

15.22 hrs.

COMPULSORY VOTING BILL, 2004

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Let us now take up item no. 30, Compulsory Voting Bill. Last time when the House was adjourned, Shri Giridhar Gamang was on his legs. So, I request him to continue his speech.

SHRI GIRIDHAR GAMANG (KORAPUT): Thank you, Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir.

This is an important Bill. Democracy in India is not only a democracy, but it is also democracy with freedom. Therefore, you cannot compel the voters to vote. It should be given to them, whatever the line that they may take during the voting process.

So, I mentioned last time about the role of five 'VIPs'. I have analysed that the percentage of voting of very intellectual persons, very intelligent persons, very influential persons, very illiterate persons and very innocent persons, who make the five 'VIPs'. These five VIPs have a role to play during the election process. One is to assess what is the percentage of different category of voters. The election in the country definitely will give a different dimension to the democratic process. Why then we have frequent elections in the country? It is because there is no stability in the Government. Political environment is changing in such a way that there is no stability in the State or at the Centre.

In the third layer of Government, that is, in the Panchayats and the Municipalities also, there is a provision for a five-year term. If every year we have election after election, then definitely people will get disgusted with the voting process.

I would like to raise a very important question. When people cast vote to elect their representatives, they are elected for a five-year term. So, they should remain the representatives of the people, either in the Parliament or the Assembly, for full five years. Experience today in the country is, there is no single-party Government for the past few years. Earlier at the Centre we had Governments enjoying absolute majority or two-thirds majority in the House. Those Governments had completed full five years' term. Then we had multi-party Government with single-party Opposition. Now, we have at the Centre multi-party Government with multi-party Opposition. As a result the stability of the Government is always in question. In the past we had the occasion when there was Government at the Centre enjoying absolute majority or two-third majority in the House. Then there were occasions when we had either mid-term or quarter-term elections. Now, there is no certainty of the term of the Government. We now have no-term Governments both at the Centre and the States. It is high time to review the Constitutional provision to find out whether the elected representatives who have been elected for five years should continue for five years or not.

There is a provision in article 83 of the Constitution, which says that the duration of the Lok Sabha is for five years. It needs to be examined and reviewed. We can amend it by adding, "unless sooner dissolved, it will continue for five years". In article 85, power is given to the hon. President to dissolve the House. On what basis can the President dissolve the House? Article 74 provides that the Council of Ministers should aid and advise the President. Definitely, the hon. President will act on the advice of the Council of Ministers. If a Government is defeated in the House then the House will not be dissolved but the Government will have to go. Only if a Government recommends for the dissolution of the House, the House should be dissolved. The Council of Ministers has the power to advise the President on important Money Bill and other Bills. No-Confidence Motion is to be moved by the Leader of Opposition in the House but Confidence Motion is to be moved by the Prime Minister on the instruction and advice of the President of India. If that is so, when the Council of Ministers recommends to the President for dissolution of the House before completion of five years term – either in the mid-term or quarter-term – why can the Members of Parliament in the Lok Sabha or the MLAs in the Assembly not vote in the House for or against the dissolution of the House? If the Council of Ministers differ on a Bill or if it recommends against to the President and the President of India does not accept and return the Bill asking the Government to show the strength in the House then the House will be the deciding factor. Similarly, the House should decide whether it would go for election before the completion of five years term or not. We should have a similar provision for the State Assemblies also.

We have a five years term for Panchayat and Municipality. There also the words used are, "unless sooner dissolved". In that case also the power to dissolve should vest with Panchayat. A Government may or may not be there for five years but the elected representatives should remain for five years. Today, there is uncertainty everywhere. How well a Government run depends on a Party. But today a number of parties are involved. It is high time we should stop going for frequent elections.

If there are no frequent elections, we will not only be saving the money but also we will not be required to compel the voters to vote every year.

I would like to refer to what happened on 17th April, 1999. At that time, I was the Chief Minister. I came and voted. If I had not voted, it would have been a defection under the Anti Defection Act. It is because defection is not attracted only when you change a party but the Act also says that if you abstain from the voting or if you do not vote as per party's direction, it would attract defection. Before me also, a number of Chief Ministers came and voted. But I am very reluctant to say that due to my one vote in Lok Sabha the Government was defeated. I would like to say that the Lok Sabha was not dissolved because of my vote as it took six to seven days for the dissolution of the House. The Government lost because it was one vote short in the House. I have not been defeated by the people. It is my ninth term in the House. I have never defected from my Party. Therefore, it would have been wrong for me if I had not voted at that time. I am referring to this because holding frequent elections is a regular feature in the country. Today, there is no certainty of the Government. But why should there be uncertainty regarding the term of the representatives who have been elected to Parliament and Assemblies in the country?

