

monitor a particular community separately? in the remaining schemes also we are giving benefits. But, in our Ministry there is no monitoring system especially with regard to minorities. The suggestion given 'rjy the hon. Member is well taken. ...*(Interruptions)*... We will try to get figures with regard to the minorities as to how much amount has been given. ...*(Interruptions)*... Hereafter, we will try to do monitoring. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hereafter he will do monitoring. ...*(Interruptions)*... Yes, Fine! ...*(Interruptions)*...

Acknowledgement and reply to letters received from Members of Parliament

*363. SHRI NAGMANI:

SHRI ISH DUTT YADAV:†

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in more than 75% cases acknowledgements to letters of Members of Parliament are not being sent within fifteen days and the final replies are also not being sent to them within three months;

(b) if so, the number of such cases during the last three years, department-wise; and

(c) whether Government propose to take any action against the concerned officers found responsible in such a cases and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN): (a) to (c) All Ministries/departments of Government of India are required to scrupulously observe the guidelines laid down in the Manual of Office Procedure (MOP) for sending prompt replies to letters received from Members of Parliament. In case delay in anticipated in sending a final reply, an interim reply

†The Question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Ish Dutt Yadav.

is to be sent within a fortnight, indicating the possible date by which a final reply Can be given. Any violation of the procedure and deliberate delays are required to be dealt with as per disciplinary procedure. This is being closely monitored by the respective ministries/departments. There is no system for centralised tabulation of letters of Members of Parliament in various ministries/departments, in terms of the acknowledged letters, replies sent or still pending for reply. It is, therefore, not possible to state in how many cases final replies were not sent by ministries/departments during the last three years and whether any action has been taken against any delinquent officials.

श्री ईश दत्त यादव: मान्यवर, सभापति जी, मेरा प्रश्न जो है यह अत्यंत ही महत्वपूर्ण है। पूरा सदन मे मेरे इस प्रश्न से, मुझे विश्वास है कि सहमत होगा। मान्यवर, जो पहले सत्ता में लोग रहे, अब इस तरफ बैठे हैं, पहले वे नहीं महसूस करते थे, इसकी आवश्यकता महसूस नहीं करते थे, इसकी आवश्यकता महसूस नहीं करते थे। जो लोग वर्तमान मंत्रिमंडल में हैं ...*(व्यवधान)* यह लोग भी पहले इसका अनुभव करते थे, अब नहीं करते हैं लगता है।

मान्यवर, हम लोग जब मंत्री लोगों को पत्र लिखते हैं- प्रधानमंत्री को, दूसरे मंत्री लोगों को, सार्वजनिक हित के लिए लिखते हैं, सार्वजनिक योजनाओं के लिए लिखते हैं, निजी कार्यो के लिए लिखते हैं जनता के हित में तो एक तीन लाइन का उत्तर आता है- "I have received your letter dated such and such I am having the matter looked into."

इसके बाद "I am having the matter looked into..."

इसके बाद ये लोग आंख बन्द कर लेते हैं।

श्री अनन्तराय देवशंकर दवे: पीछे सिगनेचर करते हैं उसके बाद आंख बंद करते हैं।

श्री ईश दत्त यादव: जो मंत्री जी का उत्तर है इससे मुझे बड़ी निराशा हो रही है क्योंकि इसके लिए रूल्स बने हुए हैं। मैनुअल आफ आफिस प्रोसीजर, एम.ओ.पी. है लेकिन इस मैनुअल का लगता है कि आज तक कभी पालन नहीं किया गया है क्योंकि मंत्री जी ने कहा कि हमारे पास कोई रिकार्ड नहीं है कि कितने पत्र आए और कितने पत्रों का उत्तर दिया गया और किसमें क्या कार्यवाही की गयी। अगर इस तरह का मैनुअल है तो इसके लिए इनको रिकार्ड मेन्टेन करना चाहिए, रजिस्टर मेन्टेन करना चाहिए और इसमें तीन स्टेजेज बतायी गयी

