

GS-KR/12.00/1N

(श्री सभापति पीठासीन हुए)

प्रश्न संख्या 46

महंत शम्भुप्रसादजी तुंदिया: सभापति महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय मंत्री जी से यह पूछना चाहता हूँ कि अगर सरकार की ओर से निशुल्क पार्किंग की कोई व्यवस्था नहीं की गई है और इसके संदर्भ में कोई विचाराधीन बात भी नहीं है, तो फिर पार्किंग की जो व्यवस्था है, उससे कितनी इन्कम होती है और उस इन्कम का उपयोग यात्रियों की सुख-सुविधा के लिए किस तरह से किया जाता है।

सर, मेरा दूसरा प्रश्न यह है कि कुछ दिनों पहले मैं दिल्ली एयरपोर्ट से अहमदाबाद के लिए जा रहा था। शाम का समय हो गया था और मेरी प्रार्थना का टाइम हो गया था, तो मैंने वहाँ पर प्रार्थना कक्ष के लिए पूछा। किसी ने मुझे बताया कि यात्रियों के लिए जो प्रार्थना कक्ष है, वह उस तरफ है। मैंने वहाँ जाकर देखा कि उसमें कुछ विशेष एक ही धर्म के संबंध में उल्लेखित निशान प्रार्थना कक्ष में थे और उसमें हरे रंग के सब निशान दिखाए गए थे और उस प्रार्थना कक्ष में कुछ चिह्न दिखाए गए थे, जो किसी एक सम्प्रदाय के या एक धर्म के थे। मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि यात्रियों की सुख-सुविधा के लिए जो व्यवस्था की गई है, उसमें सभी धर्मों का परिपालन हो, उस तरह के चिह्न और उस तरह के प्रार्थना कक्ष की व्यवस्था है क्या?

श्री जयंत सिन्हा: माननीय सभापति जी, माननीय सदस्य ने पूछा है कि जो सार्वजनिक सुविधाओं का हम लोग प्रावधान कर रहे हैं, जिसमें से एक पार्किंग फैसिलिटी है, वह

प्रश्न संख्या 46 (क्रमागत)

निःशुल्क दी जा सकती है या नहीं। जैसे रेलवे स्टेशनों पर है, मेट्रो स्टेशनों पर है और भी म्युनिसिपल पार्किंग स्थान हैं, वहां कहीं पर भी पार्किंग निःशुल्क नहीं है और इस कारण से हमारे एयरपोर्ट्स पर भी नहीं है। हमारा प्रयत्न यही है कि जो हमारे एयरपोर्ट्स हैं, वहां पर हम लोगों का प्रयत्न यही है कि हम नॉन एयरोनॉटिकल रेवेन्यूज को बढ़ाने का प्रयत्न करें। हमारी कोशिश यही है कि पार्किंग फैसिलिटीज, दुकानें, retail establishments इन सब के द्वारा नॉन एयरोनॉटिकल रेवेन्यूज को हम 35 परसेंट तक लाएं। जैसा कि माननीय सदस्य ने पूछा था कि अगर पार्किंग फैसिलिटीज निःशुल्क नहीं हैं, तो इससे कमाई कितनी हो रही है। मैं इसके बारे में जो आंकड़े हैं, वे देना चाहता हूं। जो एयरपोर्ट अथॉरिटी ऑफ इंडिया के एयरपोर्ट्स हैं, वहां पिछले साल 83.92 करोड़ रुपये हम लोगों को पार्किंग फैसिलिटीज से रेवेन्यू मिला और जो हमारे पांच प्राइवेट एयरपोर्ट हैं, वहां हम लोगों को 144.58 करोड़ रुपये पार्किंग फैसिलिटीज से रेवेन्यू मिला है। ये जो रेवेन्यूज आ रहे हैं, इनके द्वारा जो एयरपोर्ट चार्जेंज हैं, उनको हम लोग कम कर रहे हैं और कई सारी सुविधाएं हैं, जो पार्किंग में हम लोग देना चाहते हैं कि आदमी आराम से पार्किंग में गाड़ी पार्क करे और आराम से वहां से exit भी कर पाए। साथ ही साथ जो डिजिटल पेमेंट्स हैं, उनका बंदोबस्त हो और सिक्योरिटी का बंदोबस्त हो। इन व्यवस्थाओं के लिए ये पार्किंग चार्जेंज लागू किए जाते हैं।

प्रश्न संख्या 46 (क्रमागत)

माननीय सदस्य ने एक और प्रश्न पूछा था कि जो prayer rooms हैं या जो अन्य फैसिलिटीज़ worship के लिए दी जाती हैं, वे एयरपोर्ट्स में किस तरीके से दी जाती हैं? जो निर्देश हमारी तरफ से, हमारे मंत्रालय की तरफ से गया है कि इसका कोई साम्प्रदायिक रंग न हो, एक quiet room बनाया जाए, जहां सब धर्म के लोग जा सकें और जो उनको प्रार्थना करनी हो, उसे वे वहां पर करें, यह हमारी तरफ से निर्देश गया है।

श्री सभापति: दूसरा प्रश्न।

महंत शम्भुप्रसादजी तुंदिया: सर, दूसरा प्रश्न नहीं पूछना है।

श्री सभापति: ठीक है। श्री हुसैन दलवई।

श्री हुसैन दलवई: सर, मैं बताना चाहता हूं कि unanimously resolution pass किया गया था मुम्बई एयरपोर्ट को छत्रपति शिवाजी महाराज का नाम देने के बारे में, लेकिन वहां पर जो नाम दिया गया है, वह छत्रपति शिवाजी इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट दिया गया है। मेरे ख्याल से यह गलत है, क्योंकि वे छत्रपति शिवाजी महाराज के नाम से पहचाने जाते हैं। मुम्बई एयरपोर्ट का नाम छत्रपति शिवाजी महाराज इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट होना चाहिए, इसके बारे में आपका क्या कहना है?

दूसरी बात यह है कि रीजनल कनेक्टिविटी के बारे में बहुत बोला जाता है, लेकिन कोल्हापुर, शोलापुर में जहां रीजनल कनेक्टिविटी थी, वह भी बंद कर दी गई।

श्री सभापति: आप एक सवाल ही पूछिए।

प्रश्न संख्या 46 (क्रमागत)

श्री हुसैन दलवाई: रत्नागिरि की कनेक्टिविटी का हाल क्या है?

श्री जयंत सिन्हा: सर, एयरपोर्ट की नेमिंग के लिए एक पूरा नियम बना हुआ है और जो सुझाव आते हैं, वे विधान सभा से आते हैं कि किस प्रकार से किसी एयरपोर्ट की नेमिंग की जाए। जब विधान सभा से सुझाव आएगा, तब केन्द्र सरकार उस पर चिंता करेगी। जो भी सुझाव विधान सभा से आता है, उस पर हम लोग जरूर ध्यान देते हैं।

(HMS/10 पर जारी)

HMS-KS/12.05/10

श्री जयंत सिन्हा (क्रमागत) : आपने रीजनल कनेक्टिविटी के बारे में भी पूछा है, उस की बिडिंग की प्रक्रिया कल समाप्त हुई है और हम लोग अगले कुछ दिनों में इस की घोषणा करेंगे कि कौन-कौनसे ऐसे एयरपोर्ट्स हैं, जिन्हें रीजनल कनेक्टिविटी स्कीम के तहत जोड़ा गया है और सब आंकड़े आपके सामने हम अवश्य पेश करेंगे।

श्री लाल सिंह वडोदिया : माननीय सभापति जी, मैं आपके माध्यम से मंत्री जी से पूछना चाहता हूँ कि without paying anything यात्रियों को कौन-कौनसी सुविधाएं एयरपोर्ट्स पर दी जाती हैं? अगर हमारे पास economical ticket है, तो चाय-कॉफी के लिए भी पैसे देने पड़ते हैं, तो सरकार without paying anything और क्या-क्या सुविधाएं यात्रियों को देना चाहती है?

