

>

Title: Discussion on the motion for consideration of the Right to Information (Amendment) Bill, 2013.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, we shall take up the Right to Information (Amendment) Bill, 2013. Mr. Minister.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): I beg to move:

"That the Bill to amend the Right to Information Act, 2005 be taken into consideration."

The Right to Information Act, 2005 was enacted for setting out a framework for effectuating the right to information for citizens and to secure access to information under the control of public authorities, in order to promote transparency and accountability in the working of every public authority. ...(*Interruptions*)

The Central Information Commission in one of its decision dated 03.06.2013 has held that the political parties namely AICC/INC, BJP, CPI (M), CPI, NCP and BSP are public authorities under section 2(h) of the said Act. The Government considers that the CIC has made a liberal interpretation of section 2(h) of the said Act in its decision. The political parties are neither established nor constituted by or under the Constitution or by any other law made by Parliament. Rather, they are registered or recognized under the Representation of the People Act, 1951 and the rules/orders made or issued thereunder.

18.59½ hrs

At this stage, Shri C. Sivasami and Shri M. Anandan came and stood on the floor near the Table.

...(*Interruptions*)

19.00 hrs.

It has also been observed that there are already provisions in the Representation of the People Act, 1951 as well as in the Income Tax Act, 1961 which deals with the transparency in the financial aspects of political parties and their candidates. ...(*Interruptions*)

19.0 ½ hrs

At this stage, Sk. Saidul Haque and Shrimati Susmita Bauri came and stood on the floor near the Table.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please go to your seat.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Sir, declaring a political party as public authority under the RTI Act would hamper its smooth internal working, which is not the objective of the said Act and was not envisaged by Parliament under the RTI Act. ...(*Interruptions*) Further, the political rivals may misuse the provisions of the RTI Act, thereby adversely affecting the functioning of the political parties. ...(*Interruptions*)

In view of the above, the Government has decided to amend the RTI Act to keep the political parties out of the purview of the RTI Act, with a view to remove the adverse effects of the said decision of the CIC. ...(*Interruptions*) It is also necessary to give retrospective effect to the proposed amendment with effect from the date of the said decision of the CIC, that is, 3rd June, 2013. ...(*Interruptions*)

With these words, I commend the Bill for consideration of the House and passing.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Motion moved:

"That the Bill to amend the Right to Information Act, 2005 be taken into consideration."

MR. CHAIRMAN : This is a very important Bill. We can continue the discussion on Uttarakhand tragedy tomorrow. Please go back to your seats.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI DINESH TRIVEDI (BARRACKPUR): Mr. Chairman, Sir, many hon. Members are demanding that we should continue with the discussion on Uttarakhand tragedy. It is a very big tragedy which happened there. The House is supreme and we should continue with that discussion now. ...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Okay. If you are all insisting, we can continue with that discussion now.

...(Interruptions)

सभापति महोदय : ठीक है, सबकी यही भावना है, तो उत्तराखण्ड पर चर्चा कर देते हैं।

19.02 hrs

*At this stage, Shri C. Sivasami and Shri M. Anandan
went back to their seats.*

19.02 ½ hrs

*At this stage, Sk. Saidul Haque and Shrimati Susmita Bauri
went back to their seats*