

CALLING ATTENTION TO THE MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Incidents of radiation exposure detected in a scrap market in Delhi

SHRI D. RAJA (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I beg to call the attention of the Minister to the situation arising out of the incidents of radiation exposure detected in a scrap market in Delhi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY; THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF EARTH SCIENCES; THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE; THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS; AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): Sir, on the afternoon of 7th April, 2010, a fax was received by the National Radiation Regulatory Authority, Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) office from Indraprastha Apollo Hospital, Delhi, stating that one person, aged 32 years, owner of a scrap shop in Mayapuri Industrial Area, New Delhi had been admitted on 4th April, 2010. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री विनय कटियार (उत्तर प्रदेश) : सर, यह कापी सिर्फ अंग्रेजी में है, इसकी हिन्दी कॉपी नहीं है ...*(व्यवधान)*... राज्य सभा में यह देखा गया है कि यह सरकार अंग्रेजी को मान्यता देती है ...*(व्यवधान)*... नोटिस की हिन्दी कॉपी हमारे पास नहीं पहुँची है।

श्री उपसभापति : अभी देख रहे हैं ...*(व्यवधान)*... इसकी हिन्दी कॉपी अभी मंगवा रहे हैं।

SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN: Sir, the message stated that the patient had symptoms indicative of suspected exposure of radiation and requested advice on further course of action. Pursuant to the above, officers from AERB visited the place immediately with radiation detection equipments and monitored the radiation levels at various positions near the scrap shop in the evening of 7th April. The said shop as well as a couple of nearby shops were found to have very high radiation fields. Next day, teams of Radiation Safety Experts from BARC, AERB & Narora Atomic Power Station were sent to Delhi with a wide range of radiation monitoring, detecting equipments and lead flask to locate, identify, recover, safely secure and dispose radioactive sources. They started their work by 8th mid-night. The entire area was cordoned off by Delhi Police for access control.

...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री कमाल अख्तर (उत्तर प्रदेश) : सर, ...*(व्यवधान)*... आप हमें अपनी बात कहने का मौका नहीं दे रहे हैं। ...*(व्यवधान)*... इसलिए हम वाक आऊट करते हैं। ...*(व्यवधान)*...

(तत्पश्चात् कुछ सदस्य सदन से उठ कर बाहर चले गए)

SHRI PRITHVI RAJ CHAVAN: The response team identified the radiation source as Cobalt-60, used mainly in industry for radiography and in tele-therapy for cancer treatment. During search operation that continued throughout the night and up to noon on 9th April, the team could locate, recover and secure eight sources of different intensity. These sources were placed in lead shielded flask and were sent to Narora for further examination and safe disposal.

A radiation survey of scrap metal shops in neighbouring areas was taken up. The search team recovered two more radioactive sources from one nearby scrap shop. In another incident, a small Cobalt-60 radiation pencil was recovered from the owner of another scrap shop in the same market after he was admitted to hospital. All the sources were safely transported in shielded flasks to Narora. The radiation sources recovered are being examined at Narora to determine their origins.

As a matter of abundant caution, the entire surrounding area consisting of around 800 shops was scanned by four joint teams of BARC, AERB and NDRF when the shops were closed on the night of 14th April. At the entrance of the market, a small patch of soil was found having slight contamination. The contaminated soil showed Cobalt-60 contamination but of very low order. The soil up to a depth of few centimeters was removed to bring down the radiation field. The entire area has been certified to be free of elevated radiation fields.

In the above incidents, 7 persons were found to be affected by radiation injuries and 11 sources were recovered. The affected persons are being treated at various hospitals in Delhi. Delhi Police have registered an F.I.R. on 08.04.2010 and are investigating the case.

It may be emphasized that these incidences/ radiation exposures are not related to any of the DAE activities or facilities in the country.

It may be recalled that the Government had set up the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) in 2005. The NDMA has raised and trained four battalions of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) for responding to radiological emergencies. Also, the DAE has established eighteen well-equipped Emergency Response Centres at different parts of the country for preparedness and response to any radiological emergency in the public domain.

The NDMA has been mandated to coordinate, review and augment the national capabilities and infrastructure to detect, prevent and respond to radiological incidents of all kinds.

A variety of Radioactive Material Detection equipment is being installed at various Border points – seaports, airports and landports. The detection capabilities have been aimed as per international guidelines and specifications (Mega Port Initiative compliant) to detect a variety of radioactive substances emitting gamma rays and neutrons. In addition, portable equipments are being procured for use by National Disaster Response Force of NDMA and by Emergency Response Teams of the DAE for radiation detection. Capacity is being created for inspection of Trucks/containers passing on the road (vehicle monitors), Portal monitors to inspect personnel at entry/exit, Handheld detection equipment for close scrutiny including Isotope identification. The Ministry of Home, Disaster Management and Ministry of Shipping have been identified as the nodal Ministries to implement the installation and operation of these equipment. A total of 12 seaports and 14 airports have been surveyed by inter-Ministry teams, including DAE, Home Ministry, Shipping and Civil Aviation and an integrated scheme has been worked out including information exchange.

The DAE is the nodal agency to examine and approve the efficacy of equipment, operating procedures, and training. Electronics Corporation of India Ltd., under the Department of Atomic Energy has the capability to produce all the equipment needed. Implementation of the aforementioned scheme is in progress.

The DAE has organised courses to train the Front Line Officers, FLOs on the issues of detection, intradiction and response related to radiological incidents. A workshop, in association with the IAEA has been planned during May 10-19, 2010 in Mumbai on "Combating Malicious Acts Involving Radioactive Materials at Major Public Events".

Sir, I would like to assure this august House that all possible care is being taken to ensure that the country is prepared to handle any radiological emergency arising in the public domain.

SHRI D. RAJA : Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, at the outset, I appreciate the presence of the hon. Prime Minister when the House discusses such a very important issue. But, Sir, the Statement given by the Minister is not convincing to accept that the Government is prepared to face any situation. The radiation mishap in the Mayapuri Scrap Market in Delhi has really exposed the unpreparedness and the ill-preparedness of the nation. Due to Cobalt-60 radioactive isotopes, seven persons have been seriously affected, as admitted in the Statement; and more than 35 persons are under treatment,

according to some independent reports. There is little monitoring of various sources of radiation, including medical waste. Now, the practice is, the medical waste is generally disposed along with normal waste.