Another point which I want to refer to is that under our democratic process definitely the Government will be elected by the people and the Government will work for the people. The Government would always try to show that it is for the people. But what is a Government? A Government should be acceptable to the people, answerable to the people and accountable to the people. In the same way, we have to have the same type of acceptability, answerability and accountability for the public representatives, namely, MLAs or MPs or third level representatives. Today, what we find is that uncertainty is growing at the Centre as well as in the States. It is high time that we see how to remove the word 'unless sooner dissolved' or there should be an amendment of the Constitution by which an elected representative continues for five years. He should remain a Member of the Assembly or Parliament for five years irrespective of Government or no Government. The situation is that there cannot be any President Rule at the Centre. Once a Government is defeated or if a Government resigns, it cannot continue for a longer period. Therefore, the provision which is there in the Constitution is the best thing. It is my personal opinion. It need not be an opinion of my Party or the other Members. But I can say that the interpretation of the Constitution is important today. Unless we remove this obstacle, there will be frequent elections. Unless there is an Act, the voters will be forced to vote frequently for the Assemblies, Parliament and for the third level Government, namely, Panchayats and municipalities.

There are three electoral rolls for Parliament, Assembly, Panchayats, and municipalities. Panchayats and municipalities have got different electoral rolls. Therefore, there should be one electoral roll through which all the three constitutional Governments could be formed. So, there should not be any contradiction in the electoral rolls.

With these remarks, I will say that it is high time that we have to see how best we can avoid frequent elections in the country. If we cannot avoid that, instability will be prevailing everywhere.

In the absence of such a provision there will either be Governments dependent of coalition partners, or multi-party Governments, or a weak and unstable Government or a non-viable yet alternative Government. This type of a situation was not there during the earlier Congress regimes. It started only during non-Congress regimes at the Centre. It was because of such coalition Governments that concepts like Confidence Motion and No-Confidence Motion have gained ground. I have a very interesting fact here. There have so far been 11 Confidence Motions moved by the Government and 26 times No-Confidence Motions have been brought by the Opposition against the Government. Bringing in of No-Confidence Motion itself is indicative of the degree of instability of such Governments that are dependent on coalition partners. It is because the Government in such an event would have to prove their majority and show that they enjoy the confidence of the majority of the Members in the House every time a No-Confidence Motion is moved against them.

In the States today we almost do not have any single party rule. But this Government at the Centre will definitely complete their full term because of its political management and also for the support it enjoys from the different political parties. Running of a Government that is dependent on its allies, or running of a multi-party Government depends largely on the leadership that heads the Government. It is not certain whether we can continue with such type of uncertainty in our democratic process for long. It is because it would result not only in hampering the democratic process but people will also lose faith in democratic system over a period of time and also in the elected representatives. In the States the situation is somewhat different. The States can remain without a Government for months together, but at the Centre the situation is different. It is high time for us to think as to how best we can remedy this trend for the democratic process to be smooth and how to avoid holding frequent general elections. We should have elections to the Lok Sabha only once in five years and there should not be any mid-term elections.

With these few words, I support the Bill.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri Athwale, if you wish to speak, then either you have to go back to your seat, or else you would have to seek a prior permission from the Chair if you wish to speak from where you are sitting now.

15.48 hrs. Shri Giridhar Gamang in the Chair

श्री रामदास आठवले (पंढरपुर) : सभापति जी, कम्पल्सरी वोटिंग होनी चाहिए, इसके लिए हमारे माननीय सदस्य श्री बच्ची सिंह रावत जी ने जो बिल पेश किया है, मैं उसका समर्थन करने के लिए खड़ा हुआ हूँ।

MR. CHAIRMAN : The time allotted for discussion of this Bill has been exhausted. Now, if the House agrees, then we may extend the time for discussion of the Bill by another half-an-hour. Moreover, the hon. mover of this Bill also is not present in the House today. Therefore, we extend the time by another half-an-hour.

