He is the architect of our present relationship and is a dynamic man in that respect. I would like to know from him what alternative arrangements have been made with regard to Moghul Road. He may give me a few details, for my people are very worried and want to know certain details about the Moghul Road that is being constructed. Although a small announcement was made that this construction of Moghul Road will be started, I would like him to tell us so that we are able to tell our people, when the work is going to start, how much it is going to cost and when the work is likely to be completed so that we have a sigh of relief and a message goes from this House to the people of Jammu and Kashmir that something is being done by this dynamic Minister. I now come to the Bill. Of course, it is a good Bill. But I would like to seek certain clarifications. In the case of panchayats, municipalities, etc., to which people's representatives are elected, if those bodies do not act properly and fulfil the tasks assigned to them, they are superseded by the concerned State Governments and some officers are appointed to carry on the work. But here I find, for the first time, that a Government body is sought to be superseded by the Central Government. Sub-clause (3) of clause 3 says:

"The Authority shall consist of—

- (i) a Chairman;
- (ii) not more than five full-time members; and
- (iii) not more than four part-time members,

to be appointed by the Central Government by notification in the Official Gazette."

The National Highways Authority of India is to be appointed by the Central Government. But I am surprised to find a provision in clause 31, sub-clause (1) which says:

"If at any time, the Central Government is of opinion that in the public interest it is necessary or expedient so to do, it may, by order, direct the Authority to entrust the development, maintenance or management of any national highway or a part thereof with effect from such date and for such period and to such person as may be specified in the order and the Authority shall be bound to comply with such direction.

It is not clear from this as to whom the work will be entrusted. I would, in this connection, bring to the notice of the hon. Minister sub-clause (1) (c) of clause 32 which says:

"If, at any time, the Central Government is of opinion—

that circumstances exist which render it necessary in the public interest so to do the Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, supersede the Authority for such period, not exceeding one year, as may be specified in the notification;"

The appointing authority is the Central Government. Where is the need to supersede the Authority which is appointed by the Central Government itself I am not able to understand this. I hope the hon. Minister will clarify this. If any Member or all the Members of the Authority do not act in accordance with the provisions of the Act and the rules made thereunder, they can be replaced. Why should it be superseded and how do you do it? The hon. Minister may kindly clarify this. *(Time bell rings)*

I have two or three small points and I will end. While the Authority takes over from the State Governments, I would like the hon. Minister to give an assurance that the local engineers, workers and contractors will be employed. We have seen

this in the case of the Salal hydro-electric project. It has now been completed. The first phase has been completed. There is another project, Uri project, which is being taken up. What happened was that the workers from the Salal hydro-electric project were transplanted to this project and the local population was not given any chance to work in this project. Therefore, I would request the hon. Minister to clarify that while they take over from the State Governments, preference would be given to the local engineers, workers and contractors. This is very essential as only then these people will have a sense of participation.

The Authority will consist of a Chairman and not more than five full-time members. Obviously, the headquarters of this Authority will be somewhere in the North. I would request the hon. Minister that while making the rules he should see to it that in the appointment of full-time members, all the regions are represented, North, South, East and West. This is because this encompasses the entire country and, therefore, there should not be any feeling of being discriminated against among the people of the different regions. It should be specifically provided for in the rules that all the regions will be represented on the Authority when members are appointed.

With regard to the Land Acquisition Act there are Land Acquisition Acts of the States as well. All the States have this Act. The Minister may kindly clarify, when the State laws are also there to regulate the acquisition of land, how this Authority will implement acquisition of land.

Then it is said that the Authority shall have powers to enter into and verify any contract up to a certain value which will be prescribed by the Central Government. So, up to a certain value, a contract can be given by this Authority, but the question is, who will give the contract where the value is over this 'certain value'. This may kindly be clarified.

(Time bell rings.) Madam, I will take only one minute. The third point is with regard to maintenance. It is a very im-

portant part of the road-building. Some of the Members have pointed it out. After the roads are constructed, maintenance is not there, with the result the tracks go off. I suggest that in the budget itself, a good percentage of money should be kept only for maintenance. This is very essential because in the absence of this we have to construct the entire road after a few years and a lot of money is spent on this. This money could be saved if some amount is kept in the budget itself and it is spent from time to time on maintenance.