Sir, there is definitely regulatory failure and lack of professional competence to face such situation. It is reported that the Metal Scrap Market which is exposed to such nuclear hazards employs more than 20,000 people in 6000 shops. Of these 6000 shops, about 250 are scrap importers and only 50 of the 250 dealers are registered. They are the only registered.

Sir, now the Statement says, "It may be emphasised that these incidents, radiation exposures are not related to any of the DAE activities or facilities in the country". This has been echoed by a reported statement made by Dr. S. Banerjee, Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission. Dr. Banerjee is reported to have said that whatever happened in Delhi had nothing to do with the activities of his Department. The scrap materials come from other countries and it was not possible for the Department of Atomic Energy to check the entry points or to detect at entry points, if there were any radioactive material. Checking all the containers laden with scrap was not possible". Sir, I am quoting Dr. Banerjee, which has been reported in the newspapers. "Checking all the containers laden with scrap materials was not possible. Instead scanning could be done. While a decision to install scanners has been taken, implementation was taking time", Dr. Banerjee said.

This is indeed, I consider, an appalling statement from the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission. Sir, if we look at all encompassing responsibility is entrusted solely to Atomic Energy Commission and its subordinate institutions like Atomic Energy Regulatory Board. Sir, the stipulations related to nuclear safety in India were originally brought out clearly in the Atomic Energy Act, 1962, in particular, Section 16 of the Act stipulates that the Central Government may prohibit the manufacture, possession, use, transfer by sale or otherwise, export and import and in an emergency transport and disposal of any radioactive substances without its written consent. This is the Act of 1962 and the Act has several provisions. There are Sections 16, 17 and 23 which give enough powers to Atomic Energy Commission and the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board. They are being empowered to exercise full powers as a competent authority. But here the statement says that nothing is related to the activity of the Department of Atomic Energy. I do not understand this position of the

Government. Under these circumstances, the Central Government and in particular the Atomic Energy Commission and the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board have to bear the sole responsibility for the tragic overexposure of radiation which happened in Delhi. They should take the responsibility. The scrap dealers or the employees working there are the victims of the inaction of these Government agencies which have totally failed to put in the necessary controls and procedures to prevent such an incident from happening. Therefore, these victims have to be adequately compensated by the Government for the short and long term dangers they will be suffering from. Sir, having said that I must also point out that there are reports talking about..

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Raja, this is not a debate. You seek only clarifications.

SHRI D. RAJA: I am seeking clarification only. That is why I quoted the statement. His statement is not adequate; it does not address the real issue. In fact, it absolves the responsibility of the Atomic Energy Commission. If you agree to that position, then, it is a very sad situation in the country because after 123 Agreement, the country will face a different situation and where the Civil Liabilities legislation, proposed legislation is in public domain. ...(Time-bell rings)... But we will have to face such a serious situation in the coming days and when it comes before the Parliament, we will discuss. What I am trying to say is that it is a very serious issue. What is the regulatory mechanism? Do you think that it can be just like that it is dealt with by the National Disaster Management Agency or some Pollution Control Board? Do you think this is so simple an issue that they can be left to the State Governments or certain Boards? I think the Atomic Energy Commission and the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board should take the responsibility and the statement does not address that central issue. Thank you.

श्री कलराज मिश्र (उत्तर प्रदेश) : उपसभापति जी, इस ध्यानाकर्षण प्रस्ताव द्वारा एक बड़े गंभीर विषय की तरफ ध्यान आकृष्ट किया गया है। राजधानी के मायापुरी इलाके में स्कैप मार्केट में कोबाल्ट-60 के रेडियेशन से गामा किरणों के द्वारा 7 लोग इसके शिकार हुए हैं। यह बात सही है कि उनकी जान तो बच गई है, लेकिन उनको कैंसर होने की संभावना से इंकार नहीं किया जा सकता। मंत्री जी ने अपने वक्तव्य में सारी बातों को स्पष्ट करने का प्रयत्न किया है, लेकिन इस संबंध में कुछ नहीं बताया है कि यद्यपि भारत में कोबाल्ट-60 मार्केट में प्रतिबंधित है, लेकिन प्रतिबंधित होने के बावजूद भी वह कबाड़ में कैसे पहुंच गया? इसे इंडस्ट्री को देने की एक निश्चित मात्रा रहती है और उसके बाद निश्चित मात्रा में इसे वैज्ञानिकों द्वारा dispose किया जाता है। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या वैज्ञानिकों द्वारा एप्रूव किए जाने के बाद ही यह निश्चित मात्रा से दिया गया और इसका disposal हुआ? इस बारे में

वक्तव्य में कोई स्पष्टीकरण नहीं है। अगर ऐसा रहा होता, तो शायद कबाड़खाने में यह स्थिति न होती। जहां यह चीज हुई है, जो इसके लिए दोषी हैं, उनके विरुद्ध कोई कार्यवाही करने या कोई दंड देने का प्रावधान नहीं है। मंत्री जी ने कहा है कि 337 के तहत उनके विरुद्ध मुकदमा दर्ज किया गया है, जो नाकाफी है, बहुत कम है और इसके कारण यह स्थिति होगी कि लोग यह काम करते ही जाएंगे। साथ ही साथ इसके जो शिकार हो जाते हैं, विकिरण के कारण जो रोगी हो जाते हैं, परेशान हो जाते हैं, उनके लिए चिकित्सा की कोई व्यवस्था नहीं है। यह ठीक है कि लोकनायक जयप्रकाश नारायण अस्पताल में इसके लिए कोई एक विशेष वार्ड है, लेकिन और कहीं ऐसे रोगियों के इलाज की व्यवस्था नहीं है। इससे पीड़ित अगर कोई रोगी आता है, तो उसका इलाज कैसे किया जाए, इसके लिए कोई चिकित्सालय नहीं है।

