

RAJYA SABHA

Tuesday, the 28th March, 1967/the 7th 'Chaitra, 1889 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the 'Clock, MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

MEMBER SWORN

Shri V. V. Ramaswamy (Madras)

'ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

USE OF IAF PLANE BY P. M.

- 117. SHRI A. D. MANI†
SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE:
SHRI G. MURAHARI;

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of times the Prime Minister used the IAF aircraft for the purpose of her election campaign and what was the total mileage covered; and

(b) what payment has been made by the Prime Minister to the IAF on this account?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE ! (SARDAR SWARAN SINGH): (a) Eighteen flights were undertaken by the IAF aircraft for the journeys of the Prime Minister in connection with her Election campaign, and the total distance *flown* was 22,674 miles.

(b) The airlift charges recoverable from the Prime Minister and her party amount to Rs. 28084.18. A bill for this amount has been sent to the Prime Minister and Members of her party. Payment from the Prime Minister has already been received.

†The question was actually asked f
•on the floor of the House by Shri A. D. Mani.

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SHRI A. D. MANI: Sir, may I know on what basis these charges are collected, on the basis of charges per hour of flying on the basis of the distance covered?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: Generally, Sir, if the flight is undertaken between two points upon which there is a commercial flight, then the commercial charges are the basis for sending the bill. Otherwise there is a rate per mile and it is on that basis that the charges are levied.

SHRI A. D. MANI: Since the Prime Minister used the I.A.F. aircraft during her election campaign, may I ask the Minister whether she considers making the same facility available to members of other political parties, if they pay the charges of the I.A.F. flights?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: The facility which is available to the Prime Minister is not available to other political leaders, even of the Party of the Prime Minister. This is a special privilege that is available to the Prime Minister who, being the Head of Government, is entitled to security arrangements, and for all these reasons that is a special facility which is available to the Prime Minister; it is not available to political leaders either of the party that might be in power or of the Opposition parties.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: The Hon. Minister stated that facilities were available to Shrimati Indira Gandhi as the Prime Minister of the country, but she was campaigning as the Congress leader and for the Congress Party in a non-official capacity. Now we are told that the aeroplanes were provided for security reasons. Do I understand that some foreign planes were flying in the air or some such thing? We can understand security when she addresses a meeting, but these air flights were meant to facilitate her travel with speed to different parts of the country so that she could cover many places in one or two

days compared to the leaders of other political parties doing the same thing in two weeks' time. Now is it not considered unfair as against the Opposition parties that such facilities should be offered? If the I.A.F. could be made available to the Congress Party for its election campaign, why did the Government not make a declaration to the effect that the same facilities would be extended to other political parties, provided the charges were paid in the same way the Congress party would be paying?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: Sir, the Prime Minister is the Head of the Government and as such whether the Prime Minister goes for any political work or private work, it is the duty of the Government of the day to ensure the personal security of the Prime Minister. This is the normal practice that has been followed all these years—a sound practice—and I do not see any unfairness in relation to other political parties.

SHRI G. RAMACHANDRAN: Will the hon. Minister be pleased to state what is the convention or the tradition in regard to such matters in countries like England, the United States and specially in the U.S.S.R.? If the information is not available with him straightway, will he promise to give us that information at some appropriate moment?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: Sir, I have no information on these points. I think that is for the External Affairs Ministry to collect the information in relation to those countries.

SHRI G. RAMACHANDRAN: Sir, a question has been asked and an answer has been given. If this House knows that in other countries like the countries I have mentioned the tradition is of the kind he has mentioned about the Prime Minister of India, this House will gladly accept the same convention for this country. It is his duty to collect that information instead of asking us to address the question to the External Affairs

Ministry, having answered the question up to this point.

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: Sir, after all the Government is one. I was only suggesting that my channel would also be the External Affairs Ministry for collecting that information. I shall certainly have no difficulty in placing that information here once I have got that information.

श्री गोडे मुराहरि : मैं सरकार को यह इफार्मेशन दे सकता हूँ, क्योंकि इंग्लैंड में प्रधान मंत्री अपनी निजी कार में अपनी एलेक्शनीयरिंग करते हैं। हर समय हमें यह नज़ीर दी जाती है कि इंग्लैंड में जिस तरह की डेमोक्रेसी है, उसी तरह की हम भी यहां डेमोक्रेसी चलाते हैं। लेकिन कहीं पर भी अपने सरकारी एयरफोर्स के विमान को ले कर के कोई प्रधानमंत्री ने अपना एलेक्शनीयरिंग किया हो, ऐसा दुनिया में नहीं हुआ है।

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN: How do you say that?

