

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI DINESH TRIVEDI): Now, we shall take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

Clauses 2-19 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, I beg to move:

That the Bill be passed.

The question was put and the motion was adopted.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Sir, I have a Half-an-Hour discussion, but I know there is a Bill. So, I will request you to take up the Bill first, and then, we will take up the discussion.

THE SALARY, ALLOWANCES AND PENSION OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2006

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Salary, Allowances and Pension of Members of Parliament Act, 1954, as passed by Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration."

Sir, this Bill is due to the compulsion of five-year term extension of the Salary, Allowances and Pension of Members of Parliament Bill, which we passed earlier in 2001. Sir, as you know, the Salary, Allowances and Pension of Members of Parliament Bill is governed by article 106 of the Constitution. And, article 106 left this power to the Parliament. The Parliament, accordingly, composed Joint Committee of Members of both the House to examine the whole aspect and to recommend to the House and the Cabinet as to what should be the allowances and salaries of the MPs, from time to time. Sir, in the recent times, there was lot of debate in the media and many other areas as to whether MPs are taking more advantage and rest of the nation does not like it. That kind of a perception has been built. When MPs' issue regarding salaries, allowances, etc., comes, it appears to become the most juicy and choosy item for the media, especially the electronic media. But, the reality is altogether different. I first thank the Joint Committee, which worked so hard calculating all the details of world Parliaments, and I can say, Sir, Indian MPs represent the highest number of

population in the world in a particular segment of Lok Sabha, and accordingly, those, who are in the Rajya Sabha, also represent State Assemblies by their support. And, therefore, I tell you, Sir, that MPs of India still rank lowest paid in comparison with the MPs of the developed nations of the world democracies. It is the position still today, Sir, with all facts and figures. Unfortunately, a section of Indian media, the electronic media, never projected and placed it.

Sir, in 1971, when I became a Member of Lok Sabha for the first time, I remember I went to the United Kingdom as part of Commonwealth delegation. The British Member of Parliament in the House of Commons asked me a few questions. Do you have office in your constituency? I said, 'no'. Do you have office in Delhi? I said, 'no'. Do you have a transport to tour? I said, 'no'. Do you have a Personal Secretary? I said, 'no'. He asked, how do you function? I said, we go to the people, come back, collect their papers, and, write to the Minister. He said, it is very absurd. It was in 1971. I remember, there was a stenographic pool here and I had to wait in queues for hours together to get one letter typed. Those days are gone. In 2001, rightly my predecessor, Pramod Mahajanji, brought the legislation based on the recommendations of the Joint Committee of Parliament on the Consumer Price Index, and, from Rs. 4,000, the salary was increased to Rs. 12,000. He gave that logic of the day which was absolutely correct. Sir, why did I come forward today? Sir, the existing salary and allowances are effective up to 14th September, 2006. The problem is that if it is not passed before that and it expires at 12'o clock in the night on 14th September, then we go back to Rs. 4,000/-.

Last time, the Government said that it would be for a period of five years and after five years, Parliament would review and come back with the proposal and then the Government would consider.

Accordingly, the Committee gave this suggestion and the recommendation. I took it to the Cabinet. The Cabinet considered the whole aspect, not fully. My dear friend, Mr. Chidambaram, did not agree to all the recommendations but substantial part was accepted, and, I was duty bound to come before both the Houses and explain it. Therefore, Sir, I would like to submit that I thank all the Members who have worked hard. Sir, nobody just tries to understand the condition of an MP of India. All these perks and facilities are not an MPs privilege. I personally said yesterday in the House that when an MP renders real justice to a petition of an electorate, which includes taking the papers, scanning it, typing it,