उपसभापति जी, आने वाले दिनों में कॉमनवेल्थ गेम्स होने वाले हैं, तब स्थिति और भयंकर हो सकती है, इसके लिए क्या व्यवस्था की गई है? हालांकि इसमें कई सुझाव आपने दिए हैं, लेकिन पुलिस को Radiation Detection Meter उपलब्ध कराने के लिए क्या कोई विचार किया गया है, ताकि इसको रोका जा सके? इस संदर्भ में मैं यह भी जानना चाहूंगा कि यह जो E-Waste है, यानी कंप्यूटर, सी.डी., मोबाइल, टी.वी. आदि का जो वेस्ट है, यद्यपि भारत में E-Waste के इंपोर्ट पर प्रतिबंध है, लेकिन सरकार के दुर्लभ रवैये के कारण, यह बड़ी तादाद में आता है। UN की एक रिपोर्ट के अनुसार भारत और चीन को जल्दी ही E-Waste को जमा करने और नष्ट करने के लिए एक बड़ी पॉलिसी की आवश्यकता है। हमारे देश में सालाना 4-5 लाख टन E-Waste पैदा होता है और 97 प्रतिशत जमीन में गाड़ दिया जाता है। अभी आपने बताया कि जमीन के अंदर कुछ परीक्षण किया गया, तो उसमें भी E-Waste के कुछ अंश पाए गए। यह E-Waste जमीन के अंदर गाड़ दिया जाता है, जो जमीन की उपजाऊ शक्ति को खत्म कर देता है, जिससे वातावरण प्रदूषित हो जाता है। इसलिए E-Waste की recycling and disposal के लिए सही पॉलिसी बनाने के संबंध में अगर सरकार विचार करे, तो ज्यादा अच्छा होगा।

उपसभापति जी, भाभा परमाणु रिसर्च सेंटर और नरोरा एटॉमिक पावर प्लांट, इनकी जांच के बाद ही यह जानकारी मिली है कि ये लोग रेडियेशन के शिकार हैं। क्या आपने इन दोनों संस्थाओं को इनकी और जांच करने के लिए कहा है, ताकि पता लगे कि कितना कोबाल्ट-60 है? अभी हमारे मित्र, श्री डी. राजा ने उस कानून के बारे में जिक्र किया, जिसमें यह प्रावधान है कि बाहर से आने के बाद उसकी क्या स्थिति हो सकती है, उसे कैसे रोका जा सकता है। हमारे देश में इस तरह से कबाड़खानों में ये सारी चीजें पाई जा रही हैं कि उन्होंने dumping stations का रूप ले लिया है। इसको कैसे रोका जा सकता है? क्या सरकार के पास इसको जांचने के लिए कोई एजेंसी नहीं है, कोई निगरानी समिति नहीं है, जो पता लगा सके कि कबाड़ के अंदर क्या-क्या आ रहा है? इसके पूर्व गाजियाबाद

में नवम्बर, 2005 में कबाड़ में रॉकेट लांचर के विस्फोट से कई लोग हताहत हुए थे, लेकिन उसके बारे में भी विस्तार से कोई जानकारी नहीं आई और उसको रोकने के लिए क्या किया जा रहा है, यह बात भी उभरकर सामने नहीं आई। सरकार के पास कबाड़ खरीदने वाले व्यापारियों की सूची नहीं है। यह जरूरी नहीं है कि कबाड़ व्यापारी अपना रजिस्ट्रेशन करवाए, यह ऐच्छिक है। क्या आप इस पर विचार करेंगे कि यह रजिस्ट्रेशन ऐच्छिक नहीं होना चाहिए? सरकार को इस बारे में भी जानकारी हासिल करनी चाहिए कि इन कबाड़ व्यापारियों का रजिस्ट्रेशन है या नहीं।

कबाड़ की आड़ में खतरनाक हथियार को देश में लाकर assemble करके बेचा जा रहा है। क्या सरकार को इस बात की जानकारी है? इसके बारे में जानकारी हो, तो बताने का कष्ट करेंगे। इसके मार्केट केवल दिल्ली में ही नहीं हैं, बल्कि देश के अन्य शहरों में भी हैं। उनकी क्या स्थिति होगी? इसके पूर्व ऐसे कितने प्रभावित लोग चिकित्सा के अभाव में दम तोड़ चुके हैं। इसका कोई आंकड़ा नहीं है। ...**(समय की घंटी)**... मान्यवर, मैं केवल सवाल पूछ रहा हूँ, कोई भाषण नहीं कर रहा हूँ ...**(व्यवधान)**...

श्री उपसभापति : आपके पांच मिनट हो गए हैं। अब तक आपने सवाल नहीं पूछे, तो क्या पूछें?

श्री कलराज मिश्र : यह कबाड़ का ही तो मामला है, कबाड़ से ही तो सारा विध्वंस हो रहा है ...**(व्यवधान)**...

श्री उपसभापति : देखिए, अभी बहुत से माननीय सदस्यों को बोलना है ...**(व्यवधान)**...

श्री कलराज मिश्र : कबाड़ के बारे में ध्यान नहीं दिया जाएगा, तो किस चीज़ के बारे में ध्यान दिया जाएगा, इसलिए इसको interrupt नहीं करें, तो ज्यादा अच्छा है। कबाड़ से ही ये चीज़ें पैदा हो रही हैं। आज यह किरण जो कबाड़ से आया है, उसी की मैं चर्चा कर रहा हूँ। कबाड़ किरण जिस देश से आया है, क्या इसको बेचने वाली कंपनी ने सूचित किया था कि यह रेडिएशन स्क्रेप है? अगर हां, तो इस तरह की घोर लापरवाही क्यों बरती गई है? हमारे परमाणु केन्द्र में छेड़छाड़ और परमाणु प्लांट की जिम्मेदारी के संबंध में देश में गंभीर चर्चा चल रही है। यदि इसको रोका नहीं गया, तो यह घटना भविष्य के लिए बहुत खतरनाक हो सकती है। क्या हम इस तरह कबाड़ स्क्रेप के माध्यम से किसी भी गंभीर घटना को अंजाम देने के लिए आतंकवादियों और देशद्रोहियों को खुला मौका नहीं दे रहे हैं? इस घटना के बाद आपदा प्रबंधन तंत्र, जिसकी आपने चर्चा की है, की कार्य प्रणाली और क्षमता के बारे में क्या review करेंगे और अगर कमी है, तो उस कमी को दूर करने का प्रयत्न करेंगे?

