

श्री सुरजीत सिंह बरनाला : माननीय सदस्य जिम पुरान तरीके का बिक्र कर रहे है, वह मुझे बताये कि वह क्या तरीका है। अगर वह इस्तेमाल नहीं हो रहा है, तो हम उसे इस्तेमाल करके उसमें फायदा उठाने की कांशिश करगे।

Shortage of Money Order Forms

*471. SHRI SAUGATA ROY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a serious shortage of money order forms in various Post Offices in the country; and

(b) reasons thereof and steps taken by the Government to overcome the shortage?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI NARHARI PRASAD SUKHEDEV SAI). (a) No, Sir. No complaint has been received about any serious shortage of Money order forms in various post offices in the country.

(b) In view of (a) above, this does not arise.

SHRI SAUGATA ROY: Sir, I could not expect a more incompetent reply from a more incompetent Minister. It is a biased reply. At least in those Ministries in which former Jan Sangh Ministers are there, there is efficiency but in the Communications Ministry that efficiency is also not there. Sir, to tell you my personal experience, on 8th February I had to send a money order for Rs. 220/- from Calcutta to Varanasi. I went to three post offices—Calcutta-45, Calcutta-26 and....

MR. SPEAKER: We appreciate your difficulties.

SHRI SAUGATA ROY: Sir, please listen to me. Calcutta-45, Calcutta-26 and Calcutta-20. In all the three post offices money order forms were not available. But, Sir, I found that outside the post offices there were some persons who were selling money order forms at 4 annas or 30 paise per form. They are poor people, they are doing their own small black business, I have no objection. But the Minister does not

even know it and you guess the realities of the problem. There are 5 lakhs of people sending money orders from West Bengal to Bihar and Orissa every month, and every month they are sending Rs. 1,38,00,000 by money order. If on every money order form 20 paise premium is to be paid, just imagine how much premium is to be paid on 5 lakhs of forms. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he will inquire into the whole matter as to whether there is a serious shortage of money order forms in Calcutta and whether a large number of industrial workers have complained to the postal authorities regarding the shortage of money order forms. I want to know whether he will enquire into it and come back to the House with a report.

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BRIJ LAL VERMA): Sir, as the hon. Member has informed me that there is some shortage because by this time we have not received such serious complaints, I take it for granted that there is something and I will inquire into it and see that the requirements are fulfilled.

SHRI SAUGATA ROY: At least the Minister is good enough to admit that there is some shortage. But not only in Calcutta but in the whole of Delhi region there is a serious shortage of postal articles as a whole. Inland letters are not available. Postal envelopes are not available and post cards are not available. And even in the Parliament House Post Office, or one day I did not find inland letters. In the North Avenue Post Office also inland letters are not available. I want to know whether they are printed in the Security Press at Nasik. I do not know exactly where these forms are printed, whether advance invoices were given, and whether indents were placed for acquiring them and why they have allowed this situation to develop. I would like to know what steps they are taking so that there is no shortage of the most ordinary of the ordinary things—the postal arti-

cles—to be provided by Government in future at any time.

SHRI BRIJ LAL VERMA: Though this question does not arise from the original question, still I would like to say something. As far as the post cards, inland letters and other things are concerned, they are printed in the Security Press at Nasik. It is the monopoly of that press. They cannot be printed in any other press. But there is some shortage of inland letters. So, what we are doing is, we have ordered our local PMGs to get them printed in the local press and put stamps thereon. As Nasik Press is not able to meet the full demand, we have allowed our PMGs to print them locally and put stamps thereon. Now they have arranged for one extra press for this purpose and I think after one month the shortage will not be there.

SHRI K. GOPAL: My friend, Mr. Saugata Roy pointed out only the shortage in West Bengal. I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister the shortage of money order forms in the Southern States, especially in Tamil Naidu. Actually, it is not the shortage of money order forms there. But only Hindi money order forms are available and the people are not able to use it. I would like to know whether the Minister will see that the money order forms in the regional languages or in the language that is being understood by the people in the region are made available. The shortage is artificial. I would like to know whether he will look into this and see that money order forms in Tamil and in English are made available.

SHRI BRIJ LAL VERMA: I will look into it. I will enquire about this and see how they get the forms.

SHRI K. GOPAL: Only Hindi forms are available.

SHRI BRIJ LAL VERMA: Generally, it is printed in Hindi and English. In some places where there is a

demand, they are printed in the regional languages also. I will see if anything can be done.

SHRI BAPUSAHEB PARULEKAR: I fully endorse the submissions made by my learned colleague, Mr. Saugata Roy. Even in Maharashtra, there is a scarcity of stamps and all other forms. I am informed that the printing of these forms in the Government press has been stopped for a considerably long time. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the printing of these things in the Government press has been purposely stopped so as to assist the private dealers who are selling these particular forms in the market.

SHRI BRIJ LAL VERMA: No, it is not so. We are printing these forms in four Government presses, viz., Nasik, Calcutta, Aligarh and Tichur. But when there is a scarcity, we have also allowed our regional officers to get them printed in the local press.

SHRI BIJOY SINGH NAHAR: The Minister has admitted that there is scarcity of these forms and he has also said that it will take one month to solve this problem. During that period of one month, what will the people do? Have you made any arrangements? Or, will they be asked not to write letters, not to send telegrams?

SHRI BRIJ LAL VERMA: I have made alternative arrangements also. As I have already said, it will be printed in the local press and stamps will be put thereon.

Canal connecting Brahmaputra with Ganga

***472. SHRI BEDABRATA BARUA:** Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposal for a canal connecting the Brahmaputra with the Ganga has been revived;