

PASSPORTS AND VISAS OBTAINED ON THE
PRETEXT OF GOING TO HAJ

*452. SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state;

(a) whether it is a fact that some persons who obtain passports and visas on the pretext of going to Haj, return to India without performing Haj;

(b) if so, whether Government have investigated the real reason of their visits abroad; and

(c) what action is taken by Government in such cases?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI LAKSHMI MENON): (a) to (c) Government do not carry out any special check on whether persons who proceed to Saudi Arabia ostensibly for the Haj actually perform the Haj or not. In fact Government do not consider such a check necessary unless there are special reasons to suspect the conduct of the person concerned. If such suspicion exists necessary precautionary measures, such as subjecting the baggage to special scrutiny, are taken.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: May I ask, Sir, whether one Zahiryar Jung, a Haji, who was once suspected of smuggling a large amount of currency outside India, asked for a passport for going to Haj, whether a passport was issued to him and whether the Government made enquiries that it was not a pretext for obtaining a passport but he did actually go to Haj?

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI MENON: The Government are fully aware that Zahiryar Jung, s/o Mohin-uddaula, accompanied by his wife and 14 others went to Saudi Arabia for pilgrimage. He sailed on the 16th February, 1960, and returned on the 20th April, 1960. We do not know for what reasons he returned. Usually, Sir, when people have some domestic trouble, ailment and the like in their house, they return without performing the Haj.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: May I ask, Sir, when a large party like this goes out and somebody returns without performing the Haj, the very reason for which the passport is issued, is it not necessary for the Government to make enquiries, particularly in the case of a person with this background?

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI MENON: Sir, this gentleman had certain property in Madina. He had gone there for making suitable arrangement for it. As for smuggling, we have no information.

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN: There are two provisions: one is Haj during the specified period and the other is *Umra* outside that fixed period. Those who are not able to perform Haj during the specified period perform *Umra*.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Some people should not perform smuggling.

†PAYMENT TO BHARAT SEWAK SAMAJ
FOR WORK ON JAMUNA BUND

•312. SHRIMATI SAVITRY DEVI NIGAM: Will the Minister of WORKS, HOUSING AND SUPPLY, be pleased to state:

(a) whether final payments regarding the work recently completed on the Jamuna Bund at Shahdara have been made to the Delhi State Bharat Sewak Samaj; and

(b) the date when the work was completed and the date when the tenders were finalised?

THE MINISTER OF WORKS, HOUSING AND SUPPLY (SHRI K. C. REDDY) : (a) No, Sir. Against the final bill prepared by the Central Public Works Department, the Bharat Sewak Samaj has preferred some claims which are under consideration.

(b) The contract was awarded to Bharat Sewak Samaj by negotiation. The work was started on 30th March, 1959 and completed on 13th June, 1960.

†Transferred from the 12th December, 1960.

SHRIMATI SAVITRY DEVI NIGAM: May I know, Sir, what was the original estimate of the P.W.D. for the entire earthwork?

SHRI K. C. REDDY: The estimate for the earthwork only was about Rs. 2,33,000. Tenders were called and several tenders were received but the Bharat Sewak Samaj did not tender at all. But because of the policy of the Government to encourage voluntary organisations like the Bharat Sewak Samaj to do this kind of work, the Bharat Sewak Samaj ultimately was given this work by negotiation on rates 10% above the scheduled rate.

SHRIMATI SAVITRY DEVI NIGAM: May I know, Sir, why the payments were delayed for such a long time?

SHRI K. C. REDDY: The payment was not delayed for a long time of any amount on the part of the C.P.W.D. The final bill was promptly made by the C.P.W.D. for Rs. 2,21,000 odd. But the Bharat Sewak Samaj preferred a number of claims, about seven or more, involving a number of points for excess payment of Rs. 80,000. All these things have to be gone into. The latest claim was received only last month. That is under scrutiny and we hope that a decision on this will be taken in about 8 or 10 days' time.

SHRIMATI SAVITRY DEVI NIGAM: May I know, Sir, what expenditure would have been incurred if this project had been taken up and completed by the C.P.W.D.?

SHRI K. C. REDDY: It is a hypothetical question. If the C.P.W.D. had taken up the work departmentally I do not know what the cost would have been, but I imagine it would have been about the same.

SHRIMATI SAVITRY DEVI NIGAM: May I know, Sir, if it is a fact that a lot of other things were demanded of the Bharat Sewak Samaj to be completed which were not specified in the original contract?