sending it to the concerned Ministry, following it up, talking to the officer or the Minister, the total cost which he has to pay for one petition is Rs. 65. Every month, an MP entertains, at least, a minimum of 20 such important petitions of the public to deal with. Not only this, for travelling in the constituency to meet the people, and, according to India's basic modest standard of hospitality, you have to offer them, at least, a cup of tea, or, when you go, they give you food; you also have to share sometimes. We know, in the social life, there is a compulsion. People have a feeling that if I go to an MP's House, he will rescue me. Be it a heart patient; be it a helpless daughter, her father will come and say, I have to arrange her wedding, please do something. All sorts of social obligations are complied with by the MLAs and the MPs of the respective States. No DMs, SDOs, or, the bureaucrats come forward and say, 'All right'. They also say to the people, go to the MP's House. ...*(Interruptions)*... No, no. I am not joking. This is the fact. Each one has to face the music, and, if one cannot do it, the media will write, फर्ला आदमी एम्पटी के पास गया, उसने उसको घर से निकाल दिया। This also happens. Therefore, this is a peculiar situation of how the Indian Parliamentarians function. Therefore, reform in the whole thinking, reform in the whole apparatus is required. Recently when I went to Germany, our Speaker also went there, I was surprised that each of the German MPs has, in the Bunde Stag, well-equipped office, with the support of the secretariat and transport. And, in Britain, they have it both in the Constituency as also in the city of London, in Westminster itself. In Singapore, in Malaysia, and, Sir, I found more advantages given to the Sri Lankan MPs than Indian MPs.

Therefore, Sir, it is a very surprising thing that we always feel a little shy that we are drawing this allowance or that allowance. We are not drawing much; it is nothing. What is the salary and perks of the Commissioner of Police? Less than that you get here, much less than that. Therefore, Sir, I tell you that the Committee's recommendation is not to make us rich, but to give us the bare minimum. I know, in the present perception, people will say that farmers are committing suicide, so and so is doing that, etc. That is the duty of the Government of the day to think how to handle that, how to invest more money for the social sector. But, when people from that social sector suffer, their works are being done in terms of legislation from this side or raising the issues from that side by the people who represent them, by the MPs. How are they doing so? Sir, I am not questioning the *bona fide* of any media to criticise us. But, these days, there are a lot of T.V. anchors who get Rs. 2 lakhs or Rs. 3 lakhs or Rs. 5

lakhs, and, that too, on contract. It varies from channel to channel. They do not employ people in terms of provident fund and bonus, just in vouchers. If I am happy with you, stay with me, or, get out; go to others. But here, a Member of Parliament, if somebody visits his house in the morning, and even I request the electronic media to send your sting camera persons to his house to have a sting operation and see for themselves how the people from his constituency come to an MP and how he handles their problems, or, at least, show how they face them. Therefore, Sir, it is wrong to say that Indian Parliamentarians are looting money, robbing money and getting it for themselves. It is not correct at all. I have made my own study. Seventy eight per cent of the MPs of the first Lok Sabha were from the freedom fighters' families. In second to fifth Lok Sabha, 85 per cent of the MPs were from school-teachers or from the working class or from the farming community. Sir, today also, I say with responsibility, combining both the Houses, except two to three per cent, who are from the higher strata of the society, like my dear friend, Rahul Bajaj and others, all the rest are dedicated to the public life at best, and most of them are advocates. And, when they come here, they lose their profession, like Ravi Shankar Prasadji. Therefore, Sir, it is not something big we are talking, something big we are doing. We have done a modest exercise. The Government has accepted only one suggestion. The Joint Committee made a recommendation, a new one: Should the Parliament decide their salary, or, should somebody else do it? This was also a suggestion of the hon. Speaker and the others. Sir, there are two opinions in this regard. One, often we say that the Parliament is supreme. Parliament is for legislation. Anything you do, it is to be legislated by the House. Should Parliament's privilege be scanned and scrutinised by an authority outside Parliament? That was the thing. The other one is: Should Parliament evolve a collective mechanism as a permanent institution, instead of *ad hoc* measure of five years? So, Sir, the Joint Committee recommended that the Government should consider working of the modalities of a permanent mechanism for determination of salaries and allowances of MPs, in consultation with the Chairman of Rajya Sabha, the Speaker of Lok Sabha and the leaders of recognised political parties in both Houses of Parliament and bring a suitable legislation before the Parliament. I am happy to inform the House, the Government has agreed, in principle, to set up a permanent mechanism for recommending the salary and allowances of the Members of Parliament. A suitable amendment to the Salary, Allowances and Pension of Members of Parliament Act, 1954, for this purpose, will be brought in the next session of