(Time bell rings.) Madam, I am the only person speaking on the merits of the Bill. Kindly give me one more minute. On page 5 it is said that the Authority will, on behalf of the Central Government, be empowered to collect fees for services or benefits rendered by it. There are fees being collected by States also. How does he reconcile with the collection of fees by the States and collection of fees by the Authority? What has he got in his mind so that the people may not have to pay double taxation, how can he avoid it?

Coming to the last point, in sub-clause (2)(d) it is said:

"regulate and control the plying of vehicles on the highways vested in, or entrusted to, it for the proper management thereof."

To my mind 50 per cent of these highways are used for local transport also. For instance, if I have to go from Srinagar to Uri which is on a National Highway, how can this clause be implemented for local vehicles? How will the plying of vehicles on these highways be regulated by the Central Authority when most of the traffic will be of the local or State level? This may kindly be clarified.

Then I agree with Mrs. Pratibha Singh that money should be collected through advertisements and hoardings on the National Highways. I have seen in Jeddah and other places, lot of money is being collected by them through these advertisements. So, this should be done.

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Amenities like restaurants and other things are essential on the national highways. My last point is with regard to accidents. We have got a large number of accidents on the national highways. During the current year alone on Jammu-Srinagar Highway, there were 5 major accidents. The Minister may kindly elaborate what steps are being taken to avoid accidents.

**SHRI RAJESH PILOT:** Madam, before I start, let me thank my colleagues who have taken keen interest and offered valuable suggestions and kind words for the Department. Some of the Members have asked how did we really think of this Bill to have a National Highway Authority? For the last 15 to 20 years this idea had been floating in the Department but somehow between the States and the Central Government, we could not really sort out the opinions. I had different meetings with PWD Minister, and Transport Ministers. I specially wrote to Chief Ministers and took their views. We had very open discussions in the Transport Development Council and on all the objections where the State Governments had any apprehensions or had anything in mind, we had two open meetings of the Transport Development Council and we all agreed that this was a very right step and should be taken as early as possible. I do agree with my senior colleague, Shri Guropadaswamy, that it has been delayed. But you must also appreciate that two years and eight months we have spent in consultations with the State Governments and with other Ministers with which this subject was connected and after consultations with all the State Governments, we have come out with this Bill in Parliament. It is the first time we are bringing such a bill. I do not say that there is no scope for improvement, or no scope for adding something more or subtracting something from it. We have just brought this Bill with whatever little experience we have had in national highway functioning.

As a Minister, I have been travelling all over the country and believe me, when you are travelling by road, you can make out that you are in a different State now. From the road itself, you can make out

that the State has changed, or you have come into the region of the other State.

I do agree, though I have not read the World Bank report, that the impression abroad is certainly that roads in India are bad. Road is a mirror of the development of the country. There is no doubt about it. Even we, the public representatives, when we go to a village or a district, if the roads are developed in that district, it is taken as a developed area. Similarly, the reputation of the country particularly gets damaged with the poor quality of roads.

I do share the feelings of the hon. Members that funds have not been sufficient. We have not been able to give that much funds which are required by the State Governments. But I really feel sad when with the same funds, some road in some States could be maintained properly, whereas some other State cannot maintain that road in the same funds that properly. I would not like to mention the States. There have been occasions when I was travelling with the Chief Minister and after leaving the city we were going towards the airport. And I asked him: "Have you fixed any other programmes on the ways? Why are we going towards a rural area?" and he had said: "No, no, we are on the national highway". And I had to say, it does not look like a national highway. And when I came back, I checked up with my Department. And I found that we had recently released some 1.5 to 2 crores for that road and this was released only three or four months back. Then I checked up and found it had been paid also. These are facts which really made us worried that exchequer's money should not be allowed to be misused... (Interruptions) I am coming to your points, Mr. Radhakrishna.

With all these feelings, we think that it is our duty, the duty of every public representative—maybe we are in Government today, tomorrow you are in Government and day after tomorrow somebody else will be in the Government—it is the duty of the Government to see that exchequer's money is utilised properly, whether it is the Centre or the States. There are no two opinions about this.

With this background, we have come out with this Bill. I am happy that most of the Members have supported this Bill. I must thank them for their kind support. Members have pointed out certain things in their speeches. I would like to cover most of the points which they have made.

