

To
Shri Manikrao Hodlya Gavit, Chairman, Committee of Ethics
Lok Sabha

Letter No: ADR04/Letter/LS/ROI/01
Date: 30/10/2012

Cc: - Shri Lal Krishna Advani, Member, Committee of Ethics,
Shri Sai Pratap Annayyagari, Member, Committee of Ethics
Thiru Thalikkottai Rajuthevar Baalu, Member, Committee of Ethics
Shri Kalyan Banerjee, Member, Committee of Ethics
Shri Dara Singh Chauhan, Member, Committee of Ethics
Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi, Member, Committee of Ethics
Smt. Sumitra Mahajan, Member, Committee of Ethics
Shri Inder Singh Namdhari, Member, Committee of Ethics
Shri Sis Ram Ola, Member, Committee of Ethics
Shri Asaduddin Owaisi, Member, Committee of Ethics
Shri Prem Das Rai, Member, Committee of Ethics
Shri Sambasiva Rayapati Rao, Member, Committee of Ethics
Kunwar Rewati Raman Singh, Member, Committee of Ethics
Shri Mahabali Singh, Member, Committee of Ethics

Shri T.K.Vishwanathan, Secretary – General, Lok Sabha
Shri V.R. Ramesh, Joint Secretary, Committee of Ethics, Lok Sabha

Smt. Meira Kumar, Speaker, Lok Sabha
Dr Karan Singh, Chairman, Committee of Ethics, Rajya Sabha

Subject : Introduction of Register of Members' Interest of Lok Sabha MPs

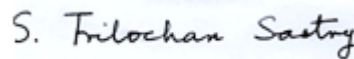
Dear Sir

Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) is part of a nationwide campaign called National Election Watch (NEW) which comprises of more than 1200 NGOs and other citizen led organizations working on electoral reforms, improving democracy and governance in India. We have come to know from media reports that the Ethics Committee has discussed a draft report on 'Introduction of a Register of Interest in Lok Sabha'. We highly commend you for the effort taken to bring more transparency in financial matters of elected representatives.

Based on our experience with the information obtained from the Register of Interest of the Rajya Sabha MPs and certain anomalies found with the same, ADR has a few recommendations for the Lok Sabha Members' Interest Register and the recommendations have been attached for your consideration. We hope that you will be able to take this forward.



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ADR/ NEW's RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE REGISTER OF INTEREST IN LOK SABHA

Details in Register of Interest in Lok Sabha

- Along the lines of Register of Rajya Sabha Members' Interest, the Lok Sabha Register of Interest to include all the details regarding Remunerative Directorship, Regular Remunerated Activities, Shareholding of controlling nature, Paid consultancy and Professional engagement of the Lok Sabha MPs
- As the trusts and NGOs of several elected members are being discussed in media reports, details of members of Lok Sabha pertaining to Directorship, Chairmanship or position as a Board Member of any trust/ NGO/ Companies covered u/s 25 of Companies Act, 1956, to be included in the Lok Sabha Register of Interest

Inclusion of financial details of spouse and dependents in the 'form'

- Details of financial and business interests of spouse and dependents of the MPs should be made part of the 'form' of pecuniary interest of members, similar to the affidavit declarations of asset details which is made by candidates contesting elections.

Scrutiny of declarations

- There should be a mechanism for thorough scrutiny and verification into the authenticity of the declarations of financial interest made by members on the 'form' of pecuniary interest.

Issue of conflict of interest

- The mechanism of the Register of Interest should also address the issue of conflict of interest comprehensively in terms of ministry/panel/committee that the MPs are part of and related financial interest that they possess. There should be a bar on members to be part of committees which deal with subjects related to their business interest.

Non-submission of Register of Interest

- Registration of pecuniary interests to be made compulsory for all Lok Sabha MPs
- Rules regarding actions should to be laid down for non-declaration of pecuniary interests of the members of Lok Sabha with minimum penalty being public censorship by the Parliament.

Correlation of data provided

- The pecuniary details provided in the Register of Interest should be provided to the Income Tax authorities or other appropriate body for cross-checking with the Income Tax Returns filed by the MPs.

Also, we kindly request you to provide a copy of the draft report as discussed by the Ethics Committee.