Parliament. Since the Joint Committee has already made a recommendation of five years regarding the salary and allowances, it is proposed to amend this Act to give effect from 14th September, 2006 for five years and from the 15th Lok Sabha, when it will be constituted, this permanent mechanism will be built for all years to come so that ad hocism will be over. So, that is what the decision of the Government is. Now, I would like to inform what are the provisions in this Act. The existing provision regarding salary and allowances shall expire on 14th September 2006. Naturally, the Act is necessary. Sir, we received the Report of the Joint Committee. I would not like to go into details now. After due consideration, the Government has decided to implement most of the recommendations, and its proposals are as follows:

Salary is being raised from Rs.12,000 per month to Rs.16,000 per month. Tax, not on salary income, but as income from other sources. Sir, daily allowance is being increased from Rs.500 to Rs.1000 for each day during the period of residence on duty. The increase of salary and daily allowance will be effective from 14th September 2006 for five years or until fixed.

The road mileage is being raised from Rs.8 per kilometre to Rs.13 per kilometre.

A member who is physically incapacitated and cannot travel by rail or air, for reasons known to him and his doctor, will be entitled to perform the entire journey by road and claim the road mileage at the rate of Rs.13 per kilometre. The physically incapacitated Member will also be entitled to travel facility by road along with a companion in lieu of the travel facilities by rail or air for the Member and the companion and may claim the road mileage at the said rate.

In order to entitle the Members to travel more frequently during the interval of two sittings of the Parliamentary Committees, particularly during the break period of Budget Session, and claim travelling allowance, it is proposed to accept the recommendation of the Joint Committee to reduce the period of interval from seven days to five days.

Air journeys from any place in India at present for a Member of Parliament in a year are 32. We have increased it to 34 on the

6.00 P.M.

recommendation of the Committee. The Members will also be entitled to carry forward the unutilised air journeys for the remaining term and to adjust eight excess air journeys against the next year's entitlement.

Sir, ex-Members of Parliament, who are really in a very pitiable condition, dedicated social activist, come to the Annexe, and sit in the Central Hall. Sir, I cannot describe their position. Some of them are on the brink of begging for their daughters' education. Even I knew an ex-Member of Parliament, who kept his wife admitted to the AIIMS, then started knocking on the doors of Members of Parliament to get Rs.1,000 or Rs.500 or Rs.200. Therefore, Sir, we have categorised ex-Members of Parliament into two categories. One, those who are from Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep, shall be entitled to have the facility of travel by streamer always. At present, the pension is Rs.3000 per month. After his death, his wife gets or the dependant gets Rs.1500 only for two years. Sir, I proposed it to the Cabinet and the Cabinet agreed to raise it to Rs.8,000 per month. The additional pension for each year in excess of five years, is being raised from Rs.600 to Rs.800 per month. Fifty per cent of that shall be the family pension, not for two years, but for life. Sir, this shall provide a great relief to those social activists and ex-Members of Parliament who are really in trouble.

Sir, apart from these amendments, there are some proposals which will be covered by Rules and not by the Act, as per the practice of Parliament. These are as follows:-

Constituency allowance of the Members will be raised from Rs.10,000 to Rs.20,000 per month.

Members of Parliament, at present, are entitled to office expense allowance of Rs.14,000 only per month. Sir, there have been complaints from various quarters that they are not able to get even a good computer operator for Rs.5,000. And an assistant these days does not work for less than Rs.4000. The Members of Parliament, at present, are entitled to office expense allowance of Rs.14,000 per month. This is being raised to Rs.20,000 per month. Of which, postage is being raised from Rs.1,000 to Rs.2000 per month; stationery from Rs.3,000 to Rs.4,000 per month; and staff assistance from Rs.10,000 to Rs.14,000 per month (Rs.10,000 for a computer assistant in Delhi and Rs.4,000 for an assistant in the

constituency). So, it will be raised from Rs.14,000 to Rs.20,000. It is enhanced by Rs.6,000 only.

Sir, as per the Housing and Telephone Facility Rules, 1956, a Member of Parliament is entitled, without payment of charges, to a maximum of 50,000 units of electricity and 4,000 Kilolitres of water per annum in respect of his accommodation in Delhi.

Sir, it has been decided to amend it in the following manner: to carry forward unutilized units of electricity and water to the subsequent years; adjustment of excess units consumed, to the next year's quota; where both husband and wife happen to be Members of Parliament and reside in the same accommodation, their entitlement of water and electricity will be pooled together.

