

these food items; and

(d) the adverse impact it will have on environment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (PROF. M.G.K. MENON): (a) and (b). Government have in principle approved the application of irradiation technology for food preservation. An apex body, namely, National Monitoring Agency (NMA) has been constituted under the Ministry of Health to give guidelines and to oversee all aspects regarding irradiation technology. Presently, NMA has cleared the application of this technology for the preservation of species, frozen sea foods and onions meant for export.

(c) and (d). No ill effects have been seen from animal feed experiments. The technology has been tested to be safe from the environmental angle.

[*Translation*]

Fixation of Richness Line

4226. PROF. SHAILENDRA NATH SHRIVASTAVA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to fix a richness line like poverty line; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI BHAGEY GOBARDHAN): (a) and (b). The expressions 'Amiri Rekha' or 'the line of richness' have been used to convey the idea

that savings devoted to unproductive assets are a waste to resources and accumulation of unproductive wealth is undesirable.

(*Interruptions*)

12.00 hrs.

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Take your seat.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: I have not permitted you.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Janardhanji, take your seat.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI DINESH SINGH (Pratapgarh): Mr. Speaker, sir, you are aware, the country is agitated over an issue in which over Rs. 900 crores were raised from excise and customs. Earlier the Government decided that this money would be returned to those people. Then there was a noise raised in the country, with the result the Government have now stayed it. Now merely staying it is not enough. If it is stayed today, it can be given back to them tomorrow. But the real question is, how did this happen. Why in this matter, in which money had been taken it was planned to be returned and returned to certain categories of people which are quite close to the Government? That is why we feel that this requires an impartial enquiry. It is not sufficient to say that this money is really safe. I would, therefore, suggest that Government come forward to set up a joint parliamentary committee to look into this matter. (*Interruptions*)