

**Recommendations of Press Council of India on diffusion of Ownership and Control of Newspapers**

327. SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Press Council of India have adopted a set of recommendations on diffusion of ownership and control of newspapers;

(b) whether those recommendations have been forwarded to Government for consideration and necessary action; and

(c) if so, the outlines of the recommendations made by the Press Council and the reaction of Government thereto ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI DHARAM BIR SINHA) : (a) and (b). It is understood that the Press Council is considering this matter.

(c) Does not arise.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : The Government announced its intention in the last year during the Budget Session to amend the Companies Act to give effect to what was recommended by the Press Council as far back as 1954. What is the reason that they have not been able to fulfil the assurance they have given on the floor of the House while trying to meet the requirements of the members on the Budget ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI I. K. GUJRAL) :

The hon. Member has mixed up the Press Council with the Press Commission. The question is about the Press Council . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : I meant Press Commission. am sorry.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL : do not know what he means because the intention is walways very pious. The difficulty is that

his question is about the Press Council and that we have replied to.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : Is it not a fact that a Committee of Ministers was then appointed at the end of last year to make firm proposals? In May this year, the Prime Minister, regretting the delay, assured the Parliament that the Committee was on the verge of concluding its labours. Eight months of discussion in the Committee of Ministers has led to a comprehensive Bill which is actually. . .

MR. SPEAKER : Are you asking a question ?

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : I am asking a question. What is the reason for the Government to postpone the Bill? Let the people not get the impression that the Government is pressurised by the press barons.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL : I think my hon. friend, when he drafted his supplementaries, forgot the main question. The main question pertains to the discussion on the Press Council itself. The supplementaries are about the process through which the Government is passing. All the same, I am trying to accommodate him.

I would like to repeat what said earlier, that the entire matter is under consideration of the Government and the broad intentions and commitments of the Government are known to this House . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU : am going by what the Prime Minister has kindly said on the floor of the House in May last and also last year the Information & Broadcasting Minister. Now, this Bill should have been enacted in this session. So, whatever he says we will view it with great suspicion. What is the reason for the Government for not bringing the Bill

for enactment in this session? We want to know specifically and categorically.

**SHRI J. K. GUJRAL :** The Government has made no commitment at any stage that the Bill would come in this session. The only thing I would like to repeat is that the Government is now seized of the matter and the Government stands by its commitment.

**SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU :** He has misled the House once again. It was there in Part II Bulletin which listed the Bills coming up for discussion in the session. On the top of that the hon. Minister says that the Government never said.

**MR. SPEAKER :** May be, but, not committed for this session.

**SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU :** It was in Part II Bulletin. I raised it in the House—you remember and he apologised. Today he takes a different stance. I understand that the big business is pressurising them and they are dilly-dallying with the whole issue.

**MR. SPEAKER :** This is Question-Hour. Please sit down after your question.

**SHRI I. K. GUJRAL :** I would like to make clear one thing. My hon. friend has made wild allegations. I can say with a great deal of assertion that neither any big business in this country nor my hon. friend will have any strength to pressurise the Government. The Government can stand on its own and its own policies.

**SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU :** All paper tigers.

**SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA :** Apart from the fact as my friend, Mr. Jyotirmoy Bosu, said and has correctly said, that the Bulletin for the Session did list this Bill among the other Bills which were put down for business—he may say that that is not a commitment, but at least we were led to believe

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that it will be one of the items of business for this session—apart from that, would like to know from him that in view of the fact that this Committee of Ministers did go in depth into this question as far as we know and as a result of their labours, it is said that some draft Bill has been prepared and the Committee included eminent lawyer Ministers also like Shri Gokhale and Shri Kumaramangalam, what prevents the Government from at least introducing the Bill and then let it go to a Select Committee where all the details and all that can be gone into? Why should it not be introduced?

**SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU :** After discussion.

**SHRI I. K. GUJRAL :** What my friend is saying is quite strange that the Government introduces Bills without finalising its own policy. The Government does not finalise its policy in the Select Committees. Whenever the Government makes a Bill or brings a Bill, then the Government stands by it. Only minor adjustments are made in the Select Committee.

The basic issue which my hon. friend might know is that the Committee of Ministers was appointed. The Ministers Committee did discuss. The Ministers' Committee did not discuss the final draft as it was given to us.

**SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA :** The hon. Minister was pleased to say that in some form this matter is being considered by the Press Council. Now, may I ask whether the Press Council is doing it on its own or on a reference from the Government? If it is on a reference from the Government, what are the points that have been referred to the Press Council?

**SHRI I. K. GUJRAL :** My hon. friend will recall that in the Press Council Act a specific clause has been laid down that

the Press Council shall examine the diffusion of newspapers ownership, etc. Therefore, it did not need any reference from the Government. The press Council is now studying it in terms of the particular clause in the law itself.

**SHRI MURASOLI MARAN :** Is it true that the Government is waiting or keeping the Bill in cold storage because the Government wants to wait until the judgment regarding the Newspaper Control Order is delivered ?

**SHRI I. K. GUJRAL :** When the Government decide finally as to what shape the Bill should take, naturally all the factors will be considered and naturally one of the factors will be the judgment of the Supreme Court. We cannot ignore that.

**SHRI SAMAR GUHA :** I want to know from the hon. Minister whether he is aware that although the progressive section of our people are for the anti-monopoly Bill, there is an apprehension in the minds of large sections of people that in trying to diffuse the ownership and control of the newspapers the Government is trying to indirectly control the newspapers themselves. In view of this apprehension may I know whether the views of the large section of the public, intellectuals and readers and others, will be taken into consideration before coming to final decision in regard to drafting of the Bill ?