SHRI K. C. REDDY: We cannot go into a discussion of all these details. As I said, they have preferred about seven claims about various matters, about the lift to be given, about the mode of measurement by the cross-section or part payment for earthwork which was washed away by rains and things like that. We cannot have a discussion of all these things.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: I would like to know whether the rates quoted by the Bharat Sewak Samaj were comparatively lower or higher than the tenders received?

SHRI K. C. REDDY: Higher. In fact, we have given it to the Bharat Sewak Samaj on some higher rates.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: May I know the reasons for it?

SHRI K. C. REDDY: As I said, it was given by negotiation. I have already said that it is the policy of the Government to encourage voluntary organisations like the Bharat Sewak Samaj to take up works for which they are qualified, and in pursuance of that policy we awarded this work to the Bharat Sewak Samaj.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: Even if the rates are higher?

SHRI FARIDUL HAQ AN SARI: May I know, Sir, whether the work done by the Bharat Sewak Samaj was satisfactory?

SHRI K. C. REDDY: Yes, it was satisfactory.

SHRIMATI T. NALLAMUTHU RAMAMURTI: Is not the Bharat Sewak Samaj a voluntary organisation? Therefore, the work done by them should be done in a spirit of service as a contribution to the cause and so the rates should be lower.

SHRI K. C. REDDY: It was not very much higher. In fact, the lowest tender was found to be 12% above the estimated cost. The Bharat Sewak Samaj did not quote at the time the

tenders were called. Ultimately the Central Works Advisory Board, which scrutinised all these tenders and the offer made by the Bharat Sewak Samaj, recommended that the award be given at 10% above the scheduled rates to the Bharat Sewak Samaj.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I was under the impression that voluntary organisations would make themselves available at lower cost, but the Minister says that he has given higher rates to the Bharat Sewak Samaj than what would have been given to professional contractors. May I know, Sir, the reasons for that and whether that is how the Government is going to enlist voluntary labour at a greater cost to the exchequer, as was done in the case of Bharat Sewak Samaj, or whether it is not a case of patronage of an organisation?

SHRI K. C. REDDY: NO, Sir. It is not patronage of the kind that the hon. Member is referring to. A decision has been taken that works of construction costing about Rs. 20 lakhs per annum may be given to Bharat Sewak Samaj. We have got that agency. They have got very earnest workers and they are doing good work in the social field and other spheres. In some cases the Bharat Sewak Samaj under-took some works at lesser rates than the rates quoted by others.

*453. [*The questioner (Shri B. N. Bhargava) was absent. For answer, vide col. 2439 infra.*]

CONSTRUCTION OF 18-STOREYED SKYSCRAPERS NEAR CENTRAL VISTA, NEW DELHI

•454. SHRI MAHESWAR NAIK: Will the Minister of WORKS, HOUSING AND SUPPLY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to construct 18-storeyed skyscrapers near the Central Vista in New Delhi;

(b) if so, what will be the estimated cost of these skyscrapers;

(c) to what purpose they are proposed to be put;

(d) what is the present stage of implementation of the proposal; and

(e) whether the proposal when implemented will leave adequate accommodation for the vast assemblage of people during the Republic Day Parades?

THE MINISTER OF WORKS, HOUSING AND SUPPLY (SHRI K. C. REDDY): (a) to (e) The Town Planning Organisation under the Ministry of Health has recommended the construction of several skyscrapers in the Central Secretariat Complex for use as office buildings. The recommendations are under Government's consideration and a decision has yet to be taken.

SHRI MAHESWAR NAIK: May I know, when plenty of open space is available at other places than this, why this particular place is considered suitable for constructing these skyscrapers?

SHRI K. C. REDDY: I do not know what site he is referring to. The question relates to the place described here as Central Vista. Several office sites have been there. On some of the sites we have the hutments which have to be demolished today or tomorrow, very shortly. On those sites, we have to put up permanent buildings for the Parliament Secretariat and Defence Ministry etc., and there will be other composite office buildings. All these constructions have to come and it is with reference to those sites and constructions that this question has been asked.

SHRI MAHESWAR NAIK: Does it mean that the open spaces now available will be left intact as they are?

SHRI K. C. REDDY: I have already answered that there are hutments on many of these sites built during the war. Their life was over long ago and they have to be pulled down and there are some vacant sites also.