श्री रामदास आठवले : सभापति महोदय, हमारे देश में लोकतंत्र की शुरुआत 26 जनवरी 1950 से हुई। डॉ. बाबा साहेब भीमराव अम्बेडकर जी की अध्यक्षता में संविधान तैयार हुआ, तब से हमारे देश में लोकतंत्र है। हमारा लोकतंत्र पूरे विश्व में सबसे बड़ा लोकतंत्र है, ऐसा माना जाता है। हमारे देश के लोगों की वोटिंग का प्रतिशत देखा जाए तो वह बहुत ज्यादा नहीं है। कुछ जगहों में तो यह 25-30 प्रतिशत से अधिक नहीं है। मेरा ऐसा मानना है कि इसके लिए सरकार को संविधान में संशोधन करने पर विचार करना चाहिए और कम्पल्सरी वोटिंग के बारे में सोचना चाहिए। पांच साल में वोटिंग बड़े आदमी और छोटे आदमी, सभी के लिए बराबर होनी चाहिए। लेकिन हमारे संविधान में वन मैन, वन वोट, वन वैल्यू का सिद्धांत है। हमारे लोकतंत्र में उद्योगपति, गरीब या मध्यम वर्ग, सभी के वोट की समान वैल्यू है।

इसलिए जब भी इलैक्शन होते हैं तब हर व्यक्ति को वोट डालना चाहिए, इस तरह का कम्पल्शन करने की आवश्यकता है। जैसा आपने कहा, 1998 में जब श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी की सरकार थी, तब मैं भी रिपब्लिकन पार्टी ऑफ इंडिया की ओर से संसद सदस्य था। आप मुख्य मंत्री थे और यहां वोटिंग के लिए आए थे। हम चाहते थे कि श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी की सरकार हट जाए। इसका मतलब यह था कि हमें सरकार बनानी है। हम श्री वाजपेयी की सरकार को हटाने में कामयाब हो गए। आडवाणी जी को भी यह नहीं लगा था कि हम हारने वाले हैं, लेकिन अंदर से हमें मालूम था कि हम उनको हारने वाले हैं क्योंकि आप अपने राज्य से वोटिंग करने आए थे। इसलिए एक सदस्य के वोट डालने से अचानक श्री वाजपेयी की सरकार हार गई। मैं आपकी बात को सपोर्ट करता हूँ कि कोई भी सरकार पांच साल तक चलनी चाहिए। अगर हमने एक सरकार को हटाना है तो दूसरी सरकार बननी चाहिए। लेकिन उस समय हम अपनी सरकार नहीं बना पाए। अगर किसी पार्टी को मेजोरिटी नहीं मिलती, वह सरकार नहीं बना सकती, तो राष्ट्रीय सरकार होनी चाहिए जो पांच साल तक चले। इसके लिए कौन्सिलिटेशन में प्रावधान करने की आवश्यकता है।

वोटिंग पार्टी के नाम पर होनी चाहिए। मेरी पार्टी छोटी है। वोटिंग कैंडीडेट के नाम पर होती है, लेकिन अगर पार्टी के नाम पर वोटिंग हो और महाराष्ट्र में हमारी पार्टी चुनाव लड़े तो उसे 11-12 प्रतिशत वोट मिल सकते हैं। अगर हम अकेले लड़ेंगे तो हमारा एक भी कैंडीडेट चुनकर नहीं आ सकता। मेरा सुझाव है कि कैंडीडेट के नाम पर वोटिंग करने के बजाए अगर पार्टी के नाम पर वोटिंग हो, तो हर पार्टी को वोटिंग का जितना प्रतिशत मिलता है, उतने कैंडीडेट नौमिनेट करके वह पार्टी हाउस में ला सकती है। कौन्सिलिटेशन में नया अमेंडमेंट करने की आवश्यकता है। यह मेरा सुझाव है।