है-मैनुअल में। एक तो प्राप्ति का, हमारा पत्र मिल गया, रिसीव हुआ है। अगर ज्यादा डिले है तो विदिन 5 डेज अंकित करें कि इसमें क्या कार्यवाही हो रही हैं और हमको फाइनल रिजल्ट से भी अवगत करा दें। लेकिन आज तक यह कभी नहीं हो रहा है। इसलिए मान्यवर, आपके माध्यम से-माननीय प्रधानमंत्री जी बैठे हैं इन सब लोगों से मैं यह कहना चाहूंगा कि आज तक जो कुछ हुआ सो हुआ ...**(व्यवधान)** क्या अब से इस कानून का, इस नियम का-जो मैनुअल आफ आफिस प्रोसीजर है इसका कड़ाई से पालन करेंगे? क्या इसके लिए हर मंत्रालय में, हर विभाग में रजिस्टर बनाया जाएगा, कंप्यूटर में इसको फीड किया जाएगा और नियमित रूप से माननीय संसद सदस्यों के पत्रों की प्राप्ति का और अगर विलम्ब हो कार्य में तो 15 दिन में इसका स्पष्ट उत्तर दिया जाएगा कि क्या कार्यवाही की जा रही है या अधिक से अधिक तीन महीने के अंदर उसके अंतिम निस्तारण का उत्तर सबको देने की कृपा करेंगे?

SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, we have issued clear guidelines to all the Ministries and Departments that whenever they get any letter from a Member of Parliament, that letter should promptly be attended to and within 15 days, as the hon. Member himself has said, a reply should be sent to the Member. If they are not in a position to reply within 15 days, of course, the letter will be acknowledged. ...**(Interruptions)**... The letter will be acknowledged that the matter is being looked into. ...**(Interruptions)**... The letter is definitely acknowledged and a reply is given to the Member. ...**(Interruptions)**...

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: We don't want 'looking into'. Neither we want an acknowledgement. We want a reply. These are two different issues.

श्री ईश दत्त यादव: मान्यवर, मैनुअल ऑफ आफिस प्रोसीजर एम.ओ.पी. में यह प्रोविजन है कि,

"Any violation of office procedure and deliberate delay are required to be dealt with as per the disciplinary procedure and action".

तो मैं मंत्री जी से यह आश्वासन चाहूंगा कि भविष्य में क्या इस तरह का कोई सख्ती आप करेंगे कि जो लोग

इसका अनुपालन नहीं करते हैं उनको दंडित किया जा सके जो आपके अधिकारी सबोर्डिनेट लोग हैं और दूसरा आपसे जानकारी चाहूंगा कि क्या आज तक ऐसी गलती करने वाले किसी भी अधिकारी और कर्मचारी को किसी प्रकार का आपने दंड दिया या नहीं? अगर नहीं दिया है तो इसमें मैं मानूंगा चाहे पिछली सरकारें रही हैं और चाहे वर्तमान सरकार हैं, सब की इसमें उदासीनता और लापरवाही है।

श्री त्रिलोकी नाथ चतुर्वेदी: ईश दत्त जी आप अधिकारियों के बारे में ही पूछते हैं जो कठपुतली बन जाते हैं उनके बारे में क्यों नहीं पूछते?

श्री ईश दत्त यादव: बाकी आप पूछिए।

SHRI S. R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN: Sir, as far as the letters are concerned, there exists no centralised system in regard to their receipt. But definitely, whenever there is a violation—as the hon. Member himself has said—it is dealt with, as per the Manual of Office Procedure. It is dealt with, as per the Central Civil Services (Classification and Appeal) Rules. Articles of charge are framed against the accused officer and based on the imputation of evidence on record available in regard to this, punishment is given to the officer concerned. It may be a fine. It may be a censure. But definitely, action is taken.

SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN: Sir, I would like to know whether the Government is aware that many senior officials in Delhi are reluctant either to speak over telephone with the MPs., or, provide appointment to the MPs., who want to meet them for giving some representation, or, for eliciting legitimate information from the officers. This is contrary to the instructions issued by the Department of Personnel.

