

Nagaland, Sikkim and J & K, it is nil. In the last three months, you have not taken up any such projects in these States which require our help. In view of that, the picture is very tardy. The Government wants to give potable water to all the villages. But, unfortunately, the figures which have been shown for the current year are very pathetic. As such, I would like to know what the schemes of the Minister are to see that these targets which have been mentioned will be achieved by the end of the financial year.

डा० जगन्नाथ मिश्र: सभापति महोदय, यह बात सही है कि पिछले तीन महीने की प्रगति असंतोषजनक है। इस मंत्रालय का भार लेने के तुरन्त बाद जो हमने समीक्षा की तो हमने अनुभव किया कि प्रगति बहुत धीमी है। इसलिए हमने तत्काल सभी मुख्य मंत्रियों को पत्र लिखा है कि ग्रामीण पेयजल आपूर्ति योजना को प्राथमिकता दी जाए। जिन राज्यों की मैंने अलग-अलग समीक्षा की है, खास तौर से बिहार और आन्ध्र प्रदेश इन दोनों प्रदेशों में मैं खय गया था और इन दोनों प्रदेशों में वहां की स्थिति मैंने देखी है। तो वहां भी हमने ध्यान आकृष्ट किया है कि बिहार में जो राशि आवंटित की गई है उसका व्यय नहीं हुआ है। यही स्थिति आन्ध्र प्रदेश की भी है। हमने सभी मुख्य मंत्रियों से कहा है कि भारत सरकार द्वारा जो राशि दी जा रही है उसका प्रयोग प्राथमिकता के आधार पर किया जाए।

Enactment of Lok Pal Bill

*62. **SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA:**[†]
SHRIMATI RENUKA
CHOWDHURY:

Will the **PRIME MINISTER** be pleased to state:

(a) the response of the leaders of all the political parties to the letter addressed by the Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions on 31st May, 1995 asking for comments to bring about consensus on the enactment of Lokpal Bill in the current Session; and

(b) the names of leaders or MPs who have responded to the invitation to send

suggestion on Lokpal including the response of major National parties and by when Government are planning to call a meeting of all political parties and groups to find out a consensus?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SMT. MARGARET ALVA): (a) 49 Hon'ble Members of Parliament were addressed out of which 5 Members have responded till 28.7.95.

(b) **Shri E. Ahamed**, Muslim League, **Shri Jaswant Singh**, BJP, **Shri Chimanbhai Mehta**, Independent, **Ms. Dil Kumari Bhandari**, SSP, **Shri Chaturanan Mishra**, CPI have responded to the invitation of MOS(PP). **Shri Jaswant Singh** has suggested that the matter be left to the next Lok Sabha.

श्री चिमनभाई मेहता: सर, यह बहुत निराशाजनक बात है कि मेरे पूछे गए प्रश्न में मैंने पूछा है कि लोकपाल के बारे में सर्वसम्मति तैयार करने हेतु सरकार सभी राजनैतिक दलों और गुटों की एक बैठक कब तक बुलाने पर विचार कर रही है। अब प्रश्न तो मैंने यह पूछा है कि आप बैठक कब बुलायेंगे आप देख लीजिए सभापति महोदय कि जो जवाब दिया गया है, यह जो मुख्य प्रश्न है उनका उत्तर उसके हिसाब से कोई जगह नहीं पा रहा है। आलतू-फालतू की बातें ही बताई गई हैं कि कब करना चाहिए और कब नहीं करना चाहिए, लेकिन आप लोकपाल के बारे में कब मीटिंग बुलाने जा रही हैं यह नहीं बताया है। बार-बार आपने टाला है और पांच वर्ष से टाल रहे हैं, अब कितने दिन और टालेंगे? यह तो अनुयुक्त बातें हो रही हैं। नॉन-आफीशियल रेज़ोल्यूशन जब होता है तब भी गवर्नमेंट टालने की कोशिश कर रही है।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please put the question.

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Therefore, my question is, when are you going to call a meeting to bring about a consensus on the Lokpal Bill? That is my main point.

SMT. MARGARET ALVA: Sir, I am sorry, but I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Member to this. He says that my answer is irrelevant. The first part of the question is about the

[†]The Question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Chimanbhai Mehta.

response of the leaders of all the political parties to the letter addressed by the Minister.... (Interruptions).

Part (a) of the question is about the response. I have given you the details of the response. The second part of the question is about the names of leaders or MPs who have responded. Again, you have put the question and when I give you the names of the MPs which you have asked for, you say my answer is irrelevant. The last part of the question says, "When will you call the meeting?"

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: That is the most important point.