बहुत बार ऐसा होता है कि हम एक बार वोटिंग करते हैं लेकिन अगली बार वोटिंग लिस्ट में हमारा नाम ही नहीं होता। कुछ लोगों के पास आइडेंटिटी कार्ड होता है, लेकिन उनका नाम वोटिंग लिस्ट में नहीं होता। इसलिए इसमें सुधार लाने की आवश्यकता है। भारत का नागरिक होने के बाद भी व्यक्ति को अधिकारियों की गड़बड़ी के कारण वोटिंग का अधिकार नहीं मिलता। इसके लिए भी नया प्रावधान हो सकता है। हर व्यक्ति को चुनाव में वोटिंग करने का अधिकार है। उन्हें उनके कौन्सिलिटेशनल अधिकारों से वंचित रखना ठीक नहीं है। जो व्यक्ति कम्पल्सरी वोटिंग नहीं करेगा, उसे सजा देने का प्रावधान होना चाहिए। बड़े-बड़े लोग लोकतंत्र का फायदा उठा रहे हैं, देश की आजादी का फायदा उठा रहे हैं, लेकिन उनके पास एक दिन वोट डालने के लिए आधे घंटा का भी समय नहीं है। जो बड़े लोग वोटिंग नहीं करते, उनके लिए ऐसी सजा का प्रावधान हो, जिसे उन्हें अगली बार वोटिंग के लिए जाना ही पड़े।

मैं ज्यादा वक्त न लेते हुए, इस बिल का समर्थन करता हूँ। इस बिल को सरकार की तरफ से लाया जाना चाहिए। कम्पल्सरी वोटिंग करना बहुत जरूरी है। अगर भारत के लोकतंत्र को मजबूत करना है तो कम्पल्सरी वोटिंग करनी चाहिए। मैं इस बिल का समर्थन करते हुए अपनी बात समाप्त करता हूँ।

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW & JUSTICE (SHRI K. VENKATAPATHY): Sir, I am happy to express my sincere thanks to Shri Bachi Singh Rawat for bringing the focussed attention of this august House on the question of compulsory voting by introducing the Compulsory Voting Bill, 2004 in this House on 9th July, 2004. The Bill seeks to make voting compulsory in elections, subject to certain exemptions; to impose fine or punishment or both in respect of those who fail to cast their vote; and to provide incentives to those persons who, in spite of their illness or physical incapacity exercise their right to vote at an election or those who exercised their right at all elections held during a period of 20 years preceding this Act without any break, such as preference in jobs and admission of their children to the institutions of higher technical education or such other incentives as may be prescribed.

The hon. Member has explained the reasons in brief for the Bill in the Statement of Objects and Reasons appended to the Bill. The Statement of Objects and Reasons reads as follows:

"A very sad feature of our democracy that is revealed at all elections is that the number of voters who actually cast their votes is far less than those eligible. The average number of votes polled is around fifty per cent. It is a glaring commentary on the responsibility of citizens that the fate of the country's democratic institutions has been left to be decided by about fifty per cent of the electorate. Since the trend of voting from time to time does not show any appreciable increase in the number of those who exercise their franchise, time has come to ensure that all the citizens exercise their sovereign right to choose their representatives, so that the elections may reflect the will of the whole electorate and not merely that of a part of it. The general elections to last few Lok Sabhas reveal that in a number of States the voting was less than 40 per cent and in a number of cases people had boycotted elections and thus

did not vote deliberately.

With a view to increasing the voting percentage, the present Bill proposes to make it compulsory for every eligible voter to vote and to provide for exemption only in cases where the voter is physically incapacitated due to illness of serious nature or the voter has *bona fide* grounds to do so.

Since the provision is being made compulsory, punishment is also sought to be given to those who do not vote at elections. However, incentives are also proposed to be given to those persons who vote at elections despite illness or without any break at successive elections."

Clause 2 of the Bill makes a provision for making voting compulsory at elections. In this context, I would like to draw the attention of the House to the recommendations of the Committee on Electoral Reforms 1990 which is commonly known as the Dinesh Goswami Committee appointed by the Government to go into the various proposals for electoral reforms. The Committee went into the reasons and remedial measures for low percentage of polling at the elections. In this connection, the Committee also considered the question of making "voting compulsory". The idea was, however, not accepted because of the practical difficulties involved in its implementation and the contradictory views expressed by the members of the Committee.

Now, I may mention some of the arguments against the system of compulsory voting. It is true that voting at elections by an overwhelming majority of citizens strengthens the democratic process in the country, but it is also equally true that such participation in the process by a citizen should be on his own volition rather than by coercion. It is undemocratic to force people to vote, as this would amount to infringement of their fundamental rights.

16.00 hrs.

The ignorants and those with little interest in politics would be forced to go to the polls, if compulsory voting is introduced. The compulsory voting may increase the number of 'donkey votes', that is, bad votes that do not get counted. However, this argument may not hold good in case of voting by the electronic voting machines.