**SHRI I. K. GUJRAL :** While drafting the Bill the broad spectrum of the public opinion will be kept in view and when it comes before the House, the hon. Members who represent public opinion may also be able to let us know about the public reaction. But may I also add that there need be no apprehension whatsoever so far as freedom of expression is concerned. This Government stands committed to freedom of Press.

**SHRI S. M. BANERJEE** *rose.*

**MR. SPEAKER :** Your leader has asked a question. Then I will come to you in the second round but not immediately.

**SHRI S. M. BANERJEE :** During discussion you go by Party. In Question-Hour also, should you go Partywise ?

**MR. SPEAKER :** Try to understand the substance of my reason. Once he has asked, I have to go to the other side.

**SHRI S. M. BANERJEE :** In that case, let the Prime Minister answer one question on their behalf, nobody else.

**SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU :** Whatever you are saying should apply to the Congress also. Then we will be happy. One question for each Party.

**SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH :** In view of the wide interest on this question, may I know how long it will take for the Government to finalise its policy ?

**SHRI I. K. GUJRAL :** So far as finalisation of policy is concerned, that is well known to my friend. The policy is finalised. The question is drafting and bringing a Bill. For that, I think, Sir, naturally it takes time. But cannot commit myself in terms of days and months as to how long it will take.

**SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA :** May I point out one thing. In reply to my question, the Minister said that Committee of Ministers did not determine the Government's policy and the policy has to be determined before the Bill is brought or given to the Select Committee. Now he says that the policy has already determined .....*(Interruptions)*

**SHRI I. K. GUJRAL :** I stand by what I said that the Ministers' Committee did not consider the final draft as sent to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. I did not talk about policy.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : Conversion of the Press Trust of India and other news agencies into a Corporation was delayed because they were trying to bring a legislation for supposed to be diffusion of ownership and control of newspapers. I would like to know as to why there is the delay, why conversion of the PTI into a public corporation is being delayed though there was a clear recommendation by the Press Council.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL : The Press Council made no such recommendation to us.

SHRI S.M. BANERJEE : It was the recommendation of the Press Commission that the PTI should be taken over and converted into a corporation. This House was told by Shrimati Nandini Satpathy when she was the I & B Minister that this was delayed because of this Bill. I want to know why the Bill is being delayed now.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL : The Press Commission did suggest and some steps were taken in the past in the light of the Press Commission's report also. We have also felt that some further action is needed and as part of this Bill we will deal with News Agencies also.

प्राचिनवासी क्षेत्रों में उद्योग स्थापित करने के लिये लाइसेंस जारी करना

328. श्री मूलचन्द्र डागा : क्या औद्योगिक विकास मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :  
(क) क्या पिछड़े हुए क्षेत्रों के औद्योगिक विकास के लिए लाइसेंस देने के बारे में हाल ही में कोई नया निर्णय लिया गया है; और यदि हाँ, तो उसकी मुख्य बातें क्या हैं;

(ख) वेब में उन पिछड़े हुए जिलों के नाम क्या हैं जहाँ प्राचिनवासी रहते हैं तथा जहाँ सरकारी तथा गैर सरकारी क्षेत्रों में उद्योगों की स्थापना की गई है;

(ग) क्या राजस्थान के प्राचिनवासी क्षेत्रों में कोई उद्योग स्थापित किया गया है; और

(घ) यदि नहीं, तो इसके क्या कारण हैं?

औद्योगिक विकास मंत्रालय में उप-मंत्री (श्री सिद्धेश्वर प्रसाद) : (क) से (घ) एक विवरण सभा पटल पर रखा जाता है।

विवरण

(क). पिछड़े क्षेत्रों से मिलने वाले प्रावेदन पत्रों को तकनीकी प्राचिक सम्भाव्यता और औद्योगिक लाइसेंस नीति की परिसीमा में प्राचिकता देने की सरकार की स्वीकृत नीति है।

(ख) से (घ). प्राचिनवासी प्राबादी वाले पिछड़े जिलों में स्थापित किये गये उद्योगों के संबंध में उपलब्ध जानकारी निम्न प्रकार है:—

जिले का नाम	उद्योग का नाम
उदयपुर	(1) सीमेंट का कारखाना (2) जिक स्वेल्टर
चित्तौर गढ़	सीमेंट का कारखाना, ग्रन्थ सीमेंट एकक की स्थापना होने वाली है।
सिरोही	*एक सीमेंट कारखाना खोला जाने वाला है।
डूंगरपुर	श्रीमों की बोनने बनाने और इस्कों के (कन्टेनर) सयल की स्थापना के लिये प्राव्यपत्र जारी किया गया है।

श्री मूलचन्द्र डागा : मेरा प्रश्न यह था कि जिन प्राचिनवासी इलाकों में प्राचिक और तकनीकी साधन उपलब्ध नहीं हैं क्या वहाँ पर कोई औद्योगिक विकास नहीं होगा क्योंकि प्राचिनवासी इलाकों में प्रकृति की देन के रूप में जो साधन उपलब्ध हैं उन की मह्यता से भी वहाँ पर इंडस्ट्रीय नहीं बानी जाती हैं। मंत्री महोदय ने धपने उत्तर में कहा कि जब तक प्राचिनवासी इलाकों में तकनीकी और प्राचिक साधन उपलब्ध नहीं होंगे तब तक उन का विकास नहीं होगा। मैं जानना चाहता