

..(Interruptions).. She did not tell me. Please. ..(Interruptions).. He was aware, but if I have not been given the information, what can I do?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE; AND THE MINISTER OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): Sir, Shri Vivek Tankha raised an important issue day before yesterday during Zero Hour regarding the children suffering from spinal muscular atrophy. The hon. Member stated that there is only one medicine to treat this disease. It costs about Rs.16 crore. This medicine is imported. He also stated that there is a tax component of Rs.7 crore on it. I would like to apprise the House that the assessment made by the hon. Member regarding the tax component may not be right. All the life-saving drugs imported for personal use are exempt from basic customs duty either unconditionally for specified medicines or subject to a certificate to be issued by the Director of Health Services or the DG of Health Services of the State Government or the District Medical Officer or the civil surgeon of the district for other life-saving medicines. The relevant customs duty notification is No.50/2017 (Serial No.607). Therefore, import of stated medicine for personal use for treatment of spinal muscular atrophy is entitled to this concession. However, such life-saving medicines attract a GST rate of 5 per cent which comes to about Rs.80 lakh in this case. GST rates are prescribed on the recommendation of the GST Council. The Council has vested power in the Union Finance Minister to grant *ad hoc* exemption on case to case basis in the circumstances of exceptional nature. In exercise of this power, *ad hoc* exemptions from the IGST have been allowed for such imports on a case to case basis where a request is received. These exemptions are subsequently placed before the GST Council. Thank you very much, Sir.

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#### **OBSERVATIONS BY THE CHAIR- *Contd.***

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, as I could go through the notices to raise issues for which permission is given liberally, it seems that Members have run out of the issues. So they are trying to invent or search for some issues. I can only caution them and tell them that they have got every liberty to raise issues. I am here to facilitate bringing of important issues to the notice of the Government through this House. But the point is this. One, you may also get a doubt why certain Members are getting opportunity the second time. Some got permission yesterday and they have got permission today also. The reason is that as I run out of the issues, which are eligible for admission, and then there is an issue, which is really worth raising,

though it is the second chance to the concerned Member, I am giving it to them without compromising on my basic rule. If there are many Members, then definitely it will go according to the priority on the basis of the eligibility of the issue and on the merit of the issue. If fewer Members have asked for Zero Hour submissions or Special Mentions, you might have seen that we have combined Zero Hour submissions and Special Mentions and we are giving permission even to raise Special Mentions instead of placing them on the Table of the House. I am allowing Members to raise it in the House, so that it gets the attention of the Government. That is the practical problem. I only suggest this to the Members. Please See to it that your Zero Hour issues are issues of larger public interest and current in nature and also on a specific issue.

The second point is that we have seen it today and even earlier also that some Members tend to drag Governments and then make criticism. What I am saying is that you can definitely refer to an incident. But making allegation against a State Government which is not here to defend itself and even against the Central Government because we have not given it to the concerned Minister to respond here, it is not going to solve any problem.

The third issue about which I would like to tell the Members is this. Some Members are developing a habit of making running commentary while sitting. That is not going to solve any problem. Any solution can be found only if you bring it through proper system to the notice of the Chairman. If the Chairman thinks it fit or if it is appropriate to accept, then permission would be given. Otherwise, एक मिनट के लिए आप थोड़ा ज़ोर से बोल सकते हैं, लेकिन उससे कोई फायदा नहीं होगा because the media is not going to cover it and the record will not include the same. So, I only request the Members to bear with the Chair's advice and follow the rules and regulations and procedure so that we can have maximum opportunities.

One more issue just now came to my mind. If a Member makes a submission and if the Minister wants to respond and the Minister indicates to me, only then can I permit. If the Member wants clarification and the Minister is not responding, I cannot permit it. As per the rule, clarification is not mandatory. If the Minister wants to clarify and if there is time, the Chair will be more than happy to allow the Minister to give clarification and allow the Member to get the clarification. This has to be kept in mind. The other day, Shri Vivek Tankha raised an issue about an amount of Rs.6 crore as tax. Even I was surprised. It is a very serious issue. So, yesterday, the Minister sent a letter to me saying that she would like to respond to this issue. Then, I went through the reply. It was explanatory which would also be useful. I allowed the Minister to give clarification. Otherwise, normally, clarifications are given then and

there. ...**(व्यवधान)** आप बैठ जाएं। आपका कोई विषय है तो चेयरमैन से मिलें। रेवती रमन जी, यहां हाउस में मेरे से सीधे बात करने का कोई फायदा नहीं है। आपको हमेशा निरंतर मौका मिल रहा है, आप एक एक्टिव मेम्बर हैं। मैं जानता हूं कि इस उम्र में भी आप कष्ट करके इश्यू रेज़ करने की कोशिश करते हैं। जैसा मैंने कहा, once I receive notice, I go through it and then find out whether the issue can be raised in the present form and in the present Session. Then, you will get an opportunity. Keep that in mind. You have met me and you were given an opportunity for raising the issue yesterday. So, that will come in due course of time. So, you will have to bear with me. I have also seen a new tendency. Shri Binoy Viswam, do you want to say something on this issue? I called you yesterday but you were not there because you had been told that your name is not going to be there in the Zero Hour list. But later, we discussed and decided that during the discussion on the Insurance (Amendment) Bill in the evening, you will get an opportunity and you can make your point clear. That is why, you were not called.

SHRI BINOY VISWAM: Sir, may I make a small submission in one minute?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Not now. Then, when I found that there was time yesterday, suddenly, I called you when you were not there. So, there is no complaint at all because it is not your fault as your name was not listed. Nowadays, I have developed a new system. Whenever there is opportunity and time available, I go through names of the Members on Zero Hour submissions as well as Special Mentions and if those Members are present in the House, then I call them and give them an opportunity. So, that has to be understood. Otherwise, a wrong message might have gone that I called Shri Binoy Viswam; he gave notice and he was not there in the House. That is not the correct position. The correct position is this. So, that has to be understood. I think, you have also spoken yesterday.

SHRI BINOY VISWAM: Yes, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Now, Shri Akhilesh Prasad Singh.

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#### MATTERS RAISED WITH PERMISSION - *Contd.*

##### **Poor families returning to traditional fuels due to hike in prices of LPG**

**श्री अखिलेश प्रसाद सिंह (बिहार) :** सभापति महोदय, पिछले कुछ महीनों के दौरान घरेलू रसोई गैस की कीमतों में भारी बढ़ोतरी हुई है। उससे गरीब लोगों का जीना मुहाल हो गया है। पिछले वर्ष