Sir, on retirement, resignation or death of a Member, the provision is, if a Member dies, his family has to vacate the House within two months. Sir, it is a problem which we witness many a times. We have changed it. On retirement, resignation or death, a Member or his family will be entitled to consume the balance units of electricity and water for that year within a period of one month and he can stay for six months.

Sir, monetary ceiling for rent free furniture supplied at the residence of a Member is also being raised, from Rs.24,000 to Rs.60,000. Why has it been raised? I will explain. Sir, the CPWD complained that the repair cost of the old furniture is becoming such that the whole thing has become redundant. Therefore, for the longevity of furniture and to reduce repairs, furniture is required to be supplied afresh. Therefore, Sir, we have decided to raise it from Rs.24,000 to Rs.60,000 for durable furniture and Rs.6,000 to Rs.15,000 for non-durable furniture.

Sir, at present, the family members of a Member of Parliament can retain the Government accommodation for two months after the death of the Member. As I said, Sir, it has been officially decided -- it will be incorporated in rules -- that they can do it up to six months on the same rent that a Member of Parliament used to pay.

Sir, at present, the Members of Parliament are entitled to three landline telephones and one BSNL mobile phone with one lakh fifty thousand free local calls per year which can be availed on any number of telephones in the Member's name. Now, they will be provided another

BSNL/MTNL mobile phone for constituency. Twenty thousand additional local calls where constituency is 1000 kilometre away will be dispensed with.

Sir, as per decision taken by the Committee on Provision of Computers to Members of Parliament, Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha Secretariats would be extending broadband facilities to the Members in lieu of 1000 free local calls per annum separately, in respect of each broadband connection. The Government has decided to provide the broadband facilities on one telephone subject to the condition that the rental should not exceed Rs.1500 per month.

Sir, these are the broad things that have been agreed. Half of it is already in the Act as per the clauses; rest is accommodated in the rules. This is all I can say about the entire Bill, Sir, and I hope the House will consider it.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI DINESH TRIVEDI): Thank you, Mr. Minister. We have one speaker. Mr. Sitaram Yechury.

SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE (West Bengal): Sir, I am to speak.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI DINESH TRIVEDI): Your name is not here, Sir.

SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: I have given my name. Shri Sitaram Yechury is not here, I will speak. ...*(Interruptions)*... No, no, I will place our party's view.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI DINESH TRIVEDI) : Okay, please go ahead.

SHRI DATTA MEGHE (Maharashtra): Sir, I have got only one suggestion to make.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI DINESH TRIVEDI) : Let him speak, after that, you can give your suggestion.

SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: I am not going into the details in that subject which the hon. Minister has just said about the decency in public life, the duty of a politician in the public life. That is another issue. The Minister has dealt with it at great length. But from our party, we had pointed it earlier also and we make it very clear here once again that we do not agree to the system, particularly of the increase of salary and allowances of the Members of Parliament that they should decide

themselves only. We do not agree to this. There must be some method, methodology, mechanism or system. We are long demanding about this that there should be a Committee and on the basis of some methods, decision may be taken. Ultimate decision be taken by the MPs and it should be approved here. Sir, like the workers and employees, there should be some methods and mechanisms. The Pay Commissions are being formed. The cost of living indexes are calculated in respect of DA and wage increase.

— Like that, such system should be maintained so far as the increase in wages and allowances of the Members of Parliament is concerned. It is a fact, Sir, that I have written about 15 per cent. The Minister has said that 15 per cent is written in that Bill. One of our Members was in that Committee, and he also placed this reason in the main Committee meeting. But, unfortunately, in the Sub-Committee meeting--the rate was fixed when the Kerala election was there just after one or two days--he was not present. He could not be present--everybody knows it--in the Sub-Committee meeting held on the 29th April. But in the Committee meeting, from our party, our Member placed these views to follow so far as this important decision is concerned. I hope, as the Minister has said, he will follow this system. But we have long been demanding this. It would have been better if, in this particular case also, this system had been followed by the Government, by the Ministry, as pointed out by our M.P. This is our observation. I place it here.

