

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
LAW AND JUSTICE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:624
ANSWERED ON:15.03.2012
MONEY POWER IN ELECTIONS
Reddy Shri Modugula Venugopala

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

- (a) whether the influence of money power in parliamentary and assembly polls is on the rise in the country;
- (b) if so, whether the Election Commission has also suggested some measures to control the same;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the action taken/being taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHID)

(a) to (d) : The Election Commission is seriously concerned about the growing influence of 'Money Power' in Parliamentary and Assembly Elections. The Commission held a meeting on 4th October 2010, with all recognized National Political Parties to discuss issues related to use of Money Power etc. in elections.

(b) The Commission has taken several measures including opening of separate Division in the Commission to oversee election expenditure, appointment of Expenditure Observers and Assistant Expenditure Observers, Flying Squads and Static Surveillance Teams to keep vigil over movement of cash, liquor and other items during elections, Media Certifying and Monitoring Committee to watch media advertisements and paid news, Maintenance of Shadow Observation Register of each candidate, Video Surveillance Team to oversee major items of expenditure, opening of separate bank account by the candidate for the purpose of election expenses and involving of Income Tax Department to keep vigil over movement of cash. Considering the impact of the monitoring mechanism of Election Expenditure in the recently concluded Assembly elections, the Election Commission has decided to enforce the similar measures in all General Elections.

On the issue of money power in elections, the Election Commission's suggestions on electoral reforms include funding of elections. This along with other comprehensive electoral reforms proposals is being considered by a Core Committee under the Chairmanship of an Additional Solicitor General. The Committee under the aegis of Legislative Department and in co-sponsorship of the Election Commission of India conducted seven regional consultations at Bhopal, Kolkata, Mumbai, Lucknow, Chandigarh, Bengaluru and Guwahati, wherein the stakeholders have been consulted, who inter-alia included leaders and workers of the political parties, legislators, legal luminaries, representatives of NGOs, eminent persons, civil servants (serving and retired), students etc. and views have been gathered. An all party meeting is also under consideration. On the basis of the inputs received or as may be received in all these consultations, legislative process as may be considered necessary will be initiated by the Government in due course.

A Group of Ministers constituted by the Central Government is considering measures that can be taken by the Government to tackle corruption which inter alia include the introduction of state funding of elections. The Group of Ministers has discussed certain formulations that could be adopted to address this issue but no final decision has yet been taken.