In this connection, I would like to know whether the Government would repeat the existing instructions to the officers in order to ensure their availability and in order to ensure their showing courtesy to the MPs. when they seek appointment, or, when they want to

talk to them on telephone, or, when they make representations to them, on behalf of the public or their constituents.

SHRI S. R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN: Sir, we will take note of it. We will again issue strict guidelines and instructions to the concerned Departments and Ministries.

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI: It would be 'looked into'.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: This is a very frightening reply.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: This is an assurance. *(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Sir, my hon. colleague who has raised this issue has touched on a very sensitive point. I say this because we are the representatives of the people. When we raise an issue, it is not for patronising acknowledgement. It is not for that we write to them. We write to them in order to get a concrete reply, in order to know the plan of action. Sir, I would also deem it as an issue of our privilege, as Members of Parliament, that when we seek action, we are fobbed off. Even the Ministers...

SHRI SURINDER KUMAR SINGLA: Not palmed off?

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: I would request the hon. Minister that there should be a review of the protocol and procedures that are applied to the Members of Parliament, in the respective Ministries, including the question as to how they should answer a telephone call. Quite often, Sir, we are forced to speak— as you know, there is a restriction on the number of free calls that we are allowed — to everyone down the bureaucratic line and we are kept waiting. Quite often, the officers do not even come on the line. I find this extremely offensive. This is a violation of our privilege, as people's representative. Therefore, stringent action has to be taken by the hon. Minister. It is not

enough that he 'looks into the matter'. I am sorry. But this myopic vision of looking into the matter would not satisfy us. I want a time-bound action plan to be executed by the hon. Minister in order to restore the dignity of the House.

SHRI S. R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN: We understand the feeling of the hon. Member. We have already issued instructions and guidelines to the different Ministries. We will again bring it to their notice. But if there is any violation in an individual case, that can be brought to the notice of the concerned Minister. Definitely, action would be taken.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: It is not a matter of individual cases. It is a question of the procedure that has to be applied. There is a protocol which has to be applied. There is a procedure which has to be applied.

SHRI S. R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN: There is a procedure.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Why is it not being applied? ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI JAYANTHINATARAJAN: Sir, the staff speak only in Hindi. They do not speak in, any other language. We do not follow that... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM GOPAL YADAV: Shriman, fortunately, the Prime Minister is here, और मुझे ऐसा लगता है कि संसद सदस्यों के पत्रों के संबंध में जो अधिकारियों के बारे में बात की जा रही है, वह तो सेक्रेटरी है, प्राइम रिस्पॉन्सिबिलिटी तो मिनिस्टर्स की होती है। माननीय सदस्यों के जो लेटर्स जाते हैं, उन पर या तो मिनिस्टर्स डिजीजन लेना नहीं चाहते या डिजीजन लेते हैं तो अधिकारी मानते नहीं।*(व्यवधान)*..

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: The acknowledgement comes, but the reply

comes to MPs only after four years. By that time we forget the issue.

श्री रामगोपाल यादव: तो प्रश्न यह है कि कहीं-न — कहीं कोई गड़बड़ी मंत्रिस्तर पर है। ऐसा नहीं है कि मिनिस्टर डिजीजन ले और कहे, लेकिन कोई फैसला न हो। महोदय, यह राज्यों में तो मैंने सुना है, कि मंत्रियों के आदेशों का पालन अधिकारी नहीं करते, लेकिन मुझे ऐसा लगता है कि—

Either the Ministers are ignoring MPs or their orders are not being carried out. सर, मैं तो एक टीचर हूँ और टीचर होने के नाते ज्यादातर अध्यापक मेरे पास आते हैं। ह्यूमन रिसोर्स डवलपमेंट मिनिस्टर यहां बैठे हैं, मैं उन को पत्र लिखता हूँ कि पति और पत्नी एक ही विभाग में हजारों किलोमीटर दूर है। इस बारे में एम.पी. चिट्ठी लिखता है, बराबर 6-6 महीने से चिट्ठी लिखी जाती है जबकि उन के लिए कानून है कि दोनों को साथ रखना चाहिए। लेकिन उस के बाद भी कोई एक्शन नहीं होता है।

I am sorry to say this. The HRD Ministry is here. I have written at least twenty letters to his Ministry regarding these problems. People from my constituency come. Their daughters and their sons-in-law are working in the Department as teachers at different places, but they are not being brought together. So, I request the Prime Minister, through you, as he is present here, to direct all the Ministers at least to comply with genuine requests of Mems of Parliament.

