

LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

*Wednesday, March 30, 1988 (Chaitra 10,
1910 (Saka)*

*The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the
Clock*

[MR. SPEAKER *in the chair*]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[*English*]

National Debate on Poll Reforms

*511. SHRI DHARAM PAL SINGH
MALIK :

SHRI MANIK RAO HODLYA
GAVIT :

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal under the consideration of Government to Convene a National debate on poll reforms in the country; and

(b) if so, the time by which a debate is likely to be held and the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H. R. BHARDWAJ) : (a) No, Sir. There is no such proposal before the Government.

(b) Does not arise.

[*Translation*]

SHRI DHARAM PAL SINGH MALIK : Mr. Speaker, Sir, during the elections held in the past, particularly during the elections in Haryana, under the present electoral system, it has been seen that the complaints of booth capturing and bogus polling were reported in a very large number. Mr.

Speaker, Sir, in order to ensure free and fair polls and bring reforms in present electoral system, so as to make the system full proof, I have two suggestions to offer. Bungling is done at two stages *i.e.* either at the time of polling or at the time of counting. This bungling may be avoided by issuing the identity cards to the voters and the voting and counting may be done by machines. I would, therefore, like to know from the hon. Minister as to whether the Government propose to introduce electronic system of voting and issue identity cards to voters ?

SHRI H. R. BHARDWAJ : Mr. Speaker, Sir, so far as the voting machine is concerned, I stated in this House on earlier occasion also that the Government have taken a preliminary decision to introduce the voting machine in this country. As regards the question of identity cards, the Chief Election Commissioner has suggested that a multi purpose identity card should be issued to the voters in the country for the election purposes. It will be considered after discussing it with the State Governments.

SHRI DHARAM PAL SINGH MALIK : No one can deny the role of money power in the present electoral system. I would like to know from the hon. Minister that in order to eliminate the role of money powers and ensure fair elections whether any proposal of public financing of elections is under consideration of the Government under which at least the candidates of the registered national parties be provided funds in a limited quantity and no money other than provided by the Government be allowed to be spent in the elections or whether the Government want to introduce some other system by which the role of the money power could be minimised ?

There has been so many election offences in India but I think that till today not even a single person has been convicted for these offences. I would like to know

whether any person has been convicted for the offences with regard to State Assembly or Parliament's elections ?

[English]

SHRI H. R. BHARDWAJ : So far as the public financing of election is concerned we have mentioned that there is no proposal before the Government, at present. But the Election Commission has suggested some of the provisions to be made regarding petrol coupons, stationery and some poster papers, etc. So this concrete proposal for public financing of election is not before the Government but a debate is going on this issue as to what extent the public financing of election can be undertaken in our country.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY : In view of what happened in Tripura that. . .
(Interruptions)

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : He is referring to your victory. Why are you disturbing him ?

MR. SPEAKER : He lost powers. That is what happened.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY : Just three days before the election, the Army was unilaterally induced to influence the voters there. The failure of the Election Commission to stop the Central Government from subverting the election process—whether the Government will agree to our demand that there should be a debate on the Poll Reforms in this House immediately ?

SHRI H. R. BHARDWAJ : So far as the question of a debate in the House is concerned, you are the main custodian of the rights of this House and it is entirely for the Chair to decide when there should be a debate.

But so far as reforms are concerned, I have expressed very clearly that the Government is for the Reforms. We are debating this issue within our own party and I doubt whether their party is discussing it at all.

So far as our party is concerned . . .
(Interruptions)

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY : In your party there is no election. What are you discussing in your party ?

SHRI H. R. BHARDWAJ : So far as the fairness of election is concerned and the role of their party is concerned, I leave it to their judgement how far they are fair in holding elections. Recently one or two Ministers of the West Bengal. Ministry spoke about rigging in West Bengal. So you try to correct your own self.

MR. SPEAKER : Now let us see what Mahatmaji has to say.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE : Lok Sabha is the highest pillar and a supreme body of democracy. So I would like to appeal to you, please protect our democratic rights.

I would like to ask from our hon. Minister, whether he is aware that in the last Election of West Bengal, four thousand candidates were not allowed to contest the elections and three Cabinet Ministers have openly alleged that their Leader had rigged the election. So, I want to know whether the Minister will consider having a commission of inquiry to find out the facts and take necessary steps, so that this does not happen in future. (Interruptions)

SHRI H. R. BHARDWAJ : It is a very serious matter, that in West Bengal, two Ministers of the Cabinet of Mr. Jyoti Bosu levelled serious allegations of rigging of elections; but, unfortunately, they were panchayat elections, and we could not interfere there. But that matter is a very serious matter, and I have noted the submission of the Member; and we will see how we can proceed. (Interruptions)

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : What happened in Gujarat in the recent Rajya Sabha elections ? (Interruptions)

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE : There was nothing.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : Why did he reply like that ? (Interruptions)

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Sir, you have not given a ruling. The question under discussion is about an electoral

matter which lies within the jurisdiction of the Election Commission.

MR. SPEAKER : The question is only about electoral reforms.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : He has remarked about the West Bengal panchayat elections.

MR. SPEAKER : They are under the purview . . .

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV) : Why did he speak about Tripura ? (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : There is no question. .

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : Why was Army deployed ?

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE : Why did he speak about Tripura ?

MR. SPEAKER : Panchayat elections are not within the purview of the Election Commission.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : They are within the purview of the State Government. (*Interruptions*) Sir, is it your ruling that whatever is within the State Government can be discussed here ? (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : Nothing doing.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Sir, we want a clarification. It is a procedural point arising here. Are we allowed to raise the questions which are within the jurisdiction of the State Governments ? (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : Professor Dandavate, those are within the purview of the State Government, and not problems as far as the Election Commission is concerned.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : I am talking about the panchayat elections.