श्री उपसभापति : यह डिबेट नहीं है, बल्कि यह clarification है। I request the hon. Member to confine their clarifications to the statement made by the Minister. Other issues cannot be brought in here.

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA (Rajasthan): Sir, it is a sad occasion that while we are going to have many more power plants run on atomic energy, we are discussing this issue today. Mr. Minister, if you remember, I had put a question and you had replied to that. I will speak about it later. We are not even able or capable to look after the biomedical waste. It seems Cobalt-60 came out of the biomedical waste from a hospital, because it is used for cancer patients. Sir, the Committee on Subordinate Legislation is examining the hazardous waste disposal. As we have not submitted the Report, I will not be able to tell you in exact terms. But, I can say, when we visited Chennai on a Study Tour and questioned the Port Trust Authorities, the Customs Authorities and the atomic energy personnel, everybody expressed their ineffectiveness, because we do not have any method to find out what waste is coming from abroad. At that point of time, we had expressed our concern. According to them, waste is coming in containers. They said that we do not have any equipment to find out whether the waste is nuclear waste or hazardous waste or what kind of waste being imported from abroad.

Unfortunately, Mr. Minister, in today's time, when we have all kinds of detectors available, our country does not have such things. Sir, foreign countries are using atomic energy extensively, both for medical purposes, power generation and warfare. They have also developed detectors. We also have medical tourism. A lot of patients come from abroad for treatment. Our poor patients also go to hospitals for treatment. In Delhi Cobalt-60 is detected at scrap dealer and we came to know only when they got sick and reported in the media. But, there is no proper waste disposal policy. Yesterday, the Minister of Environment and Forests explained extensively during the Question Hour that he is framing new rules. But, again, I would say, as I told him yesterday that we make the rules. But who will implement them? He was talking about the e-waste. But what about the bio-medical waste that is coming out from both, the Government as well as private hospitals. There is no control over it. I am very sorry to say that we have observed in the markets, close to hospitals, even the cotton wool, which comes out of hospitals, is put in *rajais* and *takiyas*. It is a very serious situation. Mr. Minister, it is one incident that happened over here. But, then, we are going to have many more nuclear power generation plants. And, as you said, all of them are going to be in the public domain. None of them would be in the private domain. My simple question is this. How are you going to

control the waste disposal? Even the used material also takes about 25-30 years to get de-radiated. It is also very shocking to read that not many doctors are aware of the side effects of radiation. When the patients, especially the cancer patients, are treated with radioactivity, even the doctors in the AIIMS are not aware of the dangers of over-exposure to the radioactive materials. Not only that, they don't even know that it is only the city scan that causes radiation, and not the MRI. It is a very serious issue. I am very happy that hon. Prime Minister and hon. Health Minister both are present here. The biomedical waste is just thrown in the thickly populated areas. It affects the general population. Even some of your doctors in the All India Institute of Medical Sciences do not know the side-effects of radioactivity. ...**(Time-bell rings)**... Anywhere where radioactive materials are used abroad, they have some kind of showers which removes the radioactivity of the material. These showers are also used in our atomic plants also for the people who are working with the radioactive materials.

Sir, even in the Liability Bill, which was supposed to be introduced in the Lok Sabha, the compensation is very meagre as compared to other countries in the world. Are the Indian people guinea-pigs that there is a provision of such a meagre compensation? ...**(Time-bell rings)**...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I think, we can have a separate discussion on the Liability Bill. ...*(Interruptions)*...The Liability Bill is not. ...*(Interruptions)*...

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: No, Sir, it is not the question of discussion. Would you like another disaster to take place and, then, we have a full-fledged discussion? Why did you admit such an important matter as a Calling Attention? Is there any provision for compensation for the affected people?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That is a wider issue. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA (Jharkhand): She is saying that even the affected people in this incident will not get any compensation because there is no law. That is the point.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I fully agree with you. But it is not under the domain of the Calling Attention. How many times I will have to remind that under the Calling Attention you can seek only clarifications?

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: Why did you admit it as a Calling Attention?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You are my worthy predecessor. You very well know. ...*(Interruptions)*... You have to seek only clarifications. It cannot be a debate. You can give a notice for having a full-fledged discussion on it.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Sir, many a time you have converted Calling Attentions into a discussion. You can convert it into a discussion. What is the problem?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Where have I converted it? I have not converted it. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Many a time in this House, we have converted it.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: By agreement, we have done it. ...*(Interruptions)*... I only expect the hon. Members to follow the rules. There is a statement by the hon. Minister on a particular incident. Now, let us confine ourselves to seeking clarifications. ...*(Interruptions)*... Let us not convert it into a debate. This is my request.

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: I agree with your request, Sir. But I want to ask you one thing. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, no. There is no time now. Don't take twenty minutes. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Jayanti, you are on the Treasury Benches. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please. Do not compete in taking time.

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Don't compete with the Opposition. ...*(Interruptions)*...

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: Sir, where is the question of time when we are discussing the lives of people, the future of the people. We can discuss it. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I agree with you. You can have a two-and-a-half discussion. I am not. ...*(Interruptions)*...

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: Sir, I just want to put two questions here.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please put the questions.

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: Sir, you said that we must confine ourselves to the statement of the Minister. If the Minister has not mentioned some very important issues, where can I discuss it?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You may ask questions. ...*(Interruptions)*...

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: Sir, I have to ask but. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The rules are framed by the House. You had implemented them when you were in the Chair.

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: Sir, it is a different role that I am playing now. I had played a different role over there. I would like to say that the hon. Minister has not mentioned anything about compensation. When we had the gas tragedy in Bhopal, the Government brought a legislation...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am sorry, you are ...*(Interruptions)*... Mr. Ahluwalia, please. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Sir, you are not allowing her to complete. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am only making a request. The information that you are referring to may be important. You may give Notice for a two-and-a-half hour short duration discussion.

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: Sir, the purpose of Parliament is to enact laws, and I am asking the Minister to enact a law to protect people.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Surely, you have every right but not at this time.