SHRI G. MURAHARI: I say that with full responsibility because I know it. If you do not know it, it is ignorance. That is all I can say. When you talk of democracy here, you must know what are the democratic practices in this world.

और मैं जानता हूँ कि दुनिया में कभी भी इस तरह की चीज़ नहीं हुई है, जो हिन्दुस्तान में आज किया जा रहा है कि प्रधानमंत्री तो बनी बैठी रहती हैं, जब यहां पर एलेक्शन चालू होते हैं और साथ साथ जो पूरी सरकारी मशीनरी है, उसका इस्तेमाल होता है एलेक्शन के लिये और सिर्फ मशीनरी ही नहीं बल्कि इंडियन एयरफोर्स का विमान जो है, उसका भी इस्तेमाल किया गया इस एलेक्शन में। जब फ्री एंड फेयर एलेक्शन की बात कही जाती है, तो मैं जानना चाहूंगा सरकार से कि फ्री एंड फेयर एलेक्शन किस तरह से इस देश में हो सकता है, जब कि एक पार्टी की प्रधानमंत्री पार्टी का प्रोपेगन्डा करने

के लिये सरकारी विमान का इस्तेमाल करती हैं और वह भी किस दाम पर 22 हजार मील 28 हजार रुपये में यानी एक मील का एक रुपये के दाम पर ।

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Taxi rate Sir.

श्री गोडे मुराहरि : टैक्सी भी कहीं इस रेट पर नहीं मिलती । तो इस रेट पर प्रधान मंत्री को दिया गया है यह विमान, और दूसरी पोलिटिकल पार्टीज को यह सुविधा नहीं दी जाती । मैं यह समझ सकता था कि अगर कोई एक रूल हो जाता कि जितनी भी पोलिटिकल पार्टीज हिन्दुस्तान में हैं, सभी के जो लीडर्स हैं, उनको आई० ए० एफ० के विमान एक एक कर के दिये जायेंगे और तब मैं समझता हूँ कि फ्री एंड फेयर एलेक्शन हुआ । सबको समान अवसर मिले । तो मैं जानना चाहूँगा कि किस तरह से कहेंगे कि जो हिन्दुस्तान में अभी एलेक्शन हुआ है, वह फ्री एंड फेयर एलेक्शन हुआ जब कि सरकारी पार्टी को यह सुविधा मिली है ।

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, it has been more of a speech rather than a question, but I will attempt to answer very briefly some of the points raised by the hon. Member. One point stated by the hon. Member is that in our country the Prime Minister continues to be the Prime Minister at the time of election. Now this is a matter which has been mentioned here before also, i.e., according to the Constitution there must be a Government which controls the affairs of the country, and the continuance of the Prime Minister, does not mean that there is any unfairness to any other party. I strongly repudiate the allegation which was made by the hon. Member that the machinery of the Government is used for election purposes.

Then, Sir, the other point that was stated by him was that the election has not been free and fair. The

very complexion of the various Legislatures, I think, is the greatest proof of the fairness of elections; in several States we have got non-Congress Governments. Most of the hon. Members opposite probably do not have to face direct elections, but those of us who go to the electorate and face the elections, we know how fair we are. The allegation that Government machinery was used is an allegation which is entirely baseless.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Chatterjee.

श्री गोडे मुराहरि : सभापति महोदय, उन्होंने हमारे ऊपर एक रिफ्लेक्शन किया है . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Chatterjee

श्री गोडे मुराहरि : मैं तो चाहूँगा कि यह राज्य सभा को खत्म किया जाय ।

श्री सभापति : अच्छी बात है ।

श्री गोडे मुराहरि : हम सब डाइरेक्ट इलेक्शन फेस करने के लिए तैयार हैं, लेकिन मैं नहीं चाहता कि जो प्रधान मंत्री राज्य सभा में बैठ कर प्रधान मंत्री पद को चलाती हैं, उनकी पार्टी के लोग यह कहें कि ये डाइरेक्ट इलेक्शन फेस करना नहीं चाहते हैं । हम डाइरेक्ट इलेक्शन फेस करना चाहते हैं ।

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: As to the way such flights have been charged, it is in accordance with the instructions that have been issued, namely, that in the case of such airifts the rate at which it is charged, as I have indicated, is either the commercial rate per passenger, or a certain amount per mile. Now I have already said that this facility is not available to the leader of the political party—because the President of the Congress Party does not enjoy it— but it is available to the Prime Minister by virtue of the office of Prime Minister whose person has to be protected and Government work has also

to be carried on. So these facilities are absolutely essential for the Prime Minister to discharge the responsibility as Prime Minister, and it is the duty of the State also to look to the security of the person of the Prime Minister.

SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE: Will the hon. Minister inform us whether the expenses incurred by the Prime Minister in her election campaign on flights by I.A.F. aircraft have been entered in the return of election expenses? That is my first question. My second question is that as far as Rule 80 of the Conduct of Election Rules is concerned, a person who seeks election from a parliamentary constituency cannot spend more than Rs. 25,000 but it appears that the sums spent by the Prime Minister have been to the tune of Rs. 28,000. Now how can this be reconciled with the return of election expenses? If the hon. Minister says that all this amount was not spent on her own election campaign but on the election campaign of the party members as well, will the hon. Minister split up this figure and say what part of it was spent by her for travel in her own constituency? That is the second question. Then the third question which I shall ask of the hon. Minister . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Chatterjee you are in the habit of putting too many questions in one question. Please restrict yourself.

SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE: Then I shall ask another question with your permission after he answers these two questions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I do not know if there are others wanting to put questions on this subject but you cannot take all the time. Now you have put the question. If there is time, if I see there are not many people wanting to put questions, I will ask you again.

SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE: I have put part; (a) and (b) of the question-

tion. Let me now put part (c) of the question and finish with it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I really do not like this sort of attitude.

SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE: Only clause (c) of my question remains Sir. The hon. Minister has said just now that such facilities are available to the Prime Minister. Can he point out any rules or any provisions in the legislation relating to parliamentary elections that the Prime Minister is specially entitled to such facilities as flights by I.A.F. aircraft, and not other party leaders, or not other party members who have also to go on election campaigns? These are the three aspects of the same question number one, which he will please answer.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I hope there is no fourth.

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: Sir, the legalistic approach which has been introduced by the hon. Member in framing the question really is a matter which is not for Parliament. Now I would like to make it clear that these tours for purposes of electioneering were in the interests of the Congress Party of which she is the leader and therefore, this has nothing to do with her own election expenses. Now I do not know what is the return that she submitted. It is a public document and if the hon. Member or any other person is interested they can get copies of the returns that are filed by anyone out of us for this election. Copies are available and anybody can get the copies and have a look at them.

Now this covers the first two questions. The other question is about the rules or legislation. There is no legislation on this point, but the Prime Minister, being the head of the Government, is head of the Defence Ministry also, and the Defence Ministry has issued . . .

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Will the Deputy Prime Minister now get a helicopter?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: Anyone can get a helicopter. Even I can get; any other Minister can get a helicopter. Now Government have issued clear instructions on this point in consultation with the Finance Ministry, and this is a well-established practice that has been prevailing all the time during the first three elections, from Prime Minister Nehru's time. There is no new practice that has been now introduced. There are no new instructions that have been issued. These are the existing Instructions that have always been there.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: An immoral practice.

SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE: The hon. Minister has not answered that part of the question which asked whether he will split the figure of Rs. 28,000 which she spent upon her own election campaign. He has not answered that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Will you please sit down, Mr. Chatterjee? I am satisfied with the answer.

SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE: You will kindly ascertain it, Sir.

श्री राजनारायण : क्या सरकार बताएगी कि श्रीमती इन्दिरा नेहरू गांधी के साथ कांग्रेस पार्टी के कौन-कौन नेतागण उस हवाई जहाज में धूमते थे और चुनाव प्रचार में जाते थे ? क्या कई अफसरान भी जाते थे ? मेरा दूसरा सवाल है : क्या सरकार को इस बात की जानकारी है कि संयुक्त सोशलिस्ट पार्टी, जन संघ और दूसरी पार्टी के नेताओं ने इस पर जबरदस्त आपत्ति की थी कि श्रीमती इन्दिरा नेहरू गांधी (Interruption) इट इज हर एक्क्चुअल नेम । यह वोटर लिस्ट में है । यह जो सरकार की ओर से टेलीफोन नम्बर मिलता है, उसमें भी यही नाम लिखा हुआ है, श्रीमती इन्दिरा नेहरू गांधी । तो

यह तो जो हिस्टोरियन हैं, जो भारतीय कलचर के जानकार हैं, वे इस पर हिस्ट्री लिखते होंगे और मुझे मालूम है कुछ लोग लिख रहे हैं ।

SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE: On a point of information, Mr. Chairman. How can it be 'Indira Nehru Gandhi'? Either it is 'Nehru' or it is 'Gandhi' How can it be 'Nehru Gandhi'?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please let him put his question.

श्री राजनारायण : तो मेरा सवाल यह है कि क्या सरकार को इस बात की जानकारी है कि चुनाव के प्रचार के बीच हम विभिन्न दल के नेताओं ने सार्वजनिक बयान दिया और बयान देकर यह कहा, इलेक्शन कमीशन से भी यह अपील की, कि श्रीमती इन्दिरा नेहरू गांधी के जरिये जो भारतीय वायुसेना के विमानों का इस्तेमाल किया जा रहा है, उसे रोका जाय और उनसे वे नाजायज अपनी पार्टी का चुनाव प्रचार करने में फायदा ले रही हैं, जिससे चुनाव की निष्पक्षता, इम्पार्शलिटी खतरे में पड़ रही है ।

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: Sir, I cannot give any information about the other leaders that might have accompanied the Prime Minister during these various flights. There were a very large number of flights and I cannot give information as to which other Congress leader accompanied her on any individual visit. I would however like to make one point absolutely clear, that if any other non-official travelled with her, then the expenses of that other person have also been paid.

SHRI G. MURAHARI: They are not the Prime Ministers.

श्री राजनारायण : कामराज साहब गये हैं उनके साथ, चव्हाण साहब गये हैं उनके साथ ।

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: And the other question is whether any officers also accompanied her. Obviously officers like the security officers or the Private Secretary or other members of the staff would be there because the Prime Minister is supposed to look after the governmental work also and the line of communication between the headquarters and the Prime Minister should remain open so that any information that is intended to be passed to the Prime Minister could be passed or any instructions that are to be taken, could be taken. So this facility should be there.

The other thing is whether some leaders objected to the use of this facility. I cannot say if others objected, but if they had objected that objection was absolutely invalid. I have taken the stand that this facility should be available to the Prime Minister and it is in the interest of the country that the Head of the Government should be provided with necessary facilities of this type.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question, Mr. M. P. Bhargava.

श्री राजनारायण : श्रीमन, एक जैनुइन रिक्वेस्ट है ।

MR. CHAIRMAN: That will do. We have taken twenty minutes on this question.

श्री राजनारायण : श्रीमन, प्रधान मंत्री श्रीमती इन्दिरा नेहरू गांधी यहां पर विद्यमान हैं और वे जानती होंगी कि उनके साथ कौन कौन आदमी थे ।

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have passed on to the next question, Mr. Bhargava.

श्री राजनारायण : इस प्रश्न पर बहस होनी चाहिये ।

श्री गोडे मराहिर : इस पर आगे घंटे की बहस होनी चाहिये ।

SHRI S. S. MARISWAMY: Sir, I am very sorry to submit that this side of the House has not at all been seen. We have been trying to catch your eye several times but I have not succeeded. I have been denied an opportunity to put a question though I have been trying all the time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have seen all sides and I have taken twenty minutes over this question.

SHRI S. S. MARISWAMY: I have been trying for the last ten minutes. Sir.

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN: Our complaint is that only that side is being heard.

SHRI S. S. MARISWAMY: This is a very important question concerning the matter of having free and fair elections.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am afraid I will very soon have to devise some television method so that everybody could be satisfied.

•118. [Transferred to the 3rd April, 1967.]

PUBLICATION OF BOOKS ETC. BY DEFENCE PERSONNEL

•119. SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA :t
SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are any set rules governing the publication of any facts known to Defence personnel during their term of office or after their retirement;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of Defence Personnel who sought permission for such publications during the last five years?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SARDAR SWARAN SINGH): (a) Under the existing rules, serving personnel are required to obtain prior

tThe question was actually asked I on the floor of the House by Shri M.P. I Bhargava.