श्रीमती सुषमा स्वराज (मध्य प्रदेश) : धन्यवाद उपसभाध्यक्ष जी। महोदय, इस सदन में यह दृश्य हर पांच वर्ष बाद उपस्थित होता है, जब उस समय के संसदीय कार्य मंत्री सांसदों के पेंशन, भत्ते, सुविधाएं बढ़ाने का बिल यहां लाते हैं। वामपंथी साधियों में से एक खड़ा होकर उसका विरोध करता है, पुरजोर विरोध करता है और एक मोरल हाई ग्राउंड अटैन करता है और ऐसे करता है जैसे हम सब यह भत्ता लेने वाले, आइज कहने वाले कोई अनैतिक काम कर रहे हैं और नोज कहने वाले बहुत बड़े नैतिकता के ठेकेदार हैं। लेकिन उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, जब वह बिल पारित हो जाता है तो सबसे पहले उसका लाभ वामपंथी उठाते हैं। इसलिए एक तो मैं अमेंडमेंट अपनी ओर से यह पेश करना चाहती हूं कि इस बिल में यह क्लॉज होनी चाहिए कि लेना ऑप्शनल है, अगर आप नहीं चाहते तो नहीं लें।...(व्यवधान)...

SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: Sir, is there any provision for including the portion of Smt. Sushma Swaraj?

श्रीमती सुषमा स्वराज : अब मैं बोल रही हूं, यह बोल चुके हैं।

उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, यह बात केवल इस बिल के बारे में नहीं है। मैं आपको एक दूसरे विधेयक के बारे में याद दिलाना चाहती हूं। आप इसी सदन के सदस्य थे। इस सदन में एक

विधेयक आया एन0डी0ए0 सरकार के समय में कि राज्यसभा के लिए डॉमिनाइल की शर्त समाप्त हो जानी चाहिए, जिस तरह लोक सभा में पूरे हिन्दुस्तान से कहीं का भी मतदाता किसी भी राज्य से चुनाव लड़ सकता है, उसी तरह से राज्य सभा में भी यह लागू होना चाहिए। सर्वसम्मति बनती हुई दिखी, लेकिन यहां भी वामपंथियों ने खड़े होकर उसका विरोध किया और कहा कि यह तो बड़ा अनैतिक काम हो रहा है, यह आप कैसे कर सकते हैं। राज्य सभा के लिए जो संविधान की शक्ति है और संविधान की धारा यह कहती है कि वह उसी राज्य का मतदाता होना चाहिए उसको किसी भी कीमत पर बदलना नहीं चाहिए। यह रिकार्ड में है आप उठाकर के देख लीजिए। जब वह बिल पारित हो गया, सुप्रीम कोर्ट में चेलेंज हुआ, इसके बाबजूद सबसे पहले श्री सीताराम येचुरी जिन्होंने उस बिल के प्रावधान का लाभ उठाकर राज्य सभा के सांसद बने।... (व्यवधान)... वृंदा कारत जी ने अपना वोट बंगाल में बनवा लिया था। लेकिन वह जो बिल यह प्रावधान करता था कि हिन्दुस्तान में कहीं का भी मतदाता कहीं से लड़ सकता है, दिल्ली का मतदाता रहते हुए उस बिल का लाभ उठाते हुए सीताराम येचुरी जी राज्य सभा के सांसद बनकर आए। इसलिए मैं सारे सदन के सामने एक निवेदन करना चाहती हूँ कि अगर हम इतना मोरल हाई ग्राउंड लेते हैं, तो उस विधेयक के पारित हो जाने के बाद उसका लाभ लेने से इंकार कर दिया करें। लेकिन अगर उसका लाभ सबसे पहले हम लेते हैं तो यहां बाकी लोगों को नैतिकता का पाठ पढ़ाने की आवश्यकता नहीं है। जो बात उन्होंने कही कि कोई कमेटी होनी चाहिए। तो संसदीय कार्य मंत्री ने बिल प्रस्तुत करते समय सबसे पहले यह कहा कि अब यह आखिरी बार कर रहे हैं और अगली बार की लोक सभा में जब पांच साल बाद आएगी, तो बाकायदा कमेटी बन जाएगी। कमेटी का मकेनिज्म उन्होंने सामने रखा कि स्पीकर लोक सभा होंगे, चेयरमैन होंगे, दोनों एल0ओ0पी0 होंगे और एक कमेटी इसको तय किया करेगी। लेकिन अगर उसके बाद भी अपना विरोध दर्ज कराने के लिए वामपंथी यहां खड़े हुए तो इसलिए मुझे लगा कि एक बार दूध का दूध और पानी का पानी हो जाए और इन लोगों को कम से कम इनका सही चेहरा यहां दिखा दूं। इसलिए मैं र.ां खड़ी हुई थी इस बिल के बारे में बोलने। धन्यवाद।