SMT. MARGARET ALVA: It might be, to you. But I am coming by the order. I would like to say one thing to you, through Mr. Chairman, as we have said earlier also—I had said in this House—that we are addressing letters to all the political parties for their comments. After we receive them, we would put them all together and then call a meeting. I only want to say that we have waited. Out of the 49 leaders of the political parties in the two Houses that we had addressed, only five had responded and out of that, the BJP reply has been that we should leave this to the successor Government and not go into this question at this stage. The Muslim League has written to us saying that they will send us their comments later. Ms Dil Kumari Bhandari is the one who has said that she would want the Prime Minister and the Chief Ministers included. Mr. Chaturanan Mishra has replied and there is a detailed reply from Mr. Chimanbhai Mehta. If the House feels that we should not wait for any responses from the political parties, we are prepared to call a meeting next month or by the end of this month after Parliament adjourns, and have a meeting with the political leaders and get their opinion. But we were waiting for a response from the political leaders.

श्री चिमनभाई मेहता: अब बात फिर अपोनीशन से चलने की कोशिश हो रही है। अब हाउस सम्मति दे

तो, हाउस कैसे सम्मति दे? हाथ ऊँचा करके सम्मति दे कि आप मीटिंग बुला लें, हाउस कैसे सम्मति दे? आप खुद कह रही हैं कि आप बिल बनाने के लिए तैयार हैं। आप प्रोसिजर में इतनी देर लगा रही हैं। आपने पूछा, किसी ने जवाब दिया, किसी ने नहीं दिया। सबको बिठाकर एक बार आप तय क्यों नहीं कर लेती, उसकी डेट क्यों फिक्स नहीं कर लेती कि भाई उस दिन हम बुलाने जा रहे हैं जिसको दिलचस्पी है वह आ जाए। आपको कर्तव्य तो वही था कि आपको ड्राफ्ट देना चाहिए था प्वाइंडर्स पर कि कौन से प्वाइंडर्स पर लोकपाल का बिल बनना चाहिए, वह आप देती नहीं हैं। जितने पुराने एक्ट या बिल यहाँ रखे गए, सभी का जुमला करके हमको भेज दिया, अब कितने दिन पढ़ने में लगेंगे। ये पांच प्वाइंडर्स हैं। इसलिए हमने 5 प्वाइंडर्स पर दे दिया। आप अब भी तय कर दीजिए, आप हाउस की सम्मति अभी चाहती हैं तो ले लीजिए और अगर हाउस न कहता है तो फिर आप कर सकती हैं बाद में।

You ask for the permission of the House just now. Yesterday, you had given the warning. तो मेरा क्वेश्चन है कि (व्यवधान)....

MR. CHAIRMAN: She has answered your question.

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: No, no. She hasn't answered.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If you wanted a different answer, you should have worded your question differently.

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: No, no. She has read out. She said that my question about convening of the meeting was at serial number 3. (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please ask your question.

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Whether my question was at serial number 3 or 4, the House has given a consent to you. You know about it, Sir. The Minister should call a meeting. When is she calling a meeting? Kindly give the date.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Sir, the hon. Member said that I have sent a whole file of papers. We had sent two draft Bills one of which was studied by the Joint Select Committee earlier. As

the House is aware, five attempts have been made to work out a consensus by which this Bill can be passed. I have sent you only two Bills—the 1985 Bill which was introduced by the Congress Government and the 1989 Bill which was introduced by the V.P. Singh Government. These were the two Bills which were current and which were studied by the Joint Select Committee. We circulated them and said that we would like to have their comments because there were differences between the two Bills. We have not received them and I was waiting, hoping that some response would come. As I said earlier, certain parties are not interested in immediately pushing it through. As I said earlier we wanted a national debate and we wanted some response. ~~We~~ We are prepared to call a meeting of all the political leaders so that a consensus can be worked out. I will not make an announcement about the date today. But immediately after the Session, during the inter-Session period, we are prepared to call a meeting.

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: If she is prepared to call a meeting, I am satisfied.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shrimati Renuka Chowdhury—not present. *(Interruptions)* Mr. Surinder Kumar Singla, you cannot raise your hand and stand up by yourself. Please sit down. Shri S.R. Bommai.

SHRI SOMAPPA R. BOMMAI: Sir, the Lokpal Bill has been pending for the last many years. It has been discussed by various Committees and it has been debated in the House also. I would like to know whether the Government has a mind to bring in the Lokpal Bill or not. If you have got a mind, then bring it in the next Session. Why do you want to wait for the next Lok Sabha? If you are interested in preventing corruption at the higher levels *....(Interruptions)...*

SHRI M.A. BABY: They want to give you the credit.