One point Shri Gurupadaswamyji said about two roads. One was Bangalore to Mysore road, about four-laning of the road. The State Government and the Central Government are discussing that it should be a four-lane road. Last time the hon. Minister of PWD, Mr. Deve Gowda, called on me and he said that there were some private sector offers. We are also trying to get it enquired from some other sources whether it could be taken up. Another was four-laning of Bangalore to Belgaum via Tumkur. This is included in the Seventh Plan and I think work could be taken up on this. Then he mentioned about the Eighth Plan announcement of the funds. I do agree with the honourable Member: We are trying to enhance them as much as possible in the Eighth Plan for the road sector.

Raoofji has mentioned about urban development and, then, about more funds from the Planning Commission about which I have already said, that the Department is taking up with the Government and Government also is trying its best to supplement the resources in the road sector. Madam you could see that or allocation in the Seventh Plan was Rs. 1,060 crores but we have already spent Rs. 1,400 crores. We are likely to go further high and we hope to spend another Rs. 200—300 crores in this year. So, whatever the Government could afford from the resources it did spend. All Members are aware that last year we had been a drought year, the year previous to last year also had been bad, and with all the burden on the Central Government we still have been able to take out sufficient funds for roads.

He has mentioned about the private sector, especially Reliance and R. P. Goenka. From the last two years, at different forums we had been asking the pri-

vate sector to come openly and help us in this sector and every time offers come from everywhere, like for the Bombay-Pune road where a lot of offers came. But then they say that the Government should direct the banks to give them the money. (Interruptions) If money is available in the banks, then the Government can very well use that also directly through the budget. But we do not have the money. We want to use the private resources in this sector. So, none of them came up. Mr. Goenka met me nearly six month back and said they would take up the Delhi-Kanpur road in the private sector. Every time I write to him, the reply comes, "I am getting it surveyed, I am getting it assessed I am trying to get the information whether it is feasible viable, or not." But you could see that the intention is not that much to come out openly for the road sector because the viability or the return does not seem to be that attractive as in other investments. That is why, after making all these efforts, we have come up with this National Highways Authority so that at least we can go to the public for the funds we can go to the public for bonds, we could go to some other agencies to take loans or something to augment our resources.

He has also mentioned about a National Highways Finance Corporation. We are keeping this option open because the National Highways Authority Bill has got a clause where we can supplement our resources through bonds and other means. But still, if find that a National Highways Finance Corporation is required in relation to the National Highways Authority, that could be thought of later on. We keep the option open. Let us see the implementation of the National Highways Authority Act.

Madam, Mr. Radhakrishna mentioned about Andhra Pradesh. About roads, both he and Gurupadaswamyji have asked. I will just read it in a minute. Andhra Pradesh as got 2,300 kilometres. Actually it is 2,299 but I said just one more. Karnataka has got 1,996 kilometres. For all



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States the total comes to 32,138 kilometres .... (Interruptions) ... I will read that out. Kerala has got 790 kilometres. I am not saying that this is a sufficient length of any States. We have not been able to add much in the last two, three years. We did add, roughly, I think 2000 or 3,000 kilometres.

SHRI E. BALANANDAN: Highway No. 17.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: The length available—32000 kilometres—is very marginal. The requirement is about 66,000 kilometres. That also, five years back. Today it must have gone higher. But what is the requirement? The requirement is traffic. When the traffic increase on a road, then it becomes necessary to declare it as a national highway. The requirement is rising because the traffic is rising, because the requirement in the area is rising. We are aware of this and we have taken up some kilometres with the Planning Commission.

Last time we brought a proposal for enhancing the cess on petrol and also for including diesel within the purview of the cess, and I must thank all the Members of the House that it was passed by both the Houses. But the Finance Ministry has not yet released that money to us. I think, with this a hundred odd crores of rupees will come to the CRF, and Rs. 220 crores will go to the States. The only thing is that in the Central Road Fund we used to have Rs. 10 crores or Rs. 20 crores. Now we will have Rs. 100 crores. So it is a great boost to us. With that Fund we hope to take up some more work on the national highways.

Then, Mr. Radhakrishna has mentioned about funds to the States.

श्रीमती प्रतिभा सिंह : कृपया हमारे रोड का भी बत्ता दीजिए ।

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: We have been looking after the best requirements of the States. But the hon. Member will agree with me that every State would like to

make every State highway a national highway because the financial burden will become less on the State, and the responsibility shifts immediately to the Centre. We could not take up all the State roads which have been presented to us. But, if the hon. Member wants to know, there is a set of criteria on which we declare national highway. There are 10, 12 clauses under which you see the traffic, you see the length. There are so many things which we consider. There are recommendations of the NTPC, National Transport Committee. Considering all these factors we declare national highway.