MR. CHAIRMAN: One minute, please. The question is on parking, not on facilities. अगर आप जवाब देना चाहते हैं, तो दे दीजिए।

प्रश्न संख्या 46 (क्रमागत)

श्री जयंत सिन्हा : माननीय सभापति जी, मैं माननीय सदस्य को आश्वासन देना चाहता हूँ कि हमारी यही कोशिश है कि हम जो भी विमान सेवा का प्रावधान कर रहे हैं, उसमें हमारा यह लक्ष्य है कि हम उसे जितना सस्ता और सुरक्षित बना सकें, बनाएं। अब आपको मालूम है कि चाहे एयरपोर्ट हो, विमानन सर्विस हो या और भी कोई सार्वजनिक सर्विस हो, उसमें जो कॉस्ट या भाड़ा है, वह तो देना ही पड़ेगा, नहीं तो हम सुरक्षित और सही तरीके की सेवा नहीं दे पाएंगे। इसलिए हम सेवाओं की सही कॉस्ट के आधार पर सही फीस कर रहे हैं और जो सुविधाएं निःशुल्क दे सकते हैं, वे भी हम जरूर दे रहे हैं।

श्री नजीर अहमद लवाय : सर, जम्मू-कश्मीर में जब भी बर्फबारी होती है, तो हमारा फेयर बढ़ जाता है। उस समय 3 हजार की टिकट 30 हजार में मिलती है। सर, आप दुनिया के किसी कोने में 40-50 हजार में जा सकते हैं, लेकिन जम्मू से श्रीनगर और श्रीनगर से जम्मू के लिए हमें 30 हजार रुपए देने पड़ते हैं। मैं मंत्री जी से पूछना चाहता हूँ कि ये फेयर कब कम होंगे और आप इस के लिए कौनसे ठोस कदम उठाने जा रहे हैं?

جناب نذیر احمد لوائے : سر، جموں و کشمیر میں جب بھی برف باری ہوتی ہے، تو ہمارا فئیر بڑھ جاتا ہے۔ اس وقت تین ہزار کی ٹکٹ تیس ہزار میں ملتی ہے۔ سر، آپ دنیا کے کسی کونے میں چالیس پچاس ہزار میں جاسکتے ہیں، لیکن جموں سے سری نگر اور سری نگر سے جموں کے لیے ہمیں تیس ہزار روپے دینے پڑتے ہیں۔ میں منتری جی سے پوچھنا چاہتا ہوں کہ یہ فئیر کب کم ہونگے اور آپ اس کے لیے کون سے ٹھوس قدم اٹھانے جا رہے ہیں؟

प्रश्न संख्या 46 (क्रमागत)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Not related to the question. Anyway!

श्री जयंत सिन्हा : माननीय सभापति जी, हम लोगों का एयरलाइंस का मार्केट एक मार्केट इकोनॉमी के आधार पर चलता है और वहां बहुत competition है और चाहे हम उसे हमारे मंत्रालय के नज़रिए से देखें या Competitive Commission of India के नज़रिए से देखें, हमारी जो उस पर विजिलेंस है, उसमें हम पूरे तरीके से उसका अध्ययन करते हैं, जिसमें कि anti-competitive behaviour न हो। सर, Anti-competitive behaviour में प्राइसिंग में चाहे वह predatory pricing हो या price gouging हो, कई तरीकों से इस का अध्ययन किया जाता है, इस की जांच और analysis किया जाता है। सर, हम लोगों को जो आंकड़े मिल रहे हैं और जो बात analysis से पता चल रही है, जो भी प्राइसिंग अभी एयरलाइंस मार्केट में सेट हो रही हैं, वे competitive तरीके से सेट हो रही हैं और आज तक हम लोगों को आंकड़ों के analysis के आधार पर कोई ऐसा violation नजर नहीं आया है, जिसे हम anti-competitive behavior कह सकें।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Question No. 47.

(Ends)

प्रश्न संख्या 47

श्री हरिवंश : सभापति जी, मैंने माननीय मंत्री जी का उत्तर पढ़ा। मैं खेद के साथ कहना चाहूंगा कि अति-संवेदनशील मुद्दे पर सरकार का यह routine उत्तर है। मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय स्वास्थ्य, परिवार और कल्याण मंत्री जी को याद दिलाना चाहूंगा कि हाल ही में ओडिशा के भुवनेश्वर में आग की वजह से 22 लोग अस्पताल में असमय मरे और 120 घायल हुए। महोदय, 5 वर्ष पहले कोलकाता के एक अस्पताल में एक ऐसी ही घटना में 90 लोग मरे। ओडिशा की घटना के बाद कर्नाटक सरकार ने Fire and Emergency Department से कर्नाटक के सभी अस्पतालों को फायर सेफ्टी ऑडिट कराने का आदेश दिया। यह भी खबर आयी कि नोएडा स्थित Disaster Management Cell ने नोएडा और यमुना एक्सप्रेस वे पर स्थित सभी अस्पतालों व क्लिनिकों को दो माह के अंदर थर्ड पार्टी से ऑडिट कराने की एक एडवायज़री दी है। हमारा सवाल है कि क्या केन्द्र सरकार बीमार, असहाय, मरीजों व अस्पतालों में भर्ती अशक्त लोगों को ऐसी दुर्घटनाओं से बचाने के लिए स्वतंत्र रूप से थर्ड पार्टी से सेफ्टी ऑडिट के साथ-साथ ऐसी चीजों को रोकने के लिए और क्या कदम उठा रही है और क्या सख्त कार्यवाही के प्रावधान हो सकते हैं?

श्री फगन सिंह कुलस्ते : सभापति महोदय, माननीय सदस्य ने स्पष्ट रूप से भुवनेश्वर और कोलकाता के बारे में उल्लेख किया है। सर, पिछले दिनों यह दुःखद घटना हुई थी और इस के बारे में जैसे ही हमें सूचना मिली, मुझे कहते हुए प्रसन्नता है कि 17.10.2016 को साढ़े सात बजे यह घटना हुई। (1 पी/एएससी पर जारी)

ASC-RSS /12.10/1P

प्रश्न संख्या 47 (क्रमागत)