The compulsory voting may increase the number of invalid votes – ballot papers which are not marked according to rules for voting. However, this argument may also not hold in case of voting by the electronic voting machines. In compulsory voting, additional resources will have to be deployed to determine whether those who failed to vote have valid and sufficient reasons and the cases of people who are to be given incentives.

In the meeting of political parties held on 22nd May, 1998 to consider electoral reforms, the issue was part of its agenda. It was decided not to make voting compulsory, as such a measure was difficult to implement.

The hon. Member has sought to make provisions in clause 3 of the Bill for punishments, fine, etc., in respect of those who fail to cast their votes. On the one hand, such a provision may not produce the desired results, and also may not be legally tenable under the Constitution of India unless the concept of negative voting is also brought in. This provision for rewards, as contained in clause 4 of the Bill, may also ultimately prove to be counter-productive and is likely to be misused.

Sarvshri K.S. Rao, Bharthruhari Mahtab and Kailash Meghwal have expressed themselves in support of the Bill moved by Shri Rawat for making voting compulsory. Sarvshri Basu Deb Acharia, Mohan Singh, Pawan Kumar Bansal, Hannan Mollah, C.K. Chandrappan, Rajesh Mishra, Shailendra Kumar, Alok Kumar Mehta, Thokchom Meinya, Kharabela Swain and Ms. Mamata Banerjee have opposed the Bill. Shri Giridhar Gamang and Shri Ramdas Athawale have also aired their opinions. Besides, the views expressed by the hon. Members on the subject of the Bill under consideration, some issues like negative voting, better positioning of polling booths in difficult terrains, deletion of names from the electoral rolls and, in general, need for electoral reforms have also been raised by them while participating in the debates.

In this connection, I would like to reiterate that the UPA Government views State funding of elections in its true spirit as recommended by the Committee on State Funding of Elections headed by late Shri Indrajit Gupta, as an important step in electoral reforms which will effectively deal with many problems afflicting the electoral system. As regards negative voting, it may be stated that the Election Commission of India has suggested that Rules 22 and 49B of the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961 may be suitably amended adding a proviso that in the ballot paper and the particulars on the ballot units, in the column relating to name of candidates, after the entry relating to the last candidate, there shall be a column 'None of the Above', to enable a voter to reject all the candidates, if he chooses so. The issue is also pending consideration in the Supreme Court in Writ Petition No.161 of 2004 – PUCL and Another Vs. Union of India and Another.

The process of reforms/changes of electoral laws and other related matters is a continuous and ongoing process and can be carried out only through consensus among political parties. Since it is a long-drawn process, it is not possible to indicate any timeframe. Besides, some members have quoted certain instances from their personal experiences where the system of election has not worked in a proper manner, for instance, deletion of names from electoral rolls or some individuals or voters being denied the right to vote.

I will request the hon. Members to give the requisite details in writing to me so that same can be pursued with the Election Commission for appropriate action.

Now, I would like to express my views on the merits of the proposal. An elector may not like to vote at the elections for a variety of reasons. He may not be satisfied with the developmental activities in his area or he may not be satisfied with the conduct of contesting candidates at particular elections. Instances are not far to seek where in the previous elections villages after villages boycotted the elections by way of protests against the lack of development in the areas concerned. Non-voting in such cases is to focus attention on the particular area or areas. In fact, in absence of the provision of negative voting, such step by voters may itself be very much construed as a democratic method to invite attention of the concerned authorities to various issues and problems affecting them. It is also true that an elector may not be able to vote due to reasons beyond his control, such as illness, inability to reach the place of voting, serious preoccupation with unavoidable exigencies or engagements or due to pressure tactics often employed by political parties or groups in elections these days characterised by what is known as 'muscle power'.

Active participation in the democratic process by the people, no doubt, will strengthen the democratic traditions in the country. But, such a participation should better come out from the people voluntarily rather than by coercion or allurements. A sense of duty in this regard should inform the people on their own and it is this sense of duty which should be the motivating factor in impelling people to turn up at the polling stations in larger numbers. The people have to be conscious about their rights, as well as, their duties and this consciousness should guide all their actions, including the voting at elections. It would, however, be unfair to blame the people for the low voting percentage. Examples are galore, baring sporadic incidents of total abstinence from voting, that at all elections, they have turned up in large numbers at election booths, even braving risks to life, to cast their votes. However, the Election Commission has been exhorting people to realise the importance of their precious vote. The Commission has been advising people to vote without 'fear and favour' by issuing advertisements in the press and electronic media. Such measures at least have the effect of awakening the conscience of the people. They may ultimately achieve the purpose by ensuring larger attendance at the polling booths.