श्री दत्ता मेघे: उपसमाध्यक्ष जी, मैं गवर्नमेंट को एक सुझाव देना चाहता हूँ। सभी एमपीज लोग, खासतौर से ज्यादा एमपीज एयर से ट्रेवल करते हैं, उसके लिए एग्जीक्युटिव टिकट हमको मिलती है। आज हम देखते हैं कि काफी एयरलाइन्स आ गई हैं, उनकी बहुत अच्छी-अच्छी स्कीम्स होती हैं। जिस यात्रा के लिए हम 14 हजार रुपये देते हैं, उस यात्रा के लिए हमारे बाजू में बैठा आदमी 7 हजार रुपये देकर बैठता है। मेरा कहना यह है कि हम पैसे भरकर टिकट लेते हैं, फिर आपके पास देते हैं। आप कम से कम टिकट हमको दे दें, तो इससे एयर कम्पनी को फायदा होगा, क्योंकि अब इतनी एयरलाइन्स हो गई हैं, कौन सी कितने बजे जायेगी, उसको भी फायदा है, शाम को गये, तो आधा टिकट लगेगा। ऐसा करने से सरकार का पैसा बचेगा। जिस एग्जीक्युटिव क्लास का 12 हजार रुपये किराया हम नागपुर के लिए देते हैं, उसमें हम 7 हजार रुपये में भी जा सकते हैं। जब हवाई जहाज में सीट खाली जाती है, तो हवाई जहाज में बहुत कम किराया लगता है। यह जो कम किराया लगता है, आप एडमिनिस्ट्रेटिव लेवल पर थोड़ी टिकट जितनी देनी है, उतनी दे दीजिए। हमको जब सुविधा होगी, उस सुविधा के अनुसार जायेंगे। इससे गवर्नमेंट के बहुत पैसे बचेंगे। यह मेरा सुझाव है।... (व्यवधान)...

सर, एयरजेट में और इधर-उधर बहुत स्कीम्स निकली हैं। पहले हम तीन दिन पहले करते थे, बहुत कम पैसे लगते हैं। ...*(व्यवधान)*...

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री दिनेश त्रिवेदी) : थैंक्यू। ...*(व्यवधान)*... थैंक्यू। ...*(व्यवधान)*...

श्री दत्ता मेघे : क्या इसके लिए कोई एडमिनिस्ट्रेटिव लेवल पर कार्यवाही करेंगे? मेरा सुझाव यह है कि जिस टिकट के हम पैसे निकाल कर जाते हैं, उसके बजाय आप जो भी टिकट देते हैं, वे हमें दे दीजिए और कम कीमत पर हम यात्रा कर सकते हैं। ऐसा करने से लाखों-करोड़ों रुपये बचेंगे।

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI DINESH TRIVEDI): You have made your point.

SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, thank you very much for allowing me to speak on this Bill. The hon. Minister during his speech has mentioned about the media. He has blamed the media that, time and again, media is ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI: I did not blame the media. I have only tried to show the other side of the picture. I did not blame the media. The media have a fundamental right to express what they feel proper. ...*(Interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI DINESH TRIVEDI): The hon. Minister has said that they have a fundamental right, if I heard him correctly.

SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: He has also said that some of the anchors are getting Rs.2 lakhs or Rs.3 lakhs.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY (Pondicherry): Sir, I want to make only one point.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI DINESH TRIVEDI): Mr. Sanghi, have you made your point?

SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: I am still to make my point.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI DINESH TRIVEDI): He is not yet through. Mr. Narayanasamy, he is still making his point.

SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: There are hundreds of thousands of media personnel in this country. They are also suffering for various reasons. It is not correct to generalise that the media is responsible...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI DINESH TRIVEDI): Mr. Sanghi, that point has been made amply clear. So, I don't think you should repeat that. Mr. Bhatia.

SHRI VIRENDRA BHATIA (Uttar Pradesh): Sir, there is only one suggestion. मंत्री जी को धन्यवाद कि इन्होंने सांसदों के बारे में सोचा और कहा। अभी आपने कहा कि राज्य सभा के सदस्यों को मान लिया जाए कि पूरे भारतवर्ष से कहीं भी चुने जा सकते हैं, कहीं भी रहते हुए, किसी भी प्रदेश से चुने जा सकते हैं। हम भारतवर्ष के किसी भी कोने में जाते हैं, आप हमें रहने की सुविधा तो देते हैं, लेकिन एक वाहन की सुविधा भी मिलनी चाहिए। जब हम एयरपोर्ट पर या स्टेशन पर जाते हैं, तो हम टैक्सी को तलाशते हैं, वहां पर जाने के लिए किसी की मदद लेते हैं, आपने इतनी सुविधाएं दी हैं, उन सुविधाओं में अगर आप एक सुविधा और जोड़ दें कि एमपी जब भी पूरे देश में कहीं पर भी जाये, जब आप जाने की सुविधा दे रहे हैं, तो उसे एक वाहन की सुविधा भी मिलनी चाहिए। इसके बारे में डिस्ट्रिक्ट्स मजिस्ट्रेट को कहा जाये कि वे वाहन की सुविधा भी उपलब्ध करवायें।

प्रो० राम देव भंडारी (बिहार) : उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, मैं माननीय मंत्री जी को धन्यवाद देता हूँ कि उन्होंने सांसदों की कठिनाइयों को देखते हुए, जहां तक सम्भव था बिल के द्वारा समाधान करने का प्रयास किया, अब तो पांच वर्ष के बाद ही कुछ होगा। अभी मिल रहा था, उसकी तुलना में यह स्वीकार करने योग्य है। मैं इसे स्वीकार करते हुए एक सुझाव देना चाहूंगा। इस समय रेल में यात्रा करने के लिए सांसदों को जो सुविधा दी जाती है उसके अनुसार फर्स्ट ए0सी0 में सांसद और spouse और एक सेकेंड ए0सी0 में कम्पेनियन।

उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, कठिनाई तब होती है जब अपने ही परिवार की बहन साथ होती है, बेटी साथ होती है, बहू साथ होती है। अब कठिनाई यह होती है कि उसे हम कहां बैठाएं? मेरा यह कहना है कि इसे स्पाउस/कम्पेनियन कर दिया जाए। दूसरा...(व्यवधान)...

श्री प्रियरंजन दास भुंशी : कम्पेनियन स्पाउस की इजाजत से होगी।...(व्यवधान)...

प्रो० राम देव भंडारी : यही मेरा सुझाव है। मैं समझता हूँ कि यह सुझाव पूरे हाउस को मान्य होगा क्योंकि यह बहुत ही रचनात्मक सुझाव है।

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI DINESH TRIVEDI): Now the question is:

"That the Salaries, Allowances and Pensions of Members of Parliament (Amendment) Bill, 2006, as passed by the Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration.

The motion was adopted.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI DINESH TRIVEDI): Now, we shall take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

Clauses 2 to 9 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, I move:

That the Bill be passed.

Sir, I would like to make one clarification, which is very important. I would like to make it clear, in response to Mr. Sanghi, that at no point of time did I say that media is responsible. I said, "The media has the right to criticise us." But one has to follow, as an anchor, when he or she is competent to collect information and place it, he or she needs to equally collect the views of the people in the House. These amenities and support should not undermine that. Media is in our hearts. Therefore, there is no question of our criticising the media. It is the feelings of Members of Parliament that the media should project both sides, this side and the other side. That is what I wanted to say.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI DINESH TRIVEDI): The question is:

That the Bill be passed.

The motion was adopted.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI DINESH TRIVEDI): Hon. Members, in the morning, the hon. Minister of Human Resources Development, Shri Arjun Singh, assured that he would give certain clarifications on the issue related to alleged objectionable materials in some books approved by the NCERT. He would now give his clarification...(Interruptions)...

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Sir, what about the Half-an-Hour Discussion?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI DINESH TRIVEDI): I was told that you have agreed...

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: No; nobody has asked me.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI DINESH TRIVEDI): Well; I am asking you now.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: I would agree to it. But we should not be giving low priority to that subject.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI DINESH TRIVEDI): Fair enough.
Now, Shri Arjun Singh.

CLARIFICATIONS BY MINISTER

Points raised by some Members relating to some books published by NCERT

मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्री (श्री अर्जुन सिंह) : आदरणीय उपसमाध्यक्ष महोदय, माननीय सदस्यों ने राष्ट्रीय शैक्षणिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद् द्वारा राष्ट्रीय पाठ्यक्रम, पाठ्यचर्या संरचना-2005 के तहत तैयार की गयी कतिपय पाठ्यपुस्तकों के संबंध में कुछ आपत्तियां उठायी हैं। मैंने प्रत्येक आपत्ति की ब्यौरेवार जानकारी लेने की कोशिश की है। इस क्रम में मैंने पाया है कि हर विषय में किसी वाक्य, खंड अथवा शब्द को उसके संदर्भ से हटाकर देने के लिए पढ़ा गया है।

राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद् की पाठ्य-पुस्तकें अत्यधिक संवेदनशीलता से और ध्यानपूर्वक तैयार की गई हैं। राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद् ने शुरू से ही अपने कार्य में प्रख्यात विद्वानों, वैज्ञानिकों और शिक्षाशास्त्रियों को शामिल किया है। प्रत्येक पाठ्य-पुस्तक की सम्पूर्ण जांच केंद्रीय शिक्षा सलाहकार बोर्ड की सिफारिश के अनुसार मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय द्वारा गठित राष्ट्रीय मॉनिटरिंग समिति करती है, जिसमें प्रो. लाल मिरी, पूर्व कुलपति, अध्यक्ष और प्रख्यात संविधान वैज्ञानिक डा. जी.टी. देशपांडे, सह अध्यक्ष - राष्ट्रीय मॉनिटरिंग समिति के सदस्यों में शिक्षा क्षेत्र के विशेषज्ञ और मध्य प्रदेश, पश्चिम बंगाल, मणिपुर, केरल, नागालैंड और महाराष्ट्र राज्य सरकारों के प्रतिनिधि हैं। राष्ट्रीय मॉनिटरिंग समिति को अन्य बातों के साथ-साथ यह सूचित करने का निर्देश है कि पाठ्य-पुस्तकों को भारत के संविधान और राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति में निहित मूल्यों के अनुरूप होना चाहिए। इस मुद्दे पर जो विवाद पैदा किया गया है, मैं सही रूपांतर प्रस्तुत करते हुए उठाई गई प्रत्येक आपत्ति पर सदन को वास्तविक स्थिति से अवगत कराना चाहता हूँ। मैं माननीय सदस्यों को, उनके द्वारा उठाई गई आपत्तियों के क्रम में ही उत्तर देने की कोशिश करूंगा।

सर्वप्रथम, मैं श्री रवि शंकर प्रसाद द्वारा उठाए गए मुद्दे का उत्तर दूंगा।

श्री प्रसाद ने कहा कि हम कक्षा एक, दो, तीन, चार, पांच के बच्चों को असंवैधानिक भाषा की शिक्षा प्रदान कर रहे हैं। बाद में उन्होंने यह भी कहा कि उन्होंने जिन पाठ्य-पुस्तकों के बारे में आपत्ति की है, वे कक्षा दो, सात, आठ, नौ, दस में पढ़ाई जा रही हैं। उनकी जानकारी हेतु इस संबंध में तथ्यपरक स्थिति यह है कि कक्षा दो, चार, पांच, सात, आठ तथा दस की इस वर्ष हिंदी पाठ्य-पुस्तकों में अभी तक कोई परिवर्तन नहीं किया गया है।...(व्यवधान)...

श्री रवि शंकर प्रसाद (बिहार) : हमने पुस्तक रखी है हाउस के पटल पर !

श्री अर्जुन सिंह : सुन तो लीजिए।...(व्यवधान)...