Thank you.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Sir, I want the Minister to circulate the Manual of Office Procedure to all Members of Parliament so that we know our rights and we follow them and so that they can follow the protocol.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: They should supply it to both the Ministers and the Members of Parliament.

SHRI S. R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN: Sir, every Minister has got it. We will definitely circulate it to Members of Parliament.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, do you have any answer to Mr. Yadav's questions?

SHRI S. R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN: Sir, it is too general. We have given clear instructions and directions to all the Ministries. If a letter is received from an MP, it has to be acknowledged within fifteen days. It has to be attended to promptly. If it is addressed to a wrong Ministry, it will be sent to the concerned Ministry.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: But no reply to MPs' letters comes at all from the Ministers. Their letters are thrown into the waste-paper basket.

SHRI S. R. BALASUBRAMONIYA: After having been in Parliament, if he does not know how to elicit replies from the Ministers, it is his mistake.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHINATARAJAN: Sir, apart from letters, a very important issue is that even the matters which are raised on the floor of the House are ignored. Vinayji gets replies to letters which she has not written. Forget that. About the Zero Hour Mentions and the Special Mentions, there was a time-honoured practice that the Ministers would write to us stating what action they were taking or what the exact situation was regarding those matters. Of late, Sir, MPs are just being ignored totally. Even if they are sitting in Parliament, they totally ignore the matters raised, which you have cleared.

I want to know whether they would look into this and see that the Members who have raised issues on the floor of the House, get proper replies on those issues.

Thank you. Sir...(Interruptions)

The Minister should answer this, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Obviously, I can understand the Members are agitated about this. Obviously, a procedure has to be evolved by the Government for replying to Members of Parliament. But, they can do one thing. They can keep a register of all the letters received from hon. Members.

SHRI S. R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN: There is a register in every department. They are required to keep a register.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And then it should be possible to monitor the progress.

SHRI S. R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN: Sir, every Department is required to keep a register. Whenever there is a delay, the subordinates must tell the heads of Department that this is the reason why they have not replied. All these things are there. This Government, in particular, has taken care that whenever there is a letter from an M.P., it should be promptly attended to. *(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN: No, it is not being done.

SHRIU TRILOKI NATH
CHATURVEDI: What about the Special Mentions? *(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Prime Minister is saying something. Obviously, the Prime Minister has to direct.

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI H. D. DEVE GOWDA): Sir, I am equally concerned about the delay in the action taken by the Government on the letters written by hon. Members of both the Houses.

Sir, with my little of experience in the last ten months, I must say that the procedure that is being adopted is very cumbersome. I have received 34 thousand odd letters. Normally, I myself write in my own hand or refer these letters to the concerned Minister or Secretary. Sir, it is an interim reply that we give. When action has been taken, a final reply is communicated. But, in regard to taking a final decision, I am sorry to say that nobody is prepared to change the procedure which we have inherited from our forefathers. We are talking so much, but we have instances where the Cabinet decisions have been turned down by officers. I can quote a number of instances. Sir, this is not an issue to be taken lightly. *(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please listen to the Prime Minister.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: Please listen to me. If the House is serious, a House Committee can go into the whole issue. Several circular instructions have been issued by the previous Government and by the present Government time and again. But that is not going to solve the problem. The system, as it is now prevailing in the Government of India, is not like what obtains in the States. The system that is prevailing in the Government of India needs a fresh look. Otherwise, whatever may be the Members' feelings, I cannot do anything. I give you one example. If an hon. Member comes to me with a delegation for sanction of a sugar factory, I will refer the case to the Food Ministry. There a Committee will consider the case. From that it should go to the Industry Ministry. The Industry Ministry has to clear it. Then there will be a joint meeting of both the Ministries.