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: Sir, then I must not speak because there is no point. The Government is not discussing any point. You are not allowing it. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: She is saying that after the Bhopal gas tragedy, there was a law passed by the Government. ...*(Interruptions)*... whether for radiation or nuclear liability. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ahluwalia, this is Calling Attention. I have to go by rules. ...*(Interruptions)*... आप बैठिए। ...*(व्यवधान)*... Mr. Keshava Rao, please take your seat. ...*(Interruptions)*...

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: Sir, I would like to have an answer. I would like to ask why Members do not have the right to enact a law for the protection of the people. You represent the people and ordinary people have been affected by it; you and I are not affected.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I would like to read out the rules. A Member. ...*(Interruptions)*...

डा. (श्रीमती) नजमा ए. हेपतुल्ला : रूल्स मुझे मालूम हैं। ...*(व्यवधान)*... रूल्स मत सिखाइए। ...*(व्यवधान)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Then why do you. ...*(Interruptions)*... How do I conduct the House? Please tell me.

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: Sir, the House runs by rules every time. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Then you must run the House according to rules....*(Interruptions)*... If you wish to quote rules, then you must run the House according to rules. What was happening half an hour ago? ...*(Interruptions)*...

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: Why did you allow. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री उपसभापति : यह क्या बात है? ...*(व्यवधान)*...

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: You are not allowing me ...*(Interruptions)*... They do not want a discussion. ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री उपसभापति : बैठिए। आप बैठिए। ...*(व्यवधान)*... Mr. Keshava Rao, I am here to control the House. Please sit down.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: You are quoting rules. Then you must. ...*(Interruptions)*... What was happening half an hour ago? ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ahluwalia, there is no need for this. ...*(Interruptions)*... There is no need for this. केशव राज जी, आप बैठिए। Why do you interfere? If I want to, I would provide the opportunity. ...*(Interruptions)*... It is not your responsibility. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Under which law would these people be paid compensation? There is no law. That is the point she is raising. And your people are jumping. ...*(Interruptions)*...

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: There is no law. ...*(Interruptions)*... This is such an important issue. They are not understanding it.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ahluwalia, please. Already ten minutes have passed. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Why are they jumping? ...*(Interruptions)*...I never said *. Don't put words into my mouth. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, no. Remove that word. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please, I am making a request.

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: Sir, I am accepting your command. You are in the Chair. I have to accept. I am asking the Government one pertinent question. In the absence of any legislation, what compensation would you give? I mentioned about Bhopal because you enacted a law. Should we have a catastrophe and, then only, we will enact a law? Or, we should have a law, like the Minister was saying yesterday that we are going to enact a law for his Ministry, the Environment Ministry, for the e-waste. What about the bio-medical waste, what about the hazardous waste? These are very important questions. When we are going to have hundreds of atomic power plants in the country, who is going to look after them? That is what I am asking. Why is everybody not bothered about it? ...*(Interruptions)*... Are you not bothered about the lives of the people?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): Sir, may I say that we have rules for hazardous waste, bio-medical waste? It is not true to say that we don't have rules. We have rules.

श्रीमती विप्लव ठाकुर (हिमाचल प्रदेश) : महोदय, यह बड़ी गंभीर समस्या है जो मायापुरी में हुई है, जिसमें से कोबाल्ट-60 की वजह से कुछ लोग आहत हुए हैं और जिसका पता बहुत बाद में हुआ है। मैं सिर्फ माननीय मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहती हूँ कि यह जो स्क्रेप लेकर आते हैं, क्या इनकी कोई रजिस्ट्रेशन है, या जहां से ये स्क्रेप लेकर आते हैं वहां कोई चैकिंग होती है और वहां क्या इसके बारे में जाना जाता है? इन्होंने कहा कि हम लोग ट्रैक और कंटेनर का इंस्पेक्शन करेंगे। तो वे कहां इंस्पेक्शन करेंगे? क्या वह port पर होगी तथा क्या इनके पास कोई ऐसी मेनेजमेंट है, क्योंकि अभी जैसा कि डी.राजा ने कहा कि आपके पास कोई ऐसा इक्विपमेंट नहीं है और जब यह

घटना घट गई है तब आप लोग इसके बारे में लेकर आए हैं। महोदय, मैं यह भी जानना चाहती हूँ कि क्या इसके बारे में अब लोगों को अवेयर किया जाएगा और साइंटिस्ट इसके बारे में लोगों को बताएंगे और जिस तरह से medical waste की बात की गई है उसके लिए हम क्या प्रोविजन करना चाह रहे हैं और किस तरह से हम लोग इस चीज में बचाव करने जा रहे हैं? यह एक बहुत गंभीर मसला है इसके बारे में क्या आप कोई वर्कशॉप लगाने जा रहे हैं, जिससे कि इसके बारे में लोगों को सूचित किया जा सके। धन्यवाद।

श्री आर.सी. सिंह (पश्चिमी बंगाल) : मैं माननीय मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहूंगा कि यह घटना सिर्फ दिल्ली की मायापुरी में ही नहीं हुई है, बल्कि देश के दूसरे कोनों में भी कबाड़ी लोग हैं और वहां भी रेडिएशन की घटनाएं हुई हैं। इनमें बहुत से लोग हाई रेडिएशन से एक्सपोज हुए हैं। इनमें से अधिकांश ऐसी घटनाएं हैं जिसमें इण्डस्ट्रियल गामा रेडियोग्राफी सोर्स के हैंडलिंग में सुरक्षा मानकों की अनदेखी की गई है। इसलिए हमारा BARC & Narora Atomic Power Station किस तरह से इस वॉयलेशन पर नजर रख सकता है, इसके संबंध में क्या प्रिवेंटिव स्टेप्स लिए जा रहे हैं, मैं जानना चाहूंगा? इसके अलावा मैं दूसरी बात भी जानना चाहूंगा कि जो स्क्रेप डीलर्स रेडिएशन मॉनिटर्स खरीदते हैं, क्या यह सच है कि slight contamination की बहुत सी घटनाओं में रेडियो एक्टिविटी सोर्स का हाथ होता है, जो स्क्रेप के साथ आ जाता है। जहां तक मुझे जानकारी है कि दिल्ली में ही 20 हजार से ज्यादा लोग इसमें संलग्न हैं। तो यह ports पर रेडिएशन मॉनिटर इंस्टाल करने का जो प्रस्ताव था, इस संबंध में क्या कदम उठाए गए हैं। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि रेडिएशन मॉनिटर को इंस्टाल करने में देरी होने के पीछे क्या कारण हैं? तीसरी बात, मंत्री महोदय ने जो अपनी रिपोर्ट में कहा है, मैं उन्हीं के बारे में कहता हूँ। मैं मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या यह सच है कि करीब 50 लोगों को Institute of Nuclear Medicine and Allied Sciences में भर्ती किया गया है, ताकि जांच की जा सके कि ये रेडिएशन से एक्सपोज हुए हैं या नहीं। यदि यह सही है तो जांच में उनमें से किसी के न्यूक्लियर, केमिकल, बायोलॉजिकल या रेडियो एक्टिव मेटिरियल से एक्सपोज होने की पुष्टि हुई है या नहीं? अगर है तो इसकी सुरक्षा के लिए क्या कदम उठा रहे हैं।

