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12.20 hrs.

OBSERVATION BY THE SPEAKER

Notices of Motions for Adjournment

Title: Notices of Adjournment Motion moved by members relating to alleged involvement of a former Union Minister in a bribery case and reported misuse of PSUs by some minister of the Government. (Notices disallowed)

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members as you are aware, yesterday some hon. Members had raised matters relating to alleged involvement of a former Union Minister in a bribery case and reported misuse of PSUs by some Ministers of the Government through notices of Adjournment Motion. I had also heard some of the hon. Members and the hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs on the subject.

As regards the matter relating to the alleged involvement of a former Union Minister in a bribery case, I may inform the hon. Members that during the meeting of the Business Advisory Committee held on 3rd December, 2003, several hon. Members had desired that the Prime Minister should make a statement in the House on the matter. The hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs had stated that the House can discuss this matter on the statement of the Prime Minister which he may make after his return from abroad.

I have, therefore, separated this matter from the other matter relating to the alleged misuse of PSUs by some Ministers of the Government.

As regards the issue of alleged misuse of PSUs by some Ministers of the Government, I may mention that I have gone through the rules.

According to Kaul and Shakhder (page 503), there is no objection *per se* to the notice of an Adjournment Motion being given simply because it happens to be based on a newspaper report, but the Speaker before accepting the Motion must be in possession of further facts. Press reports unless admitted by the Government, cannot be accepted as authoritative for the purpose of an Adjournment Motion. Since the notices received were based on Press reports, I had called for a factual note from the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions.

The note has since been received. The Government have conveyed that "the Central Vigilance Commissioner (CVC) had called on the hon. Prime Minister on 16th October, 2003. During the meeting, the CVC gave a briefing in respect of various initiatives of the Commission during the past one year and also dwelt upon the need to remove the misplaced fear of vigilance in the minds of senior public sector executives which often leads to hesitation on their part in reaching decisions. Further, the CVC delineated various measures which could be taken towards promoting economy and accountability in the functioning of the public sector undertakings. At no point, did the CVC mention any name or make any allegation in respect of any Central Minister. There are no complaints 'of demanding money from the PSU Chiefs by the Ministers'."

Though the subject is important to merit discussion in the House, I do not consider it appropriate to adjourn the entire business for this purpose.

In view of the aforesaid, I am inclined to disallow the notices of Adjournment Motion.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: There is no 'Zero Hour' today. We want to start the discussion under rule 193 forthwith.