श्री फग्गन सिंह कुलस्ते (क्रमागत) : उस घटना के तत्काल बाद सारी व्यवस्था राज्य सरकार के माध्यम से की गई और हमारे यहां से सीधे उनको डॉयरेक्शन्स दिए गए। उसकी क्षमता लगभग एक हजार beds की है। उस समय लगभग 600 मरीज वहां पर भर्ती थे और जो घटना की स्थिति थी, उसमें हमारी 19 सरकारी एम्बुलेंसेज उसी समय वहां भेजी गईं। इसके साथ ही 138 मरीजों को विभिन्न निजी अस्पतालों में तथा सरकारी अस्पतालों में भर्ती कराया गया। जहां तक उनकी सुविधाओं का सवाल है, तो राज्य सरकार की ओर से उस पर त्वरित कार्रवाई करने के लिए एक निर्देश जारी किया गया। उस घटना में लगभग 26 लोगों की मृत्यु हुई थी। उसमें मृतक परिवारों को लगभग पांच-पांच लाख रुपए की अनुगृहीत राशि देने का फैसला हुआ। जो norms हैं, उनके अनुसार भारत सरकार के अंदर यह निर्णय हुआ और स्वास्थ्य मंत्रालय ने राज्य सरकार को डॉयरेक्शन्स दिए, यहां से पत्र जारी किए गए। मंत्री जी ने स्वयं इस बारे में एक बैठक बुलाई और जो norms बनाए गए हैं, उनके अनुसार जहां-जहां अग्निशामक उपकरण नहीं लगे हैं, उनको लगाने के लिए सभी राज्य सरकारों को निर्देश जारी किए।

श्री हरिवंश : सभापति जी, मेरा सवाल यह है कि ऐसी घटना दोबारा न हो, हम इसके लिए क्या सख्त कदम उठाएं? घटना होने के बाद आप एडवाइज़री देते हैं या डॉयरेक्शन्स देते हैं, तो उसके बारे में तो वह रूटीन अफेयर है। मैं आप से यह कहना

प्रश्न संख्या 47 (क्रमागत)

चाहूंगा कि अस्पतालों में लाचार, बीमार और मानसिक रूप से परेशान लोग जाते हैं। वे लोग वहां पर सुरक्षित माहौल में रहें, यह फैसला करना सरकार का धर्म और बुनियादी फर्ज है। भारत में खुद अस्पतालों के लिए नेशनल डिजास्टर मैनेजमेंट के लिए गाइडलाइन्स हैं, लेकिन उनका कितना पालन होता है, मुझे मालूम नहीं है।

श्री सभापति : थैंक यू ।

श्री हरिवंश : मैं आपको पुनः याद दिलाना चाहूंगा कि हम दुनिया के विकसित देशों की बात करते हैं, लेकिन उन देशों में चीजों की third party से audit कराई जाती है। हमारे यहां क्यों नहीं क्लिनिकल गवर्नेन्स के लिए हम इस तरह की बेहतर कानूनी व्यवस्था कर सकते हैं, जो समय के तहत ऐसी स्थिति पैदा करे कि इस तरह की घटनाएं न हों।

श्री फगन सिंह कुलस्ते : सभापति महोदय, अभी भारत सरकार से संबंधित जितने हॉस्पिटल्स हैं, जो हमारे 23 अस्पताल हैं, उनमें से हमने 11 अस्पतालों को सीधे NOC दिए, बाकी के लिए कार्रवाई हो रही है। जहां तक राज्य सरकारों का मामला है, उनको सीधे इसके निर्देश जारी किए हैं, चूंकि वह राज्य का मामला है, वे सारे जितने राज्य सरकार के अंडर आते हैं, राज्य सरकार को उनको देखना पड़ता है। जहां तक इन प्रावधानों का सवाल है, हमारे पास अभी तक जितने भी अभ्यावेदन आए हैं, उन पर कार्रवाई चल रही है और हम बहुत जल्दी इसके बारे में पूरे देश में इस प्रकार की व्यवस्था लागू करने जा रहे हैं।

प्रश्न संख्या 47 (क्रमागत)

श्री प्रेम चन्द गुप्ता : सभापति महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय मंत्री जी से यह कहना चाहूंगा कि घटना होने के बाद आपने जो preventive steps लिए हैं और वहां दमकल गई या और कुछ गया, इसके लिए क्यों न एक ऐसी गाइडलाइन बनाई जाए, ताकि इस तरह की घटनाएं न हों। अगर आप दिल्ली के अस्पतालों में भी जाएंगे, तो पाएंगे कि बेसमेंट में ICU बने हुए हैं। घरों में नर्सिंग होम बनाकर, बेसमेंट में मरीजों को ट्रीट किया जाता है। वहां पर ऑक्सीजन या फायर के केस में सेफ्टी का कोई प्रावधान नहीं है, तो क्यों न ऐसे norms सख्ती से इम्प्लिमेंट किए जाएं, ताकि इस तरह की घटनाएं न हों? घटना होने के बाद आपने पांच लाख रुपए दिए या दस लाख रुपए दिए, इससे जिंदगी तो वापस नहीं आएगी। इसलिए आप इसके ऊपर कोई सख्त से सख्त कानून बनाने के बारे में कोई विचार कर रहे हैं? यदि नहीं कर रहे हैं, तो क्यों नहीं कर रहे हैं, यदि नहीं कर रहे हैं? तो इसको करिए।

श्री फगन सिंह कुलस्ते : सभापति जी, जैसा मैंने कहा है कि हमारे यहां 11 अस्पताल हैं, जिनके लिए हमने सीधे राज्य सरकारों से यह कहा है और हमारे यहां भी जितने हॉस्पिटल्स हैं, उनके लिए भी कहा है कि जितने भी अस्पताल हैं, उनके प्रबंधन को भी कहा है कि इन सारे नियमों का पालन होना चाहिए। अग्निशामक, बिल्डिंग और उनकी कंस्ट्रक्शन, वायरिंग आदि का मामला है, जैसा कि मैंने अभी कहा है कि यदि पूरा पढ़ूंगा तो समय लगेगा, परन्तु एक से लेकर जो हमारे 11 फार्म्स हैं, उनको पूरे करने का दिशा-निर्देश जारी किया है।

प्रश्न संख्या 47 (क्रमागत)

डा. सत्यनारायण जटिया : माननीय सभापति जी, प्रश्न सीधा है और अस्पतालों की, क्लिनिकों की सुरक्षा के संबंध में है। अब यह सुरक्षा अग्नि से हो, चाहे बरसात से हो, चाहे प्रसूति गृह में बच्चों की चोरी से संबंधित हो, ऐसे जो सभी उपचार के केन्द्र हैं, उन उपचार के केन्द्रों को मान्यता देने से पहले उनमें ये सुविधाएं बनाकर रखी हैं या नहीं, इसकी जांच करने का और अभी जो अस्पताल और उपचार के केन्द्र बने हुए हैं, उनमें ये उपलब्ध हो जाएं, इसको सुनिश्चित करने के क्या उपाय किए जाएंगे?

(10 1/LP पर आगे)

LP-KGG/12.15/1q

श्री फगन सिंह कुलस्ते : सभापति जी, जैसा मैंने कहा है कि भविष्य में इस प्रकार के जितने भी हॉस्पिटल्स खोले जाएंगे, चाहे वे सरकार के हों या प्राइवेट सेक्टर में हों, उनके जो नॉर्म्स हैं, उन नॉर्म्स का विधिवत पालन करने के बाद ही उनकी परमिशन की बात आएगी। हम इस पर सख्ती से ध्यान रख रहे हैं कि उसका कड़ाई से पालन किया जाए। इसके बाद ही आगे की कार्यवाही शुरू हो, हमने इस प्रकार का एक आदेश भी जारी किया हुआ है।

श्रीमती विप्लव ठाकुर : सभापति जी, मैं माननीय मंत्री जी को बताना चाहती हूं कि उन्होंने कहा है कि हमने ये 13 रूल्स बनाए हैं। मैं मंत्री जी से जानना चाहती हूं कि यह जो आग लगी है, यह किस वजह से लगी है और क्या इसकी इंक्वायरी की रिपोर्ट आई है?