मैं अगला point सरकार से यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि hand held radiation meters खरीदने के संबंध में क्या प्रगति हुई है? मंत्री महोदय ने अपनी रिपोर्ट में कहा है कि इसकी क्षमता को विकसित करने की कोशिश की जा रही है। इसमें क्या प्रगति हुई है, इसको किस तरह से रोका जा सकता है? यह बहुत सहज है, यह एक-डेढ़ किलो वजन का है, यह अल्फा, बीटा, गामा, एक्सरे डिटेक्ट कर सकता है। मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि यह सिस्टम डिवाइस, न्यूक्लियर को भी डिटेक्ट कर जाएगा या नहीं कर जाएगा, इसके लिए आप क्या व्यवस्था कर रहे हैं?

श्री अविनाश राय खन्ना (पंजाब) : उपसभापति महोदय, बहुत विस्तार से सभी मेम्बर साहिबान ने अपने विचार रखे हैं, मैं सिर्फ दो-तीन बातों की क्लेरिफिकेशन चाहता हूँ। कोई incident होता है, तो कमेटियां बनती हैं और

कमेटियां बनती हैं, तो वे अपनी रिपोर्ट देती हैं तथा रिपोर्ट इम्प्लीमेंट करने के लिए सरकार के पास कई बार फंड नहीं होता है या रिपोर्ट्स फाइलों में दबी रहती हैं। मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूं कि जितने भी एयरपोर्ट्स, सी-पोर्ट्स या जहां से स्क्रेप आता है, वहां पर उसकी स्कैनिंग, उसकी चैकिंग करने के लिए क्या हमारे पास माडर्न मशीन है या नहीं है, अगर नहीं है, तो कब तक ये मशीनें इंस्टाल हो जायेंगी? क्या सरकार ऐसा कोई एक और incident होने का इंतजार करेगी अथवा उससे पहले मशीनें इंस्टाल हो जायेंगी?

मैं एक बात और आपके ध्यान में लाना चाहता हूं, माननीय प्रधान मंत्री जी यहां पर बैठे हैं और आप मेरी बात को वेरिफाई भी कर लेना। सर, custom department एक बहुत important department है, जो सामान बाहर से आता है, उसको custom department वेरिफाई करता है, उसको स्कैन करता है, लेकिन उसके पास सिर्फ 9 खोजी कुत्ते हैं। यह डिपार्टमेंट कई बार सरकार को लिखकर दे चुका है कि हमें और खोजी कुत्ते तथा मैन पावर दो, ताकि हम सामान को स्कैन कर सकें, लेकिन वह फाइल अभी इधर से उधर और उधर से इधर ही घूम रही है और उनको अभी तक खोजी कुत्ते नहीं दिए गए हैं। उन्होंने स्कैन करने के लिए माडर्न स्कैन मशीन की भी डिमांड की है, लेकिन अभी तक डिपार्टमेंट को माडर्न स्कैन मशीन भी प्रोवाइड नहीं की गई हैं। मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहूंगा कि ऐसा स्क्रेप जो बाहर से आता है, उसको चैक करने के लिए जो डिफरेंट डिपार्टमेंट्स की demand हैं, उनको meet करने के लिए कब तक उनको सभी सुविधाएं प्रोवाइड करा दी जाएंगी? धन्यवाद।

SHRI MOINUL HASSAN (West Bengal): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me the time to speak. Sir, I have a few questions arising out of the statement given by the hon. Minister. If we go through paras 4 and 5, it shows that there is a lack of regulation, monitoring and awareness. So, I would like to know as to what action the Government is taking with regard to this menace, which is taking place in a particular place, and, which can happen anywhere in the country on any day.

Secondly, Sir, para 6 says that seven persons were found to be affected by radiation injuries. It has been discussed at length just now. My question is whether the Government is in a position to compensate those people, and, if yes, under which law.

Sir, my third question is linked to para 7, which says that the incidents of radiation exposure are not related to any of the DAE activities or facilities in the country. Government has washed its hands off but we must find out its sources, its causes and resolve this issue. It is the duty of the Government, which is there.

1.00 P.M.

Sir, the fourth aspect, which was also discussed yesterday in the form of a Starred Question, is that so far as the e-waste disposal is concerned, it is taking place privately in a bigger way and in a very unceremonious manner. Is there any comprehensive plan of the Government with regard to the e-waste disposal, which is taking place in different parts of the country? Sir, there is one more point, which may not be directly related but which I must mention here. Sir, twenty five years have passed since the 'Bhopal Gas Tragedy' took place.