SHRI SOMAPPA R. BOMMAI: From

the date this Government came into existence up till now there have been scandals to the tune of Rs. 1,00,000 crores. The Committees' Reports have come. You don't want to show the Report on disinvestment. So many reports have come. Don't you feel the urgency of this Bill? If you don't feel, say so; otherwise, try to bring it in the next session.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Sir, I am not passing any opinion on anything. All I am saying is that we have been saying that in 1989 you introduced a Bill. It was not studied by any committee. It was introduced. There was no need to delay. You did not pass it. You had two years. *(Interruptions)....* My point is *....(Interruptions)...*

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: We had got only 11 months.

SHRI SOMAPPA R. BOMMAI: In 11 months we had brought it. We had introduced it.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Sir, the Bills have been introduced five times by different Governments including the Government of 1977. The Bills were not passed because you yourselves found that there was no consensus on many parts of the Bill even after they were introduced. My simple point is that if there was a consensus on either the 1989 Bill or the 1985 Bill, let us work it out. We have a draft Bill which I have circulated. You have wanted the draft Bill to be circulated. We have circulated both, the 1985 and the 1989 Bills, and we have asked for your comments. If you send us your comments and point out which of them is acceptable to you, then we can proceed further. But we have not received any comment of any kind. Some parties say, "You wait for the next Parliament to assemble." Others say, "We will send our comments later." We must have some response to know on what basis some consensus can be worked out.

SYED SIBTEY RAZI: Sir, I submit

that the point which I was having in my mind was covered by the hon. Minister. So, there is no need for me to put the question.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, it is a question of political will on the part of the ruling party. Sir, I had the privilege of serving on the Joint Committee on Lokpal Bill. The Joint Committee had very senior Members from each party including Shri Advani of the BJP. It had five Ministers of the Rajiv Gandhi Government. We went round the country for three years and took evidence from experts and State Governments. When we were concluding our labours, the then Minister of Internal Security, Mr. Chidambaram, made a statement before the Joint Committee on behalf of the Government that the Government did not deem it necessary to institute a Lokpal at all. So, the Government should first make it clear that it wants to bring forward this Bill. I don't think we need to respond in writing. It is not an academic exercise because I know this to be a political exercise, an exercise in hypocrisy. If you are serious about the Bill, come forward with the Bill. We will make our recommendations and amendments. Will you come forward with any Bill of your kind which brings within its purview the Office of the Prime Minister and the Chief Ministers.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Sir, I want to make it very clear that in this House the Prime Minister himself has given an assurance and made a commitment...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: What is this assurance worth of?

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: ...that he will ensure that the office of Prime Minister, the question which you have raised, is brought within the purview of the Bill. *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: But you are not bringing in the Bill.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: We have absolutely no hesitation about

it. Sir, Mr. Jaipal Reddy just now said that in 1985 there was a total consensus on some Bill which was before the House. It is strange that in spite of that, in 1989, when they were in power, they brought a new Bill with different perceptions. If they had all agreed on the 1985 Bill, then it could have been reintroduced in 1989. *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: No, we did not. We differed in 1985. Your Government at that time did not want to bring the office of Prime Minister within the purview of the Lokpal. That was the bone of contention.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: You had brought it in 1989 in a changed form which you could have immediately passed, if you were serious about it. But, you yourself... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: When you were colluding with everybody to depose our Government...*(Interruptions)*... How could we have got any Bill passed? *(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Why? *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: What about you?

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: We made a commitment and I stand by it.

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH: After the elections?

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: No. We want to...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: What about the Bill? *(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Sir, we had circulated the two Bills *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: You introduce the Bill in the House. We shall pass it in one day. *(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Sir, we want to have a consensus...*(Interruptions)*.

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH: You

introduce the Bill. We will pass the Bill. (Interruptions)...

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, what is required is will, not the Bill. The question is whether the Government has the will for the Bill.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Yes, Sir. We have the will for the Bill. We are very keen to get this Bill passed. (Interruptions)... One Minute. Let me finish. If the Members of the House say that they will accept the Bill that the Government introduces, as a consensus, I am prepared to introduce it. If the Members say that they have no suggestions and they will pass the Bill that the Government introduces without the consensus, I accept that. (Interruptions)...

SHRI INDER KUMAR GUJRAL: Sir, ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Chaturanan Mishra. I cannot call all the Members of one party to put supplementaries.

श्री चतुरानन मिश्र: सभापति महोदय। मैं सरकार की दिकत को समझता हूँ। अभी चुनाव आने वाले हैं और फंड संग्रह होगा। तब यह बिल पास करना उनके हित में नहीं होगा।

श्री दिग्विजय सिंह: क्या संग्रह होगा?