प्रश्न संख्या 47 (क्रमागत)

दूसरी बात यह है कि जहाँ पर ये इतनी पुरानी-पुरानी बिल्डिंग्स हो गई हैं, क्या उनके बारे में भी कोई दिशा-निर्देश दिए जा रहे हैं? किसी भी हॉस्पिटल के लिए जब कोई बिल्डिंग बनती है, चाहे वह स्टेट का सब्जेक्ट हो, फिर भी आपको ऐसे प्रावधान करने चाहिए, ऐसा कानून बनाना चाहिए कि वहाँ पर विशेषकर आग न लगे, इसके लिए प्रबंध होने चाहिए। मैं यह जानना चाहती हूँ कि उस इंक्वायरी में क्या आया है?

श्री फगन सिंह कुलस्ते : सभापति जी, जैसे ही घटना की जानकारी मिली, उसी समय वहाँ पर एक जाँच कमेटी बिठाई गई। उसकी सारी रिपोर्ट्स आई हैं। अगर आप उन रिपोर्ट्स को देखेंगे तो यह निश्चित है कि हम सुरक्षा की दृष्टि से जो-जो प्रावधान कर सकते थे, लोगों को जिन-जिन स्थानों पर भेजा जा सकता था, जहाँ-जहाँ उनको शिफ्ट किया जा सकता था, हमने पूरी गंभीरता के साथ उस पर कार्यवाही की है। मैं यह कह सकता हूँ कि भविष्य में इस प्रकार की घटनाएँ न हों, हम इस पर कार्यवाही करने के बारे में विचार कर रहे हैं और हमने इसीलिए ये डायरेक्शन्स दी हैं।

श्रीमती विप्लव ठाकुर : सभापति जी, मंत्री जी ने रिपोर्ट के बारे में तो कुछ बताया ही नहीं है कि क्या रिपोर्ट आई है।

(समाप्त)

Q.No. 48

SHRI SHANTARAM NAIK: Sir, on 8th November, at 8 p.m., the Prime Minister assumed himself the role of the Finance Minister. कुछ क्षण के लिए फायनेंस मिनिस्टर को हटा दिया गया।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please ask your supplementary.

SHRI SHANTARAM NAIK: I am giving a background, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No; it is not necessary.

SHRI SHANTARAM NAIK: For some time, he was removed as the Finance Minister and...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please ask your supplementary.

SHRI SHANTARAM NAIK: The Prime Minister came on television and withdrew the notes in the denomination of Rs.500 and Rs.1,000. We expected the Prime Minister to come, on 16th November, the first day when the Rajya Sabha met, and explain to us as to why he did take that action and in what circumstances he took that decision, etc., etc. A hundred people died; he didn't inform us, subsequently.

SHRI ANANDA BHASKAR RAPOLU: It is 140, on record.

Q.No.48 (Contd)

SHRI SHANTARAM NAIK: The point is, even a condolence resolution was not moved by the Government. Even we were not permitted to move a condolence resolution.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is the question?

SHRI SHANTARAM NAIK: I am putting my question. We would like to know now as to how many non-official members are on the RBI Board; out of which the number of officials who were present; and the number of existing members.

MR. CHAIRMAN: One question, please.

SHRI SHANTARAM NAIK: Sir, this is one combined, consolidated question.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Sir, there is a total of 10 members currently on the Board of the RBI. There are vacancies on the Board of the RBI. The appointment process to fill those vacancies is in a fairly advanced stage. Those are likely to be filled up very soon.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The second question, please.

SHRI SHANTARAM NAIK: You have given the figure of eight. I don't know whether your figures are correct. I asked about the non-official members.

Q.No.48 (Contd)

Anyway, my question is: Has any analysis of the impact of demonetization been done by the Government, officially? If so, how many people from the organized sectors, the non-organised sectors and private companies have been dismissed, laid off or retrenched? I want the figures, as they are.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Sir, the overall impact is assessed by the Government from time to time. During the process, when the remonetization was at a fast pace, steps were being taken by the Government to make sure that the hardship caused to the people is the least.

(Contd. by KLS/1R)

KLS/KLG/1R-12.20

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY (CONTD): That is why a series of steps used to be announced, including relaxation in terms of dealing with old currency at sometime, so that some of the sectors don't suffer at all. The Government has been making an analysis and the Government is conscious of the fact that there are in the medium term and long term several advantages in terms of expansion of the formal sector of the economy itself. This will lead to larger digitization; this will lead to curbing of black money and crime money

Q.No.48 (Contd)

transactions; and this will lead to larger revenue coming into the coffers of the Government. ... (Interruptions)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: If you are not satisfied with the answer, you know the procedure. ... (Interruptions)...

SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY: Sir, as per the provisions of the Section 26, Sub-section 2 of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934, the Government on the recommendation of the central bank may declare any currency of any denomination of any series not to be legal tender. In the light of this provision, my question is whether the horse was before the cart. That is to say whether the RBI sent the recommendation on its own or the RBI was directed by the Government to send the recommendation. This is my question.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Sir, I may in this regard tell the hon. Member that the formal resolution of the RBI Central Board was passed on the 8th of November and conveyed to the Government whereby the matter went before the Council of Ministers which took the final decision. But I can also tell the hon. Member that consultations at a very senior level with the RBI on this issue had started way back in the month of February 2016 itself. The

Q.No.48 (Contd)

RBI Board in the month of May 2016, as a part of these consultations, had decided to approve the design and taken a decision with regard to the high denominational currency which was required to be printed as a replacement currency itself. Thereafter a series of meetings used to be held periodically at times on a defined date once a week where the seniors in the RBI as also in the Government were in consultation. Because the decision had to be kept in utmost secrecy, it is for this particular reason that these were not put into public domain. The formal decision with regard to this in this background was taken by the RBI Board on the 8th but this had been preceded by a series of discussions which had started way back in February, 2016 itself.

SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY: My question was specific, whether the Government directed the RBI to send the recommendation or RBI took its own decision to send the recommendation. That is the specific question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. Minister has explained that the process started in February. ... (Interruptions)...

SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY: Yes or no; whether Government directed the RBI or RBI sent on its own, that is the specific question, Sir.

Q.No.48 (Contd)

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: My specific answer to his specific question is that the RBI Board met and independently applied its mind and made a recommendation to this effect.

श्री अजय संचेती: सभापति महोदय, मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहूंगा कि आरबीआई ने 8 तारीख को यह जो प्रपोजल डीमॉनेटाइजेशन का भेजा था, क्या इस प्रकार का कोई प्रपोजल 2014 से पहले भी सरकार को आरबीआई ने भेजा था और क्या सरकार ने उसको कंसिडर किया था या नहीं किया था?