The hon. Member has mentioned about Jagdalpur. I think, this is one road which was thought of as a most immediate requirement. It has been sent to the Planning Commission. I hope, it will be cleared by the Planning Commission and the Finance Ministry soon.

He mentioned about a coastal road. I have noted it down. I will see what could be done about this road.

Mrs. Satya Bahin has mentioned about the needs of the two national highways. She mentioned about bypasses. We are trying to give bypasses to all the big cities on the national highways. But the city which she mentioned, Aligarh, is on a State highway. It is still not on a national highway.

Mrs. Chakravarty has mentioned about consultation with the State Governments. We have done consultations. Some differences of opinion have remained. It is not that the State Governments have openly said, "Yes, we go ahead with it". There are some reservations from some States. But the majority of the opinion was that we must go for it.

Similarly, Jadhavji has mentioned that the rails were 62,000 kms. and that the national highways were only 32,000 km. I do agree with him. That is why after the National Highway Authority comes in to being, we will plan to fulfil the requirement of the country, which is 66,000 km. today.

He mentioned about Bombay-Poona. Consultations are going on. It is very attractive. Even the viability is also on Bombay-Poona very high. The hon. Chief Minister has brought two, three proposals. We are trying to do something with the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank or private sector. This road is on a very high priority of four-laning or may be even for an express-way like Ahmedabad-Baroda.

Then, similarly, Madam all the Members of Parliament have brought different points.

श्रीमती प्रतिभा सिंह : मैंने तो सिर्फ 90 किलोमीटर के लिए कहा था ?

SHRI VITHALRAO MADHAVRAO JADHAV: About Marathwada some proposals have come to you. What about them?

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: Smt. Pratibha Singh has mentioned about a road, Madam, I have also gone to that area. The hon. Member has met me with a delegation from there. It is an important road. Seeing the boundary, we offered it to the Border Roads, but the Border Roads really came and said that as per the defence requirement it does not come under the operational category. In Defence there are two categories—operational and non-operational. I think that when Defence says that it does not come under the operational category, they really do not take up that road.

SHRIMATI PRATIBHA SINGH: Defence is not priority in Dhanbad.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: What I will do is, I will discuss it with the Chief Minister. If it is not taken as an assurance, I will try to find out some ways in which this road could be widened up if not the national highway, and it could help the traffic.

What is the main idea of bringing this Bill? Madam, it is purely to have supplement of the funds to augment our re-

sources, to check the quality of work so that the quality of work could be checked and to bring accountability in the system. Till now there is no accountability. We used to tell the State Government and the State Government used to say, "All right. We will check up who has done it." Sometimes in reply to questions of hon. members we were not really giving the correct answers as per what we feel. Somewhere we felt that this job was not rightly done, but the administrative control being with the agencies which were executing the work, we were not able to fulfil the role which was really right. So, to have the accountability in the system we have brought this National Highways Bill. Similarly, the Motor Vehicles Act, has been amended after fifty years. We thought this amendment and the National Highways Authority, both coming up together will bring the transport sector to better heights, to have smooth traffic in the country and also to meet the requirements of the time. Today's needs and requirements are changing. What was the requirement fifty years back has changed to a great degree now. So, with both the Acts, we think we will be able to discharge our duties towards the nation for better economy and good transport facilities.

I have mentioned about the private sector. With this we will be able to take help from the private sector. That is why the hon. Member from Kashmir has asked. Some clauses have been kept whereby if at any time we feel like taking help from other sector also, to this Authority that flexibility will be available under the law.

We have projects from the World Bank and ADB I think if I am right \$ 200 million is already in the pipeline. Some have been cleared and some projects are being executed and we hope that next year also we will have to take help from the World Bank or the ADB or even from NRIS. When they offered to us that they would like to come in this sector and help, we gave open offer to them and whatever Government could do was that it

[Shri Rajesh Pilot].

gave them every clearance telling that this way you should bring your money and invest.

The hon. Member has mentioned one special problem about the Mughal Road in Jammu and Ka-hmir. You are aware that that sector is a very sensitive sector and it is a fact that if national highway gets blocked the total country gets cut off from our lovely part of the nation. That is why we thought of the Mughal Road. The project has been taken up with the State Government. It has now been decided. Now, only implementation part is left. We are getting plans ready and I hope it will start soon. It has been sanctioned by the State Government and the Central Government and we will take it up as early as possible.

