

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I want to remind you that this is relating to Thar. If you want to put a supplementary on that, you can put it. About West Bengal, you can write to the Minister separately.

SHRI R.P. DAS : I want to know from the Hon. Minister whether there is any constraint in regard to the supply of rigs in West Bengal.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Not allowed.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I would not allow your question. Please sit down. I told you specifically. Nothing will go on record.

Now we will take up Shri C. Janga Reddy's question.

[Translations]

Use of Black Money in Elections

* 186. SHRI C. JANGA REDDY :
DR. A.K. PATEL :

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state :

(a) the effective steps Government propose to take to get the elections freed from the influence of black money : and

(b) the time by which these will be implemented ?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ) : (a) and (b). The use of black money for any purpose, including elections, can be curbed only by preventing the generation and proliferation of black money itself. The phenomenon of black money is quite complex and a sustained multi-pronged attack from various directions is necessary for dealing with it. It is difficult to estimate the time by which the evil of black money can be curbed. A number of measures, both administrative and legislative, have already been initiated and some more have been announced by the Finance Minister in his Budget speech on the 16th March, 1985 for dealing with the evil of black money. The measures include amendment of the tax laws for checking, tax evasion and generation of black money, streamlining the machinery for collection, collation and dissemination of information,

intensification of searches and seizures, more vigorous enforcement of the penal provisions against tax evaders, and setting up of special courts, etc.

The question is in two parts (a) and (b) parts (a) relates to as to how we can remove the influence of black money during elections and how the steps so decided will be implemented. At the very outset, I may assure this House that Government is fully determined to curb the influence of black money in all spheres of our life, be it elections or any other walk of life. So far as election is concerned, it is the backbone of democracy and the law does not permit even white money to be used in excess of the ceiling fixed under Section 77. I need not tell the Hon. Member that a candidate who spends more than the ceiling suffers the disqualification, under Section 123(6) of the Representation of Peoples Act. If a particular candidate spends more money than what is prescribed, he has to suffer the disqualification. The question is what Government can do. Government has suggested in the recent Finance Bill some measures by which it is determined to curb the generation of black money as a whole. So far as elections are concerned, every party uses black money. You must do that also.

(Interruptions)

They are not permitting me to make my point. Let me complete my answer. I seek your protection.

Every party uses the black money. According to the question put by my learned friend. The question is how we can liberate the process of election by removing the influence of black money.

(Interruptions)

This is a charge which I vehemently deny and I am not in a position being on the Treasury Benches to say that the boot is on the other leg. This type of insinuation is not parliamentary. We are discussing a very vital and national issue namely, as to how we should not allow black money to infiltrate the election process. If you say that my party has done it, my Members will report that your party has done it. We use a khadi flag and you use a silken flag. This is the difference. We do not want to go into it.

(Interruptions)

Kindly permit me to say what is relevant. They do not want to listen. The difficulty is this that they start with the presupposition that they are only the honest party. If the candidate does not spend the money in excess of what is prescribed by law, then there is no difficulty.

Now, coming to the political parties....

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : The Hon. Minister may answer to the specific question. We do not want any further discussion.

SHRI H.R. BHARADWAJ : So far as Government is concerned, we are applying our mind. We have announced certain measures to curb black money in the Finance Bill and we are also getting into a dialogue with the Opposition to come and sit with us and discuss...

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I have asked him to be specific.

SHRI H.R. BHARADWAJ : There is nothing specific in the question. It was an insinuation which I am not prepared to accept.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Mr. Janga Reddy, you put your supplementary.

SHRI C. JANGA REDDY. The Hon. Minister has delivered a long speech instead of giving an answer.

[English]

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Has his confession gone on record, Sir ?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Which one ?

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : ...that all parties are using black money. He can make that confession in a Sunday church. Why does he make it in the Lok Sabha ?

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI C. JANGA REDDY : Wanchoo Committee, which was constituted in 1971 for eradication of black money, had recommended that with a view to eradicate black money, some grant should be given to political parties. I want to know, what Government propose to do in this regard ?

[English]

SHRI H.R. BHARADWAJ : There is absolutely no suggestion with the Government of this nature, and whenever it comes, we will consider it.

[Translation]

SHRI C. JANGA REDDY : Wanchoo Committee was set up in 1971. In its report, the committee had recommended that the influence of black money on elections can be checked by giving grants to political parties. The committee had made this recommendation. This Committee was formed in 1971 by the Government whereas he says that there was no such recommendation.

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI A.K. SEN) : This clause has been added in the Finance Bill and the donation have been legalised.

[English]

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : May I know whether the Government is in receipt of a recommendation from the Election Commission to the effect that the candidates must be financed by the State itself and, secondly, whether the Government is also considering an amendment to the People's Representation Act which does not put any ceiling on the expenses to be incurred by parties ? The Minister has merely referred to the ceiling in regard to the expenses incurred by the candidates. The black money, the Minister has rightly admitted, is being used by the political parties. I do not want to go into the question which political party and all that. Will the Hon. Minister consider an amendment to the People's Representation Act by which the political parties are prohibited from spending ?

SHRI A.K. SEN : if the Election Commission makes a recommendation on these lines, the tradition has always been to put it before all the parties because elections are treated not as a matter pertaining to a particular political party. It will be decided by all the political parties and then the necessary legislation, if necessary, will be brought before the House.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : Will the Government ..

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : He is considering your suggestion.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : Will the Government take the initiative to consult all the political parties...

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Let me correct the Minister. Already the Chief Election Commissioner had convened a meeting in which all of us were present including his colleague sitting next to him, and there was a consensus, rather total unanimity, that there should be State funding of elections, that a hundred crore-rupee fund should be created.

SHRI A.K. SEN : The recommendation as a result of that consensus has not yet come. When it does come, it will be for the Government then to sit with all the opposition parties and decide accordingly. It has not yet come.

SHRI S JAIPAL REDDY : My question has not been answered, that part about amendment to the People's Representation Act in regard to the licence given to the political parties.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : He has said : if it comes from the Election Commission...

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : This was not recommended by the Election Commission. During Emergency the People's Representation Act was amended to exempt the expenses incurred by the political parties. Will the Government come forward to undo that amendment which has been largely responsible for generation of black money in elections ?

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : You have ended the Emergency. Why don't you remove the remnants of the Emergency ?

SHRI H.R. BHARADWAJ : On a point of explanation. I was also present when Prof. Madhu Dandavate and others were there. We discussed it and I will remind him that we discussed this issue but no consensus emerged out of it and, therefore, it was not followed up. Now, we are prepared to discuss the same issue thread bare. *(Interruptions)*

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Sir I have some doubt about his memory.

(Interruptions)

Standard of Telephone Services

*187. **SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHURY :** Will the Minister of COMMUNICATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that telephone services in the country are in total disarray ;

(b) whether Government have made any study regarding the nature of degeneration in the telephone services to the subscribers ; and

(c) the steps Government are contemplating to improve the telephone services ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAM NIWAS (MIRDHA) : (a) No, Sir. Telephone services in the country are not in total disarray. But there is scope for improvement.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The details regarding the improvement measures are laid on the Table of the House.

Statements

1. Introduction of sophisticated electronic telephone exchanges.
2. Scrapping of life expired equipment.
3. Installation of electronic trunk auto-exchanges to improve the STD services.
4. Laying of new junction, primary, and secondary cables in ducts.
5. Pressurisation of primary, secondary and junction cables.
6. Use of jelly filled cables in the distribution network.
7. Rehabilitation of subscribers' fittings and the D.P. boxes.
8. Provision of high grade junction circuits on Pulse Code Modulation, coaxial, and microwave media.
9. Laying of cables in PVC pipes to avoid damages.
10. Use of improved telephone instruments coded '677'.
11. Replacement of aluminium wires in the fittings at the subscribers' premises by copper wires.
12. Replacement of overhead wires by insulated drop wires.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOUDHRY : Sir, what the Minister has said is totally devoid of reality. It is difficult to tell what is the ailment of our telephone system. It is taking away our economic peace and also mental