In the circumstances explained by me, I feel that it would be more important that the people may rise to the occasion and respond to the need of the hour rather than making a law on compulsory voting. Hence, it is not possible to support the Bill in its present form or with any amendment. In this connection, political parties / groups and voluntary agencies have to play the greatest role in exhorting the people to exercise their voting rights, come what may, and contribute to the strengthening of the democratic institutions. The role of the Government maybe to accelerate the pace of developmental activities in all areas so as to relieve people from their basic problems and let them think about broader issues associated with their national identity. In view of the aforesaid, the remedy lies not in adding one more law in the statute book which may at best serve as an ornamental purpose, but in undertaking concrete and effective measures to motivate people to realise the value of their votes. Only such an awakening on the part of the people can bring about the desired results.

I once again thank the hon. Member for bringing a lively discussion on certain election laws and for focussing our attention on an important aspect of our democratic functioning. However, I fervently request the hon. Member to withdraw the Bill.

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN (TRICHUR): Sir, I would like to ask a question. The hon. Minister while replying said that one of the important aspects of the matter is electoral reforms. You have said that the UPA Government will go for electoral reforms. You also mentioned that the Government had a meeting with political parties, maybe in Nineties.

Can the Minister assure the House now – since we are discussing the matter – that within a short period the UPA Government will call all the political parties to have a detailed discussion on this question of electoral reforms based on the various reports that are before it?

SHRI K. VENKATAPATHY: Yes. Definitely. Whenever there is a proposal, we will consider, we will consult all the political parties. We will appraise the present circumstances. A proper decision will be taken after taking into consideration the views of all the political parties.

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN : It is not when there is a demand from the political parties. *Suo motu* the Government can take initiative to call a meeting because this is a burning issue so far as democracy is concerned.

SHRI K. VENKATAPATHY: Yes, we are discussing about electoral reforms also. We can convene a meeting. We can discuss and arrive at a consensus.

SHRI SANDEEP DIKSHIT (EAST DELHI): Sir, with your permission, I would like to say something. There is a discussion under Rule 193 slated for this session only on electoral reforms. I would now like to request the Chair to use his office. Let it be assured that the discussion also takes place under Rule 193.

कुँवर मानवेन्द्र सिंह (मथुरा) : स्भापति जी, मैं अभी हुई डिस्कशन सुन रहा था और मैंने माननीय मंत्री जी के विचार भी सुनें। इस बारे में मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय मंत्री जी से दो चीजों कहना चाहता हूँ। एक तो जो कंप्लेसरी वोटिंग में दिक्कत आती है वह पोलिंग बूथ के दूर होने के कारण आती है। इसलिए माननीय मंत्री जी इलेक्शन कमीशन से कहें कि पोलिंग बूथ की दूरी एक किलोमीटर से ज्यादा नहीं होनी चाहिए। दूसरे, पिछली बार के इलेक्शन में हमने देखा कि वोटर कार्ड होने के बावजूद भी वोटर का वोटिंग लिस्ट में नाम नहीं था, जिसके कारण वोटर अपना वोट नहीं डाल पाया। इसलिए अगर किसी के पास वोटर कार्ड हो तो उसे वोट डालने के अधिकार से वंचित न किया जाए और वोटर लिस्ट जो बनती है वह इस तरह से बनें जिसमें गड़बड़ी न हो और वोटर का नाम उसमें हो। होता यह है कि लाल पेंसिल से वोटर का नाम काट दिया जाता है जिससे लिस्ट में उसका नाम नहीं होता है।

MR. CHAIRMAN : You can reply.

SHRI K. VENKATAPATHY: We will consider because we want that the people should be enabled to vote in the nearest pooling booths.

MR. CHAIRMAN : There is no provision to ask a question once the Minister has replied. Shri Bachhi Singh Rawat – the Mover of this Bill – is also absent. Therefore, we will put it to vote.

The question is:

"That the Bill further to provide for compulsory voting by the electorate in the country and for matters connected therewith, be taken into consideration."

The motion was negatived.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, we will take up Item 31.

Shri Iqbal Ahmed Saradgi – not present.