One law has come. But if another radiation massacre takes place, there is no law to compensate the victims. Till now, radiations are emitting in Bhopal. But people are not getting due compensation. So, Sir, I would like to say that we must be in a position to make ourselves ready to face the menace. Thank you, Sir.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN (Tamil Nadu): Thank you, Sir. All my hon. colleagues have raised the important points. I want to be very brief, Sir. It appears to me from the Minister's statement, and I am very glad that he has re-assured the House that it really has nothing to do with DAE. We, of course, do expect that the Government will maintain that. We are not worried on that score. But it seems from the statement that this could be falling in a gap between two important issues. The Minister for Environment is here. He has assured the House several times that there are rules for disposing of bio-medical waste. However, if it is radioactive in nature, then, his Ministry may not be concerned with it. I am not sure how far the check points at the border, at airports, at customs are there although those too need to be manned. I wonder whether these may not be irresponsible disposals of bio-medical waste from hospitals which has reached the scrap shops. It is tremendously worrying to see that there was a certain amount of radioactivity in the soil. As far as this is concerned, if it is bio-medical waste, which is radioactive, which has reached scrap shops, which is used to treat cancer patients and for tele-therapy and radio-therapy, there is a gap in the law; there is a lacuna in the law, as has been pointed out by my hon. colleagues earlier. We need to consider how hospitals dispose of these radioactive substances with far greater seriousness. I think, there needs to be a synergy between the two Ministries to ensure that hospitals are given stringent punishment for irresponsible disposals. So, I would like to ask the Minister a pointed question whether there is not a gap in the various important laws that cover this issue in the dealing of bio-

medical waste where it is radioactive, as has happened in this case. 800 scrap shops, Sir, it seems to me extremely shocking that scrap shops can be a source of so much danger. Where are the other scrap shops? How far is the Delhi Police equipped to go into this in a detailed and comprehensive way and to understand the situation? Will the matter and the origin be probed with much greater seriousness? One FIR is there in a Delhi police station. How far will the origin go back? I think the origins are at a much higher place at hospitals in various parts of the city and in other places in addition to the places which have been mentioned. Therefore, Sir, will the Government consider ensuring stringent punishment for hospitals which dispose of bio-medical radioactive waste and get to the bottom of this particular incident? As my other colleagues have mentioned before me, since there is no law to deal with compensation for the injured people, the Government should ensure that proper compensation and rehabilitation reaches them.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN (Kerala): Thank you, Sir. There is nothing much more to ask because every aspect of this has been taken up. I went through the statement. It is not that the Government has not taken action. All possible and necessary action has been taken by the Government on an emergency scale. However, I would like to ask two or three straight questions. Number one, there is lack of a comprehensive law for dealing with the hospital wastage or electronic wastage, especially the radioactive wastage. Will the Government consider bringing a comprehensive law dealing with the wastage whether it is hospital wastage or radioactive wastage or electronic wastage? Number two, the Statement says that the NDMA is dealing with the subject. Of course, the DEA has no such responsibility. That is another aspect. But NDMA is mainly meant for natural calamities. I think, there should be another agency or the DEA should be asked because radioactive waste is a separate thing. Therefore, it should be dealt with by the DEA. So, this aspect should be considered by the Government. Another aspect is that in the hospitals Cobalt-60 is used for treatment for cancer, and in most of the hospitals, including the Government hospitals, I would say that there is no adequate protection.

There is lot of radiation where these radioactive materials are kept. There should be a law to regulate the use of radioactive material even for treatment purposes. Sir, it is clear that adequate detectors or scanners, which can scan radioactive material, are not available in the country. Will the Government examine the availability of this and ensure that adequate instruments are supplied in the country wherever needed, so that this menace can be minimized? Thank you, Sir.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH : Sir, I just want to clarify certain points. The hon. Minister has already made a statement. We have comprehensive rules for hazardous waste management that covers bio-medical waste as well. Like I answered yesterday, by the 15th of May, we will have comprehensive rules and regulations for managing e-waste which today is managed under the Hazardous Waste (Management and Handling) Rules. We will have separate rules and regulations for e-waste. Radioactive waste is not covered under the existing Hazardous Waste (Management and Handling) Rules. And I also said yesterday that the real problem lies in the fact that 90-95 per cent of the recycling takes place in the unorganized, informal sector against which State Governments are unwilling to take tough action because of the large numbers of people employed in this business.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, the hon. Minister will respond. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN (West Bengal) : Sir, kindly allow me to speak. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: But you have not given your name. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: Sir, I will finish it quickly.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Okay.

SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN : Sir, it appears from the statement that the Government is quite sure that this radioactive scrap has been received from abroad; it was imported. So it spoke about surveillance at seaports, airports and landports. It may be that it is procured from within the country, particularly from those who are handling bio-medical instruments. I think the scrap disposal must be brought under some regulation. Receiving it from abroad is bound by certain rules. But, within the country, the scrap disposal must be brought under some regulation. I think this is what this experience has taught us. I want to know whether the hon. Minister is going to look into that.

SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN: Sir, many important issues have been raised by the hon. Members. I am very grateful to all of them for taking interest in this very important area. Sir, we must first distinguish between what was found. It was a medical equipment, probably Gamma Chamber, and not medical waste. The equipment has cobalt pencils. They are used either for radiographic detection of material or for cancer therapy as I mentioned in my statement. What we found is not radiological or biological waste. That is one important thing.

Sir, we will take up the issue of bio-medical waste. There are rules for treating radioactive and biological waste. And these rules are governed by the Atomic Energy (Safe Disposal of Radioactive Waste) Rules. Sir, we must also remember that no operator in the country can buy radiation equipment for treatment without permission of the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board. After they import it, it is inspected. The technology goes there and continuous use of that equipment is subject to very strict guidelines of the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board. They cannot just dispose it of and sell it as scrap. It is out of question. I have clearly stated it in my statement that it is not related to any activity of our Department. No other agency is authorised by law to manufacture any radiological material. It can only come to India from the Department of Atomic Energy. Then how did it come? Of course, investigations are going on. Police are investigating it. Police are being fully supported by the DEA and the AERB. We will find exactly what happened. It is obvious that these equipments, which were found there, were not registered with the AERB.