श्री अरुण जेटली: सभापति जी, इसका इस प्रश्न से संबंध नहीं है। मैं पुराना रिकॉर्ड चेक करके इसकी जानकारी माननीय सदस्य को दूंगा।

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Sir, I would like to specifically draw the attention of the Finance Minister to part (b) and (c) of the answer about the RBI Board meeting, which he has referred to, on the 8th of November and that eight of the Directors had attended. The RBI Governor had submitted before a Parliamentary Standing Committee that there was a written directive from the Government on the 7th of November asking the RBI to convene the meeting. Now, this is on record. So, I would like to know who gave that directive, whether that directive was sent by the Finance Ministry or by the

Q.No.48 (Contd)

Banking Secretary. Was it sent by the PMO? This we must be told because the decision was taken in Delhi.

(Contd by 1S/SSS)

SSS-AKG/1S.12.25

SHRI ANAND SHARMA (CONTD.): Secondly, Sir, the hon. Minister has said that way back in May, a decision was taken by the RBI to print Rs. 2000 denomination. Surely, the RBI had not taken the decision to invalidate Rs. 500 and Rs. 1000 currency notes. Sir, the hardships were inflicted because Rs. 2000 notes could not be used as notes of other denominations were not printed or were still being printed. Who gave the directive? Also, how many independent Directors attended the 8th November meeting and how many Independent Directors' positions are lying vacant?

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Sir, out of the ten members of the Board, eight members attended the meeting. As far as the hon. Member's question is concerned, I have already clarified about the consultation process on this particular issue, which included the issue of demonetization and cessation of legal tender. Consultations with the RBI had long drawn out and the process was discussed and finalized. Sir, a formal proposal to the RBI to

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consider a matter in the Board is sent by the Finance Ministry. This is sent by the Finance Ministry to the RBI Board. The RBI Board independently considers it, applies its mind and accordingly makes a recommendation to the Government.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, Question No. 49. ... (Interruptions)...

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Sir, I wanted to put a question. Please allow me.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, no; I can only allow three questions.

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: This is unfair.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I can allow only three questions. I am sorry.

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Sir, in the entire Session, I did not get a chance to speak.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am sorry. I can allow only three questions.

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: You are not allowing me because I do not shout. I am a sick person...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Subbaramiji, you cannot agitate on this subject.

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: No, Sir. I have to put my question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am sorry, I can't violate the 'three supplementaries rule'.

Q.No.48 (Contd)

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Sir,...

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am sorry. You can put another question at another time, but not at this moment.

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: I have been here for the last 15 years.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, no; I am not denying your 15 years.

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: I have never been denied. It has never happened in the history. Nobody let me down very badly. I made a request to you and see how I am not given an opportunity! I am very upset.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Q. No. 49.

(Ends)

Q. NO. 49

SHRIMATI SASIKALA PUSHPA: Sir, the Heathrow Airport of UK, which handles 1,500 flights, departing and landing each day, has about one flight for every 45 seconds. Whereas in India, Thoothukudi, a strategically important city, commercially connected with the international port, has only one flight per day. People are suffering a lot. This is only because of slow process of land acquisition by the Government. I wish to ask the Minister, through you, Sir, whether they have any fixed time frame for the land acquisition project.

SHRI JAYANT SINHA: First, I would like to reassure the hon. Member that our airports are second to none in terms of their efficiency of operation. The hon. Member has quoted the case of the airport in the United Kingdom that has very high movements per hour. I would like to inform her that the second most efficient airport in the world is widely considered to be Mumbai airport which has almost as many departures and landings as the airport that she is quoting. So, our airports are performing very efficiently and, in fact, the entire exercise of expanding our airport capacity, which absolutely needs to be done, given the stellar growth that we have had in the aviation sector, is proceeding at a pace, Sir, and with respect to the Tuticorin

Q.No.49 (Contd)

Airport, a request had been made to the State Government many years ago to provide an additional land. In fact, we had requested for 586 acres so that we can expand the runway and land jets as well there. That request has been pending with the State Government for a number of years. We have recently been informed by the State Government that by September, 2017, the entire land acquisition for Tuticorin Airport will be done and then we will be able to land narrow-body aircraft.

SHRIMATI SASIKALA PUSHPA: Sir, my second question is this. The hon. Minister himself has given in this reply that the Government of Tamil Nadu has already issued a Government Order for acquisition of land. My humble point of request is whether the Government has any plan or proposal to opt for this land. Have you fixed any Special Purpose Vehicle for this work to be completed?

(Followed by NBR/1T)

-SSS/NBR-SCH/1T/12.30.

Q.No.49 (Contd)

SHRI JAYANT SINHA: Sir, the standard procedure by which land is taken over from the State Government is through the Airports Authority Act. Once land is acquired under this Act, it will be under the supervision and ownership of the AAI. Then, of course, the necessary investments are made so that airport is brought to the level of functionality that is required.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Kalita. This is a question on a specific airport.

SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA: Sir, although the question is specific about Tamil Nadu,...

MR. CHAIRMAN: You stick to the question.

SHRI BHUBANESWAR KALITA: Definitely, Sir. I want to restrict myself to the acquisition and expansion part of airport.

Sir, I seek indulgence of hon. Minister, because he himself has seen the situation in some of the other smaller airports like Guwahati where airport was built for hardly twenty flights. But, now, there are more than ninety flights landing every day. It is totally crowded. A number of times this issue has been raised by our hon. Members in this House. But, nothing has been done till now. So, I would like to know from the hon. Minister

Q.No.49 (Contd)

whether the Government has some proposal to expand this airport so that it can cater to the needs of the people.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This can be entertained only if the question is on other airports. You cannot ask about Guwahati airport, because that is not the question. Anyway, I leave it to the Minister.

SHRI JAYANT SINHA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to, on behalf of the Ministry -- hon. Cabinet Minister is sitting here -- reassure all hon. Members that we are very cognizant of various constraints, crowding and congestion that many of our airports are facing. We have very substantial expansion plans for all our airports. Sufficient funds are available and we are tackling all these issues with due haste.

SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: Sir, Thoothukudi airport expansion proposal was submitted when Mr. Praful Patel was Minister of Civil Aviation and landing of flight started since then. Since then we have been pursuing this matter. The DMK Government had also requested him to consider it, but nothing has happened till today. Even night landing facility has not been provided. So, will the hon. Minister assure this House as to when this project would be completed? And, I request that, at least, night landing facility be provided in

Q.No.49 (Contd)

this airport, because there is only one flight which lands here and that too during day time.

SHRI JAYANT SINHA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, obviously, former Civil Aviation Minister is informing hon. Member. In fact, request from the Ministry was initiated in 2004 and the first reply from the State Government was in 2010. Subsequently, we have been diligently pursuing this matter and, as I informed the House earlier, we are given to understand that by September, 2017, the entire land acquisition process will be complete and then the airport will be upgraded to whichever standard is required given the requirements posed by various airlines that are operating there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Husain Dalwai. You have to ask on this question.

SHRI HUSAIN DALWAI: Sir, actually...

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. You cannot go beyond the question.

श्री हुसैन दलवाई : सर, मेरा कहना है, आपने अभी मुम्बई के बारे में जिक्र किया था।...(व्यवधान)...

श्री सभापति : नहीं, यहां मुम्बई के बारे में डिस्कस नहीं किया जा रहा है।

श्री हुसैन दलवाई : सर, मिनिस्टर साहब ने अभी मुम्बई का जिक्र किया था, इसलिए मैं उनसे उसके बारे में जानना चाहता हूं। मुम्बई एयरपोर्ट में एक ही रनवे है, जिसके

Q.No.49 (Contd)

कारण बहुत प्रॉब्लम होती है। मैं मंत्री जी से पूछना चाहता हूं कि वहां पनवेल में बनाए जाने वाले एयरपोर्ट के बारे में क्या हो रहा है? क्या इस पर आगे काम हो रहा है या नहीं हो रहा है?