Another point was CRF ratio. The cess was enhanced. The ratio has been more than the previous one. I think it is Rs: 120 crores or Rs: 110 crores with the Centre and Rs: 220 crores with the States; It is a quite good ratio. Actually in the last TDC I asked all the members who were from different states, if they can leave the length of the national highway with the Centre, whatever you have recommended and leave this Rs: 320 crores also with us in one or two years we can take up all these roads. But the proposal was not acceptable to them; But we will again get in touch with the State Governments and if any adjustment is required on this line we will discuss with them;

The last point was mentioned about the preference to the local people; I do agree when you have such work, people do look for employment. But today the most important thing is to bring competence in the system. So, we will certainly have a consideration for the local people for employment in this, but if you put conditions like the local engineers to be taken up in this, local people put on this, then we will land up in the same way as we landed up with the agency system. So, we will keep competence above everything and bring a culture in the road sector especially where accountability could

be inculcated and we can take work from the people and we can deliver results by properly utilising the exchequer's had earned money which has been put into this sector.

Will these words I once assure the hon. Members that with very good intentions, with real intentions to improve the road sector and bring the system up and remove all those lacunae and lapses in this system, this Bill has been brought and the Government will put best efforts to implement the Act in the true sense for which we have brought it.

With this assurance I thank all the hon. members who have contributed valuable ideas in regard to this Bill.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill to provide for the constitution of an Authority for the development, maintenance and management of national highway, and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto, as passed by the Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration."

*The motion was adopted.*

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We shall now take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

*Clause 2 was added to the Bill.*

*Clause 3 (Constitution of the Authority).*

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We now take up Clause 3. There is one amendment.

DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Madam I move:

"That at page 2, line 27, after the words 'Central Government' the words 'in consultation with the concerned State Government, to which the proposed member belongs' to inserted."

*The question was proposed.*

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is circulated, people know about it. Are you pressing your amendment?

4 P.M.

DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI (Andhra Pradesh): I will make a few observations and I need some assurance on it. In all the public sector units and Government corporations it became a practice to appoint persons only on the basis of their being henchmen other than qualifications, ability and experience. Today, you are in power at the Centre, but tomorrow you may be replaced. That is a different story. For example, from Andhra Pradesh, for several Corporations including the Shipping Corporation of India, State Farms Corporation or Electronic Corporation, on the Boards of several banks, including the railway consultative committees both at the zonal as well as divisional level, Telephone Advisory Committees, people belonging to a single party are appointed without taking into consideration qualifications, experience and ability. The people sitting at the helm of affairs feel that they may act as an irritant to the Government that is ruling at the State. So what I would like to advise is that for smooth functioning of the authority you must consult the State Governments while proposing any name from a particular State to be included on this authority. Will the Minister assure something on this?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You want to say something?

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: Let me reply on this. The hon. Member's intention is that whosoever we may take from the State as a member on this authority, the State Government must be consulted. Now, there is a different system to appoint such members through AGC. The Central Government has already laid down rules and regulations for appointment of persons on the Board or the Authority. The main intention of the Bill is to bring and have a different culture and a system. When you are spending money on a road and if I can give a good road by annoying the State Government, I don't mind. So the more you bring these clauses, this will

only harm the Bill *in toto*. So I would request the hon. Member to withdraw his amendment because the true spirit behind the Bill is to have a culture, having an accountability in the system. Suppose I get an appointment cleared by the State Government for a particular person and tomorrow he becomes a corrupt person and does wrong things, then, is it possible to take action against the State Government? It is not feasible. It is not possible and practicable also. So let us get that thing out. You must share with me that the intention of this Bill is totally to bring accountability in the system which is not there today and if you bring this clause, accountability will not be there.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Are you withdrawing your amendment?

DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: In view of the assurance given by the Minister, I will withdraw it.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Good.

*The amendment was by leave withdrawn.*

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That clause 3 stand part of the Bill."

*The motion was adopted.*

*Clause 3 was added to the Bill.*

*Clause 4 to 37 were added to the Bill.*

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

SHRI RAJESH PILOT: Madam, I move:

"That the Bill be passed."

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

*The motion was adopted.*