MR. SPEAKER : That is what I am saying.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : What are you doing ? I am talking to one man . . . The State Government is responsible for panchayat elections; and Election Commission has nothing to do with those elections. That is what I am saying.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY : Then his reply should be expunged. (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : There is no question. Please do not do this.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : When we raise that issue, you do not allow us. (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : He said it was within the purview of the State Government. There is nothing illegal about that . . . It concerns the State Government, and not the Election Commission.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY : How can he comment ? (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : Please sit down.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY : Are you expunging it ?

MR. SPEAKER : No; I am not expunging it. There is nothing; no comment. It is not a comment. There is no adverse comment on it.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : It is a matter within the jurisdiction of the State Government.

MR. SPEAKER : No question. He has not done anything against that. He has only said that this is under the purview of the State Government.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : He made remarks, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER : No remarks. He referred to certain remarks of the Ministers. But he has not said anything from his side.

(*Interruptions*)

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Anyway, you go through the record, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER : I will see.

PROF. K. K. TEWARY : It is an old policy of the Opposition to run with the hare and hunt with the hound. Under the existing electoral system, when they win the elections they say it is the victory of democratic forces, but when they lose the elections, they blame the electoral system. And it is through this system that we have

sustained democracy in this country. In this background, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether it has come to his notice that in the recently-concluded Rajya Sabha elections, a person with very dubious international connections has been made a voter from a State to which he does not belong, and that gross irregularities have been committed in enlisting him as a voter . . .

MR. SPEAKER : That can be taken to the court.

PROF. K. K. TEWARY : In this process, the Congress (I) members of the Assembly have been, . . . (Interruptions)

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Against** they should not cast any aspersions. (Interruptions) Do not cast any aspersion on**; he has got the right to get enrolled from Gujarat. (Interruptions)

PROF. K. K. TEWARY : It concerns MLAs in Karnataka. I would like to know.. (Interruptions) The Congress (I) MLAs were sought to be bribed in order to ensure the entry of a CIA agent in Parliament. (Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER : I cannot allow. No nothing. Not allowed.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : He refers to**. He has the right to get enrolled from Gujarat.

PROF. K. K. TEWARY : The BJP has also alleged that money was offered to their MLAs. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether it has come to his notice and what action is being taken by the government in this regard? (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : No individual cases.

PROF. K. K. TEWARY : Please respond. This is a fact that an attempt has been made to bribe MLAs.

MR. SPEAKER : No, no, this has to be challenged in a court of law.

PROF. K. K. TEWARY : That has been done. But the government should also

have some information about it. (Interruptions)

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : He is casting aspersion on the Minister. (Interruptions) I want to defend the Minister. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Order please ! I am on my legs.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Panika, why can't you sit down ? We have cases like this. Even the late Prime Minister was involved in that case. So, the similar case can be taken to the court again if anybody has got anything. The courts are there. I am not the proper authority here to tackle this problem.

(Interruptions)

PROF. K. K. TEWARY : But the government should have some information. (Interruptions)

PROF. N. G. RANGA : Why don't you allow him to put a question? (Interruptions)

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : I am supporting him. He is casting aspersion on **who was enrolled in Gujarat and got elected. He should not do that. (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : No name should be mentioned here.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Have you got to say anything ?

SHRI H. R. BHARDWAJ : So far as Government is concerned, we have read some newspaper report. But after we examine it if any irregularity is found, there are methods by which it can be challenged in a court of law and prosecute the gentleman, if necessary.

[Translation]

SHRI SHRIPATI MISHRA : Sir, keeping this fact in view that casteism,

money and muscle powers are now playing a major role in the elections, would the Government consider to amend the election laws in such a manner so that not an individual but the parties contest the elections on their symbols and elect their representatives ?

SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ : The Government have at present no such proposal.

[English]

Grant to Various States/UTs

*512 SHRI VIRDHI CHANDER JAIN : Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state :

(a) the amount of assistance given to the State and Union Territories during the last three years in the form of grant or loan State-wise;

(b) the percentage of assistance given to Rajasthan as compared to other States;

(c) if the percentage of assistance given to Rajasthan is relatively less thereasons therefore; and

(d) the steps being taken to increase the assistance to Rajasthan ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI BIREN SINGH ENGTI) : (a) A statement is given below giving the required information.

(b) As compared to other non-special category States the amount allocated to Rajasthan accounts for 5.92 per cent of the total allocation.

(c) and (d). The percentage share of Rajasthan in the total assistance allocated amongst 14 non-special category States is higher than that of 6 States but lower than that of 7 States. The allocation made to each State is based on its respective share in the total allocation for the Seventh Plan determined under the modified Gadgil Formula as approved by the National Development Council. Besides, additional assistance linked to externally aided projects have been allocated to each State taking into account the progress of disbursement of aid for the concerned projects. Hence, the question of taking steps to increase the assistance to Rajasthan or any other State does not arise.

Statement

	1985-86 to 1987-88 (Three Years)			Pattern of Grant/Loan assistance
	Normal Central Assistance	Assistance for externally aided projects	Total Central assistance	
	1	2	3	4
(A) States				
I. Special Category States				
1. Assam	1398.64	6.15	1404.79	} Grants : 30% Loans : 70% For the Hill areas of Assam and Ladakh Sub-Plan of J and K assistance is given in the form of grants : 90% Loan : 10%
2. Jammu and Kashmir	1096.30	10.87	1107.17	