श्री जयंत सिन्हा : माननीय सभापति जी, मैंने पहले ही इस बात का जिक्र किया था कि हमारे देश में जितने भी एयरपोर्ट्स हैं, जहां-जहां भी आज के समय में congestion या crowding है, उन सभी एयरपोर्ट्स पर हमारा अध्ययन चल रहा है और हम ऐसे सभी एयरपोर्ट्स पर ध्यान दे रहे हैं। जहां-जहां विस्तार करने की जरूरत है, वहां-वहां पर हम लोग विस्तार कर रहे हैं।

(समाप्त)

Q. NO. 50

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 50. Questionnaire is not present. Let the answer be given. Are there any supplementaries? Okay, Shri Rapolu.

SHRI ANANDA BHASKAR RAPOLU: Respected Chairman, Sir, the fancy of the present Government to demonetize and its subsequent revolutionary phase of withdrawal of charges on digital payment has attracted the poorer and weaker sections of the nation that it is going to be the truth that there will not be any charge through Paytm, Mobilink, etc. Now, we are hearing about GoMerchant. But, the hon. Minister's reply is precise that on debit cards only of the Government dues up to Rs. 1 lakh discount rate cost for payment will be withdrawn.

(CONTD. BY PK/1U)

PK-RPM/1U/12.35

SHRI ANANDA BHASKAR RAPOLU (CONTD.): And, that is to be absorbed by the Government. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether Paytm, Jio-Money merchant and such MNC entities, which are into digital transactions, are going to be attracted by your assurance.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Sir, various forms of service providers, subject to the regulations and the control which are there in the payment and systems legislation, take a particular charge. It is the policy of the Government -- and I do

Q. No. 50 - contd.

believe it is a correct policy -- that we have to move more and more towards banking transactions and digital transactions. That makes the conduct of our financial transactions as also commercial transactions far cleaner, simpler and brings it within the framework of a particular system. As a part of this, there are alternative technologies available in India, and there are also alternative steps being taken by the Government to make sure that the volumes increase, as a result of which the rates come down. As far as the Government is concerned, the Government facilities are one by one deciding to absorb all the charges and free the customer or the merchant from bearing those charges itself. For instance, whether it is petrol pumps, or, railway ticketings, or, it is various forms of Government-related purchases, they have all one by one been exempted from payments.

As far as debit cards are concerned, on debit cards, the Reserve Bank of India has taken a decision that with regard to transactions up to Rs.1,000/- the charge would only be 0.25 per cent, which has been substantially brought down. Up to Rs.2,000/- the charge would be 0.5 per cent. Now, beyond that, the Reserve Bank is in the process of deciding what is to be the charge under the Payment and Systems Act, and I am sure, as the volumes are increasing, that charge itself will come down. There are also alternative technologies where the

Q. No. 50 - contd.

charges will come down significantly, as far as those charges are concerned. Therefore, this is still a work in progress and the process of the merchant discount charges coming down is significantly taking place. Credit cards are on a different footing altogether, because in credit cards, the customer gets a certain number of days as credit itself, therefore, the interest factor is also factored in, which would be slightly higher than what it is in the case of debit cards, or, in the case of other methodologies, including e-wallets, through which payments are being made.

SHRI V. VIJAYASAI REDDY: Sir, in the case of American Express Credit Cards, shops and commercial establishments ask for extra charges, which they collect from the customers. This is a unique feature which the American Express Card is resorting to. Whereas in the case of other credit cards like VISA or Master Cards, a commercial establishment does not charge anything from the customers. The merchant discount charges, which are offered by the commercial establishment from which we make the purchases, are shared by the banks which issue cards as well as by the service provider like VISA and Master Card. Has the Government got any plans to prevent the practice, which is being resorted to by the American Express Card, which is detrimental to the interest of the people?

Uncorrected/ Not for Publication-07.02.2017**Q. No. 50 - contd.**

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: As I indicated in the reply to the first question, credit cards stand on a different footing compared to e-wallet or compared to the Aadhaar based payment system or even the debit cards. The reason being that various credit card companies besides offering a credit for a certain period of time, because you make the payment some weeks later, also start offering additional facilities. They, on the strength of their facilities, decide as to what are the charges to be made. It is really for the customer or the consumer to decide, whether he wants to go in for these, where there is a certain higher element, because he has alternative options available. In India, for example, contrary to what is happening in many other parts of the world, the number of credit cards are fewer in number. For instance, I was told that, till about two months ago, approximately 75 crore cards were in circulation, of which about 72 crores were debit cards and not credit cards. (Contd. by PB/1W)

PB-PSV/1w/12.40

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY (CONTD.): So, the credit cards are fewer in number and are used only by the economically more well-off people. Now, those people also have a choice as to what is the kind of facilities they want and therefore discard the ones which are charging a higher amount because at the end of the day, the amount has to be paid really by the merchant through whom we transact and the merchant tries to impose that charge, in some cases, as you mentioned, on the customer itself. So, it is the market forces which will decide as to what

Q.NO.50 (CONTD.)

methodology is to be followed because now some of the newer technologies which are being offered are absolutely 'charge-free' and therefore when the 'charge-free' offer is available to the customer itself, then the customer has the option in a market-economy really to go in for the cheaper instruments rather than go in for something which will cost him greater money.

श्री विशम्भर प्रसाद निषाद: सर, चूँकि माननीय मंत्री जी ने क्रेडिट कार्ड या डेबिट कार्ड से डिजिटल भुगतान किए जाने पर 1000 रुपये तक छूट देने का प्रस्ताव रखा है और 2000 रुपये पर 0.5% का रखा है, तो मैं इनसे जानना चाहता हूँ, जिस दिन से आपने यह आदेश जारी किया, तो जिन लोगों का कम्पनीज़ ने काट लिया है, क्या उनको वापस करेंगे? हमारे देश में इसमें दिक्कतें हैं। साइबर क्राइम कानून बहुत ढीला है, सीधे बैंकों से लोगों के पैसे उड़ रहे हैं, तो उसके लिए क्या बैंक गारंटी लेंगे? यह बात इससे हट कर है, लेकिन पूरे देश में लोग चिन्तित हैं, क्योंकि उन्होंने क्रेडिट कार्ड या डेबिट कार्ड ले लिया और उनका पैसा उड़ रहा है, तो बैंक वाले कहते हैं कि इसमें हमारी कोई गारंटी नहीं है, आप जाकर ढूँढ़िए। सर, हमारे देश में गरीब लोग हैं, किसान हैं, अनपढ़ हैं, अशिक्षित हैं, उनको बड़ी दिक्कत हो रही है। तो जिन लोगों ने डेबिट/क्रेडिट कार्ड का यूज़ किया है और कम्पनीज़ ने उनका पैसा काट लिया है, चाहे वह पेट्रोल पम्प हो या रेलवे हो, क्या आप उनको वह वापस करने का काम करेंगे?

श्री अरुण जेटली: सभापति जी, जैसा मैंने कहा, जहाँ तक आपने पेट्रोल पम्प का उदाहरण दिया है, तो अब वहाँ पर चार्ज नहीं लगेगा। सरकार ने उसको मुक्त कर दिया है। जो तेल कम्पनीज़ हैं, वे खुद उस खर्च को absorb कर रही हैं। जो रेलवे की बुकिंग है, उसको रेलवेज़

Q.NO.50 (CONTD.)

खुद absorb कर रही है। किसी उपभोक्ता के ऊपर उसका चार्ज नहीं लगने वाला है। इसलिए हम लोगों को यह भी एक गलतफहमी न रहे कि इस देश में केवल कुछ लोग हैं, जो इसका प्रयोग करते हैं। जैसा मैंने संख्या की दृष्टि से बताया कि इसकी बहुत बड़ी संख्या देश के अन्दर फैल रही है और जो वैकल्पिक प्रकार की तकनीकें इसमें आ रही हैं, इनका बहुत बड़ी संख्या में लोग प्रयोग कर रहे हैं। इसका और लाभ यह हो रहा है कि जो Payments banks का institution अब शुरू हुआ है, पहले आप सबकी एक शिकायत रहती थी कि गाँव के नजदीक कोई बैंक नहीं है, तो आज टेलीफोन कम्पनीज़ अपने आपको बैंक में बदल रही हैं। देश में जो लगभग 1,75,000 के करीब पोस्ट ऑफिसेज़ हैं, ये सभी अपने आपको बैंक के रूप में बदल रहे हैं। इसलिए यह संख्या भी बदलने वाली है और इसलिए देश के अन्दर गाँव के इंटीरियर तक यह सुविधा आने वाले दिनों में पहुँचेगी।

अगर कोई शिकायत किसी बैंक विशेष के खिलाफ रहती है, तो banking Ombudsman की भी संस्था है, उसको वह शिकायत की जा सकती है और अगर बैंक की गलती है, तो उसका मुआवजा उसको देना पड़ सकता है।

श्रीमती विप्लव ठाकुर: सर ...(व्यवधान)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, no, please. ...(Interruptions)...

श्रीमती विप्लव ठाकुर: 75 करोड़ ...(व्यवधान)... (समाप्त)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please. ...(Interruptions)... Question No. 51. ...(Interruptions)...

Sorry. Please sit down. ...(Interruptions)... Please. ...(Interruptions)... No, no, please.

Q.NO. 51

MR. CHAIRMAN: Q. No.51. Questioner is not present. Let the answer be laid on the Table. Shri Rapolu.

SHRI ANANDA BHASKAR RAPOLU: Respected Chairman, in these days of demonetization, the deserts of distress are spreading and amidst that, there are also certain oasis of less cash and cashless digital transaction communities. Likewise, the Union Government is encouraging its employees, not only Government employees but also public sector employees to go in for 'less cash and cashless.' In that, have you attained the 100 per cent target to ensure 100 per cent cashless communities among the Government and public sector employees with your efforts?

(Followed by 1x/SKC)

SKC-VNK/1X/12.45

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Sir, the role of the Government in this is advisory and, therefore, as far as this advisory is concerned, because salaries are being paid to Government servants and public sector employees into their bank accounts, they are one section of society which does not have any cash earnings. So, the Government has thought it proper to advise them, as far as possible, to use either debit cards or any other mode of banking

Q. No. 51 (contd.)

transaction through which it is possible for the conduct of their transactions and, I am sure, a very large number of Government employees are using the same.

SHRI T.K.S. ELANGO VAN: Sir, my question is whether the Government has instructed all banks that whenever a person opens an account, he must be given a debit card, passbook or a cheque book. If that is done, then anybody who opens an account would get a debit card which he can programme with his name and password. Has the Government issued any such instruction to the banks that while opening an account, they should also issue a debit card to its customers?

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Sir, the banks decide it on the strength of their policy, but if you remember, when the *Jan Dhan* accounts were opened, providing a RuPay Card along with the *Jan Dhan* accounts was one of the facilities which has been provided to those 27 crore people who opened the *Jan Dhan* accounts. So, a RuPay Card was available to each one of them as a matter of right.

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Sir, the Finance Minister has said that this is an advisory, but along with that advisory, are you also going to announce an

Q. No. 51 (contd.)

exemption of the transactions costs, while using the digital mode, to the Government employees?

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Sir, I think Mr. Yechury walked in about ten minutes too late. There was a previous question where I have replied to a number of supplementary questions.

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Sir, I would be enlightened if you could repeat that, if you don't mind.

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Yes. The Government has been trying to encourage and facilitate the process by which the transaction costs come down. In some cases, they are eliminated. As far as Government's own expenditure is concerned, that is, people buying petrol, people booking railway tickets and using other facilities of the Government, we have already absorbed the charges and exempted them. There are some technologies available for which no charge is levied. As far as debit cards are concerned, the Reserve Bank, exercising its powers under the Payment and Settlements Act, has already decided that up to a transaction of Rs. 1,000, the rate comes down to 0.25 per cent; up to a transaction of Rs. 2,000, that is, from Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 2,000, it comes down to 0.5 per cent and we are in the process of taking

Q. No. 51 (contd.)

a decision with regard to charges above Rs. 2,000. That is a process that is on. In many cases, up to 31st of March, 2017, the rates have been exempted completely. So, as a part of this drive towards digitalization, we are moving slowly in the direction where charges, in many cases, are exempted and, in most other cases, are being trying to be brought down.

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Till they are not exempted, will you compensate them? That is the point ...(Interruptions)...

(Ends)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 52. Questioner not present. Let the answer be given.

Q. No. 52

श्रीमती कहकशां परवीन : सभापति महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहती हूँ कि इन दो सालों में कितने सैनिकों ने खाद्य पदार्थ एवं वस्त्रों की गुणवत्ता की शिकायत की है और उस पर अब तक क्या कार्रवाई हुई है?

श्री मनोहर पर्रिकर : सभापति महोदय, गुणवत्ता के बारे में whatever grievances a soldier may have about quality issues have to be raised by him with the Commanding Officer. That record does not exist with the Defence Ministry because it is redressed at the local level.

SHRI RIPUN BORA: Sir, I wish to put a very specific question to the Defence Minister. Do soldiers who are provided with bad quality food have the permission to put up the issue on social media? Recently, there was an incident where low quality food was supplied and a *jawan* in the BSF highlighted it in the social media. As a result, he was suspended from service. Now, even though he was with the BSF, he was a soldier and the hon. Minister is the Defence Minister. Therefore, I would like to know from him whether the same action would be taken against other soldiers for highlighting such issues on social media. Will they be punished like that BSF *jawan*?

(FOLLOWED BY KSK/1Y)

KSK/NKR/12.50/1Y

Q.NO. 52 (contd.)

SHRI MANOHAR PARRIKAR: Sir, as per the standard procedure in the Army, if there is any complaint, that needs to be raised with the Commanding Officer of a soldier. If someone goes to the social media, I think, it is basically a violation of the discipline of the Army.

SHRI RIPUN BORA: Recently, the Supreme Court has ordered that they can raise these issues in the social media also. This order has come about three or four days back.

SHRI MANOHAR PARRIKAR: There is the Army Act, under which, there is a provision for a redressal mechanism. This could be followed. If still there is a problem, I think, the Chief of Army Staff has already provided a mechanism for redressal at his level also. If the issue is still not resolved, there is a provision to even come to me, but raising it in the social media does not resolve the issue. It only highlights the issue. With so many people, there may be a few issues. So, we insist that they should come through the proper channel. We will address them, and, I don't think there is much of a big complaint about food because we are improving the food quality and the quantum also continuously. Over the last two-three years,

Q.NO. 52 (contd.)

there has been so much of improvement in quantity and quality also. For example, the chicken, which was earlier given through the butcheries, because of the issue of hygienic conditions which was raised, we have now directed that all 136 stations be supplied frozen and approved, certified quality chicken. Similarly, the supply of egg, which was one per person, has been increased to two. Further, Siachen Food Quantum is now extended to everyone above 12,000 feet. So, there are a lot of improvements which continuously happen, and if anyone has suggestions, they can give them to the Army Chief and there are complaint boxes now which have been added, and they can even come to me if there is still a problem.

श्री हरिवंश : महोदय, सवाल में माननीय रक्षा मंत्री जी से यह भी पूछा गया है कि आधुनिक उपकरणों के संदर्भ में सेना की क्या स्थिति है? मैं आपके माध्यम से जानना चाहूंगा कि बुलेट-प्रूफ जैकेट, नाइट ग्लासेज या आधुनिक हथियारों के संबंध में खबरें आती रहती हैं कि अभी भी सेना की स्थिति खराब हालत में है और 20-20 वर्षों से कमिटमेंट के बाद भी इनकी आपूर्ति नहीं हो रही है, इनकी स्थिति कृपया बताएं।

श्री मनोहर पर्रिकर : मैं खबरों के लिए responsibility नहीं लेता हूं, लेकिन आपको बताना चाहता हूं कि बुलेट-प्रूफ जैकेट्स जिनकी पहले खरीदारी नहीं हो रही थी, 50,000 are being procured, out of which, according to my information, more

Q.NO. 52 (contd.)

than 30,000 have been supplied already. Another 20,000 will be supplied before March, 2017, and 70,000 more are being procured. So, by the end of the year 2017, probably, we will have 1,25,000 bullet-proof jackets supplied. In addition to this, 1,86,000 jackets are under procurement process through capital route. Above 1,25,000 jackets, that I mentioned, have been procured through the revenue route.

Then, as far as helmets are concerned, 1,57,000 bullet-proof helmets of lighter versions have already been ordered and the supply would be started very soon. We have got 5.56 MM INSAS light machine guns. Five thousand guns have been issued. Regarding 40 MM UBGL, adequate quantities have been issued. Regarding Passive Night Vision, more than 33,000 have been issued. एक्टिव के लिए अभी प्रोसेस चालू है। For GPS, adequate quantities have been issued. For Compressed Prismatic, adequate quantities have been issued. Regarding Loras, more than thirty have been issued. For the Avalanche Rescue Equipment, procurement is under way, but regarding the Avalanche Rescue Equipment, as per the earlier data, all requirements have been fulfilled. Now, we are adding up more. I think, we are taking care of almost everything. I don't go by the

Q.NO. 52 (contd.)

newspaper report totally because the newspaper report does not specify as to what has been supplied. It only specifies normally as to what is under procurement. But already, a lot of items have been procured and supplied.

There may be a few more items.

(Ends)

(Followed by 1Z - GSP)

GSP-DS/12.55/1Z

Q. No. 53

SHRI C.P. NARAYANAN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, as explained by the hon. Minister, if the Government and the RBI had made 9 months' long preparation for demonetization, why all the bank branches and the ATMs were starved of new notes in sufficient quantities for months together. Is it not a proof enough that neither the Government nor the RBI were prepared to meet the consequences of demonetization?

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Sir, the RBI had adequate amount of currency printed in advance in order to facilitate the remonetization process. At no point of time, not for a single day, was the currency inadequate. As far as the banks are concerned, the RBI was releasing a certain amount of currency through currency chests every day from the 10th of November when the remonetization process itself had started.

As far as the ATM machines are concerned, the ATM machines had to be reoriented in order to accept and release the alternative kind of notes. Keeping in view the size of the note, the thickness of the note, the weight of the note, the machines had to be recalibrated for that particular purpose. Because of the reason of maintaining the secrecy, this could not be done

Q. No. 53 (contd.)

before the 8th of November and had necessarily to be done only after the 8th of November. That recalibration process itself took time. It is the result of this effort of the RBI in supplying currency consistently that, contrary to what many had earlier predicted, within a very short span of a few weeks, the RBI was able to meet the rush, bring the queues down and successfully carry on the remonetization process.

SHRI C.P. NARAYANAN: Sir, it still leaves much to be answered. My second question is, if the Government had made all preparations, why did not the hon. Prime Minister mention about digital banking and use of plastic cards for various financial transactions as he had done almost after a month? Why did he not mention it earlier? Why was the Government not prepared earlier? The Government is now getting prepared for digital banking and use of plastic cards only in recent weeks. Why did so much delay take place?

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Sir, one of the many reasons which prompted the particular action was that we wanted to reduce the reliance on cash currency and switch over to more banking transactions and digital transactions. It was a necessary consequence of what the Prime Minister

Q. No. 53 (contd.)

had done. From the very beginning itself, the Government had started a massive campaign in order to facilitate and enable the digitization of the economy itself. The fact that it was mentioned in one speech and not the other, I don't think lends much credence to any contrarian argument.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA: Sir, the shadow economy of India was estimated to be 23.2 per cent in 2007. There is no bigger economy in respect of shadow economy. For example, in USA, it is 8.7 per cent, and, in Japan, it is 15 per cent. We do not want to defend that. But out of this shadow economy, only six per cent of the black money is in the form of cash. The rest is in the form of real estate and regal metals and in other forms in foreign countries. Instead of coming down heavily on that 94 per cent of black money, for this six per cent, this demonetization of higher denomination notes was done, which has given a very big problem to the common man. My very specific question is: if you feel that shadow money is stored in the higher denomination notes of 500 and 1000, why should we go in for 2,000 rupee note? Will it not make it easier to store the black money? For example, in USA, the highest tender of currency is 100 dollars and in UK, it is only 50

Q. No. 53 (contd.)

pounds. Why should India go in for 2,000 rupee note when 500 or 1000 notes can serve the purpose?

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY: Sir, demonetization of currency and its replacement is certainly not the only step that this Government has taken. In order to discourage cash and therefore further flow of cash and further generation of black money was one of the intentions when this decision was taken. Right from the day that this Government was formed, apart from the formation of the SIT, there have been various steps which we have taken in order to curb black money kept outside the country through the black money legislation, which we brought.

(Contd. by SK/2A)

SK-SC/2A/1.00

SHRI ARUN JAITLEY (contd.): The IDS Scheme, which we brought, which was highly successful in order to enable people to declare their excess black money voluntarily at a certain specified way and blocking of round tripping, which used to take place through Mauritius, Singapore and Cyprus routes are the steps we have taken. The *benami* law, which this Parliament amended and which has now come into force, is a major step which has

Q. No. 53 (contd.)

been taken as far as the real *benami* investments in immovable properties are concerned. Sir, the Government is fully committed to both further generation as also looking at the black money in other forms which is lying here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Question Hour is over. The House is adjourned till 2.00 p.m.

**The House then adjourned for lunch
at one minute past one of the clock.**