श्री चतुरानन मिश्र: फंड, कोष संग्रह होगा। आम चुनाव नजदीक है। उसी वक्त में यह बिल पास करना सरकार के लिए उचित नहीं होगा और जो लोग सत्ता में जाने वाले हैं, वह भी शायद चाहते होंगे कि अगली लोक सभा में हो। कुछ ऐसी बात हो सकती है।

श्री दिग्विजय सिंह: अगली लोक सभा के बाद ... (व्यवधान)

श्री चतुरानन मिश्र: अब हमने किसी का नाम नहीं लिया है। जो लोग अपने से समझ जाए कि हम ही वह हैं तो इसमें हम क्या करें। ... (व्यवधान)

डा० मुरली मनोहर जोशी: आप नहीं जा रहे हैं, इसके लिए धन्यवाद। ... (व्यवधान)

श्री चतुरानन मिश्र: तो मेरा प्रश्न यह है कि क्योंकि भ्रष्टाचार का मामला इतना संगीन हो गया है कि देश चलाना मुश्किल हो गया है और जब प्रधान मंत्री स्वयं

सहमत हो गये हैं कि उनका नाम लिया गया है तब इसे अगली बैठक के लिए नहीं, जल्द से जल्द लाइए और यह कलंक आप अपना मिटा लीजिए। क्या आप इसके लिए राजी होंगे?

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: I am sorry, Sir. We have no sin to wash away, whatever they mean by that. I would like to say that we are prepared to take the initiative and since the House wants the Government, without waiting for the replies or the comments, to take the initiative, I shall certainly convey it to the Prime Minister and proceed with it.

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: Sir, just to supplement what Shri Jaipal Reddy, said, it appears that the will for the Bill is nil. Sir, the main difference between the 1985 Bill and the 1989 Bill was that the office of the Prime Minister was not brought within the purview of the 1985 Bill. The office of the Prime Minister was brought within the purview of the 1989 Bill. When Minister is saying that the Prime Minister is willing to accept the condition of bringing the office of Prime Minister within the scope, within the jurisdiction of the Lokpal Bill, what stands in the way of bringing this Bill tomorrow? It would require only small amendments here and there. I would like to put the same question. Why should not this Bill be brought in in this Session? What is the problem? All the points have been agreed upon, including bringing the office of Prime Minister within the purview of the Bill. What is the problem? This is my question.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Sir, this is his opinion which I have noticed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 63. Shrimati Basanti Sarma.

SHRI SURINDER SINGH SINGLA: Sir, I also raised my hand.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Not now. That question is over.

Now, Question No. 63.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Sir,...

श्री दिग्विजय सिंह: महोदय, मेरा व्यवस्था का एक सवाल है। मेरी बात को सुन लीजिए।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let me say something. *(Interruptions)*... I have something to say. The Prime Minister has written to me that—as you know since he is on an official visit to Malaysia, he will not be able answer the questions. He has authorised Shrimati Margaret Alva to answer on his behalf. *(Interruptions)*... If one person speaks, I will be able to listen to him.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Sir, the point is that there is a Minister of State looking after the office of the Prime Minister. It is understood that the Minister has gone for discharging an international obligation. But what could be the reason for the absence of the Minister of State looking after the Prime Minister's Office?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, no. He has also written to me...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, why is Mr. Bhuvnesh Chaturvedi absent?

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH: Yes. Why is Mr. Chaturvedi absent? *(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of State has also written to me and the Prime Minister has talked to me that Mr. Chaturvedi has to sign certain agreements in Malaysia and, therefore, he has to go with him. This has been explained by the Prime Minister to me.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Mr. Chaturvedi is the shadow of the Prime Minister. He has to go.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. He has some science agreements to sign. *(Interruptions)*...

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर: सर, मेरा प्रस्ताव यह है कि इस सवाल को प्रधान मंत्री के आने तक टाल दिया जाए। ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री दिग्विजय सिंह: सर, गृह मंत्री इसका जवाब दें।

The Home Minister should reply. Jammu and Kashmir is not an ordinary State. Let the Home Minister reply to it. *(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: When Mrs. Margaret Alva will reply, I think the Home Minister ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH: Sir, I respect Margaret Alvaji's capability to answer the question. But considering the gravity of the situation, we would request the Home Minister to reply on this issue. *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S.B. CHAVAN: I think the matter is absolutely clear. The Prime Minister informed the hon. Chairman that he has to go to Malaysia. He also said that Margaret Alvaji will be able to reply to all the questions. If necessary, I would also try to help her. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: What do you mean by helping her? What is wrong in your replying to it? If you reply, heavens will not fall.

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH: Sir, if he can help her, why can't he himself reply? *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Sir, we want the Question to be deferred.

SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH: Yes, the Question should be deferred. Let only the Prime Minister reply. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI S.B. CHAVAN: Sir, I am prepared to reply. *(Interruptions)* If the hon. Members want it, I am prepared to reply. *(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Home Minister is saying that he is prepared to answer the Question himself. Question No. 63.