Then it will go to the Cabinet subcommittee. Then it comes to the final stage. That way it will take three months, four months, five months or even six months. I do not know how these things have been allowed to continue for fifty years. I feel disgusted. I am sorry to say this. What type of reply can I or my Ministers give? You are all senior leaders. When we receive a letter from the Members, we normally acknowledge it. Then and there we are not in a position to say whether it can be done or not, because they have to examine it. Even to give a specific direction that you must do it, the Ministers now-a-days are damnscares. *(Interruptions)* Just one second. It is not a thing to be mixed with politics.

Even to issue a specific direction or to overrule the opinion given by the Secretary, one has to think over several times. For example, a person from Karnataka or Kerala is working in the DSF in Kashmir and suddenly his mother dies, then, he would ask for a change to the CRPF. Even to issue a specific direction or to overrule the opinion expressed by the concerned Secretary, you have to think over 10 times because everybody would go to court.

Sir, if the House is really concerned, you can constitute a committee. Let them examine the procedures and then give us a suggestion to streamline the present system of administration. It is very difficult.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (SHRI. SIKANDER BAKHT): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I appreciate the agony of the Prime Minister with regard to the load of

work which is there, receiving so many letters, etc. Talking about the present administrative system, there may be some difficulty. But I take a very serious note of his saying that even the decisions of the Cabinet are being ignored by the officers. This is very serious. This has nothing to do with the system. It is something to do with the existing Government. *..(Interruptions)...* I would definitely like to have a reply from the Prime Minister whether he really means it or there has been some slip.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have quoted the decisions of the Cabinet. I have already quoted the orders of the Central Government in the other House. There is nothing of a slip.

SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT: If a Cabinet decision is ignored by the officers, then, how the Government *..(Interruptions)...*

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: Please hear me. Whatever decision has been taken by the Cabinet has to be supported by the rule of law. Suppose, there is no budget provision and the Cabinet takes a decision to pay Rs. 50 crores or Rs. 100 crores...

SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT: Sorry then, there is something wrong with the Cabinet.

SHRI H.D. DEVE GOWDA: Just wait. I have not gone into the details as to when it happened and how it happened. I only cited one or two instances as to how things are happening. So far as other issues are concerned, it is not so simple to give a final result within 15 days or 20 days. We can only give an interim reply by an acknowledgement. If you really want

that some changes have to be made, then, the entire House should apply its mind irrespective of political parties. All parties should sit together and consider it. We must change the present procedure; otherwise, things will go on like this. *..[Interruptions]...*

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Why is the Prime Minister helpless?

SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Prime Minister has suggested that a Committee be formed to go into the present working of the administrative system. I would request you to constitute a committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is already a departmental committee dealing with personnel. Let that committee look into it.

SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN: Yes, a committee can look into it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thereafter, if necessary, we can think of a specialised committee *..[Interruptions]...* I would refer it to the departmental committee in the first instance.

Now. Q. No. 364.

Land for Memorials

*364. SHRI ISH DUTT YADAV:
SHRI RAM GOPAL YADAV:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased 'to state:

(a) the allotment of land made so far for the memorials of political leaders, including late Prime Ministers; and

(b) the area covered in each case and the estimated cost of the land and structures involved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (Dr. U. VENKATESWARLU): (a) and (b) Land for memorials of political leaders has been made available either free or on token recovery of licence fee of Re. V-. A statement indicating the extent of land, estimated cost of structures is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

The memorails of late leaders are located in some of Government bungalows. In some cases land has been allotted⁷ utilised for setting up of their memorials. The area allotted⁷ utilised covered in each case and the estimated cost of structures involved is as follows:—

SI. No.	Name of the Samadhis	Area covered (in Acres)	Cost of structure (Rs. in crores)
1.	Raj Ghat Samadhi Committee	59.00	01.20
2.	Gandhi Smarak Nidhi	06.199	—
3.	Gandhi Darsan Samiti	36.92	—
4.	Kisan Ghat (carved out of Rajghat area)	19.00	01.02
5.	Vir Bhumi carved out of Shakti Sthala land)	15.00	06.70

*The Question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Ish Dutt Yadav.