So, a logical conclusion can be drawn that they probably came as scrap from abroad. I am not saying it definitively unless we find the final answer. They are not of Indian origin. Now, it is not a waste; it is equipment. Do we have a regulatory mechanism in the country? Sir, I would like to assure this august House that we have very stringent mechanism, regulations and rules to operate any radiological equipment in the country. Now, I tried to clarify biomedical waste. Yes, there are serious issues about biological biomedical waste. But, as far as radioactive biological waste is concerned, there are strict rules framed under the Atomic Energy Act. Sir, one important distinction needs to be made because words 'waste disposal of nuclear power plant' were used. Najmaji raised that issue. Sir, these are two different things altogether. The waste disposal is also called waste. But, waste disposal from atomic power plant is a completely different aspect. Every single gram of waste coming out of atomic energy plant which is run by the Department of Atomic Energy and NPCIL is recorded

and measured. And, in certain power plants which are under the international safeguards, every gram has to be reported. So, any pilferage from there or its going to scrap dealer is just out of question. So, what we are left with is perhaps some scrap. So, are we regulating scrap coming in? Sir, import of old hazardous waste into India is subject to provisions of Hazardous Waste (Management, Handling and Transboundary Movement) Rules, 2008. These are made under the Environment (Protection) Act by the Ministry of Environment and Forests. Now, this policy requires that import of metallic waste and scrap is subject to following documents being submitted to the Customs authorities. Naturally, the Customs authorities, the Commerce Ministry and the import and export authorities are concerned about importation. So, what are the documents required? First is, pre-shipment inspection certificate in a stipulated format from an authorized certification agency. So, you have to do pre-inspection in the country of destination. Secondly, a copy of the contract between importer and exporter that consignment does not contain stipulated types of hazardous material, particularly radioactive waste material. This has got to be done. Now, was that done in this case? Does it pre-dates these rules? Apparently, it is very old equipment. So far, we have not been able to find out to which country it belongs to. We will probably find that out. But, apparently, it appears to be very old equipment. So, there are rules for importing scrap and hazardous materials including radioactive materials. Rules are in place. Now, obviously, if it still comes in and the pre-inspection measures are not updated and are not able to detect it, then, we must make sure that we don't get any radio-activation. That is precisely why, I informed that now, we have elaborate procedures for inspection. Instruments and equipment have been installed at major ports and airports and we will keep on doing that. It's a long activity.

Sir, the National Disaster Management Authority, NDMA, was specifically created in 2005 to handle all sorts of disasters including radiological disaster. So, I don't agree that they are not the agency to do this. They are precisely the agency also to handle radiological incidents, accidents or disasters. As a matter of fact, there is a full report called Management of Nuclear and Radiological Emergencies published by NDMA. Of course, the NDMA is trained, helped and supported by the AERB and the Department of Atomic Energy. And, as I mentioned in my statement, they have raised

battalions of disaster management force which is being trained by DAE. They have special equipment and protective gears. They are the people who were the first respondents when the report came from hospital that something had happened. Not only that, the DAE has its own early response teams. The DAE has created, as I said, 18 response centres throughout the country and we will keep on expanding. So, we are working on all fronts not only with the help of National Disaster Management Authority or its force, but the DAE also has got adequate equipment which are imported, which are being manufactured locally and we will fully guard our borders against unauthorized entry which could perhaps be something more serious than just scrap.

And I would like to assure the House that our guidelines for importation of scrap or any radiological material is as per the international standards, and as per the international standards, we are in constant touch with the international agencies, and I assure the House that our effort is that we get the best equipment possible. It is being installed. I admit that all of it has not yet been deployed. It is being installed. The National Disaster Management Authority, the Ministry of Home Affairs, all of them are working together. The Ministry of Shipping is installing equipments, full container scanners, not just material, but scrap could be contained in containers. Containers have been completely scanned; there is full container scanning. All this equipment is being put in. We are getting the best advice from wherever we can get, from DAE, from AERB and all that. So, I need to reassure the House that we will put equipment.

Sir, a question was asked whether there is a registration of scrap dealers. Yes, there is. But, perhaps, this system needs to be tightened up. I am sure that somebody might have got something hidden somewhere in the depot and not reported possibly. We need to tighten that. I am sure the group that has been mandated to look at all these things will go into tightening the current law of handling the scrap.

Sir, one more important issue has been raised, and that is about compensation, and I thank Najmaji and Ahluwaliaji for pointing out that at present, no law for radiological accidents exist in the country, and we must have a law which will give civil compensation for any radiological incident. Any suggestion given in this regard, we welcome to look at the suggestion. But let us all accept the fact that there is no law today, and we need to enact the law for civil compensation against a nuclear liability.

Now, e-waste policy, this is such an important area, but e-waste and radiological waste are two different things. It is not connected. I think the Minister of Environment and Forest is working on tightening up the policy of e-waste. Then a question was raised whether a declaration by exporters is required. Yes, it needs to be done. But if they do not do it, we blacklist them. We even blacklist the countries from which false declaration has come. The procedures are being reviewed constantly. Sir, I think, I have covered most of the questions raised by the hon. Members. Yes, a question was asked why there is a delay in installing the equipment. Sir, this is very specialized equipment. The full container scanners are made by very few people and already two full container scanners have been installed at Nhava Sheva port. There is a plan to install very soon at least 12 full container scanners so that if there is any radioactive material inside it, it can be scanned without opening it. I can assure the House that we have taken this whole incident very seriously. We are looking into the matter how the material came, what happened. And there is another important issue that when the person who was radiated went to his family doctor, the family doctor could not diagnose it correctly. Four, five valuable days were wasted. When he went to a major hospital which had the nuclear medicine facility like Apollo Hospital, they only knew and they alerted the DAE, and the moment the DAE was alerted through a fax message, DAE, AERB, everybody went into a bigger response and isolated the sources and took them out for examination. So, response from the DAE was very prompt, very quick, but information came late. That is a fact, and I think, it is a very important point that we need to spread awareness, and the NDMA is going to do that. We need to spread awareness in the medical syllabus about the symptoms of radiological disease and radiological exposure. It is not adequate today and that has been proven by what happened in this particular case. But I can assure you that the Government of India, the Department of Atomic Energy, the AERB, the NDMA, all are concerned about whatever possibly can go wrong, and we are fully prepared to meet any emergency as I stated in the statement. Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The House is adjourned for lunch for one hour.

The House then adjourned at nineteen minutes past one of the clock.

The House reassembled after lunch at twenty-two minutes past two of the clock,

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair.