

[Shri M. M. Dharia]

to have free evidence before the inquiry commission, is it not necessary that those officers who were alleged to have been involved in this affair or who were concerned with it, should be suspended or at least transferred from the posts they hold now? Otherwise, they will be an obstacle and free evidence may not be forthcoming. From that point of view, will the hon. Minister assure that these officers against whom violent allegations have been made will not be allowed to occupy their present posts? Otherwise, this commission of inquiry will be nothing but a farce. And we do not want that farce. So, will the hon. Minister assure this House?

DR. TRIGUNA SEN: Sir, it is not that I did not think of it. I thought of it, Sir. Had it been a departmental inquiry, these possibilities as mentioned by my hon. friend might have been there.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA: They are yet there.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA : He is in possession of material, Sir.

DR. TRIGUNA SEN: Sir, firstly it is not a departmental inquiry. The Commission of Inquiry is headed by a learned retired Judge of the Allahabad High Court. He will carry on his independent inquiry into these matters. So, nobody can interfere. Now, so far as the documents or the papers are concerned, all are now in the possession of the Public Undertakings Committee. So, there is no chance of sabotage.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Sir, you are a jurist. You know it is not a question of just having some paper. The man in position subject to the inquiry, will certainly be in a position to influence paper or documents being presented or not. Now, it is never a good thing to allow a person to remain in the same position when the matter is under investigation. He should vacate that position.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He will consider it.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: If he does not do it voluntarily, the Government should remove him. Junior officers come as witnesses. Their promotion, confidential records—everything will depend on that. Therefore, they are subject to it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please sit down. Now, the Secretary will read the message.

MESSAGE FROM THE LOK SABHA

THE CONSTITUTION (TWENTY-FOURTH AMENDMENT) BILL, 1970.

SECRETARY: Sir, I have to report to the House the following message received from the Lok Sabha, signed by the Secretary of the Lok Sabha :

“In accordance with the provisions of Rule 96 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, I am directed to enclose herewith the Constitution (Twenty-fourth Amendment) Bill, 1970, which has been passed by the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 2nd September, 1970, in accordance with the provisions of article 368 of the Constitution of India.”

Sir, I lay the Bill on the table.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This will be taken up tomorrow.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA (West Bengal) : Sir, after a longtime, one good message has come from the Lok Sabha.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER CORRECTING ANSWER TO CALLING ATTENTION NOTICE REGARDING THE REPORTED FRAUD IN THE LONDON BRANCH OF THE CENTRAL BANK OF INDIA

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI K. R. GANESH): Sir, on behalf of Shri V. C. Shukla, I beg to make a statement.

A statement was made in this House by the Minister of Finance on the 19th May 1970, in reply to the calling-attention notice regarding the suspected fraud in the London Office of the Central Bank of India. It was stated at that time that Shri Sami J. Patel, Manager of the London Branch of the Central Bank of India was relieved of his duty on the 26th March 1970. The date was given on the basis of the information then available to the Government. The Central Bank of India has now intimated that Shri Sami J. Patel was relieved of his duty on the close of business on the 31st March, 1970.

I am making this statement today to correct the record. I regret the inaccuracy which has crept in the earlier statement.

[MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair.]

श्री सुन्दर सिंह भंडारी (राजस्थान) : इसमें इन्होंने कहा है कि 26-3-70 के बजाय 31-3-70 को उन्हें रिलीव किया गया। तो मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि यह जो घटना घटी उसके गायब होने की उसकी तारीख कौनसी थी। व 31-3-70 तक सर्विस में थे तो इसके पहले वे कैसे गायब हो गये और उनका पता क्यों नहीं चल पाया। इट मस्ट बी एक्सप्लेन। क्योंकि पहले जो बयान दिया गया था उसमें कहा था कि वे 26 तारीख को रिलीव कर दिये गये, लेकिन अब कहा जा रहा है कि 31 तारीख तक वे सर्विस में थे। तो मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि सर्विस में रहते हुए वे कैसे गायब हो गये।

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: This is only a correction of the statement.

SHRI SUNDAR SINGH BHANDARI: It means something. It is not so simple.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Why?

श्री सुन्दर सिंह भंडारी : मेरा यह कहना है कि 26 तारीख तक तो वे पहले सर्विस में थे और अब आप कहते हैं कि 31 तारीख तक वे सर्विस में थे और जैसे ही उनके गायब होने की इन्फार्मेशन मिली तो तब तब तक उन्हें हटाने गये और वे गायब मिले तथा पकड़े नहीं जा सके। तो मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि जब वे 31 तारीख से पहले रिलीव हुए थे तो वे गायब कैसे हो गये?

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR (Delhi): Sir, the whole thing is rather fishy. We have been told that Sami Patel resigned his job when he was transferred to some place in India. Now we are being told that he was relieved of his charge. Now, did he resign or was he relieved of his charge on receipt of any complaint? Now, there is a mix-up of things. We would like to have some clear idea of what happened actually.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA (Uttar Pradesh): Sir, this clarification has led to further complication.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: This is not a clarification; it is only a correction.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA: This correction has led to further complication. Sir, Mr. Patel disappeared before. According to this correction, he was relieved of the post as Manager. So it requires further clarification or further corrections of the statement made to-day. How could he disappear before he was relieved and if he had disappeared, how was it that he was relieved? The whole case is very fishy and the Government by making inaccurate statements is making itself a little suspect.

SHRI SUNDAR SINGH BHANDARI: That is a deliberate protection they want to give.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: All right. There is no explanation needed. Only some wrong information was given and that information has been corrected now.

श्री सुन्दर सिंह भंडारी : उपसभापति जी, मैं समझता हूँ कि आपने जो उत्तर दिया है उसे सरकार को कहने की आवश्यकता है। पांच दिन का अन्तर हो गया, वे 31 मार्च को रिलीव किए गए जबकि पहले स्टेटमेंट इसके विपरीत थे। इसमें से अनेक काम्प्लीकेशन निर्माण होते हैं। उन्हें स्थिति को स्पष्ट करना चाहिए मैं यह समझ सकता हूँ कि आज मंत्री जी केवल तारीख बदलने का आधार लेकर इस मामले से मुक्त होना चाहते होंगे लेकिन जो इसमें प्रश्न उठाए गए हैं वे कल उनका स्पष्टीकरण देना चाहें तो दे सकते हैं लेकिन यों आसानी से वे यहां से नहीं जा सकते।

SHRI K. R. GANESH: I have some facts here. Mr. Sami Patel resigned and it was accepted on the 25th and he was relieved on the 31st of March. He disappeared only after he was relieved of his duties on 31st March. If a further clarification is necessary, that will be brought before the House.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

ORDINANCES PROMULGATED BY THE GOVERNOR OF KERALA ON THE 26TH APRIL, 1970.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI K. R. GANESH): I beg to lay on the Table under sub-clause (a) of clause (2) of article 213 of the Constitution read with