



RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR  
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT  
RAJYA SABHA

Member of Standing Committee on Finance  
Member of Consultative Committee on Finance  
Member of Parliamentary Forum on Youth  
Co-Chairman, Vigilance & Monitoring Committee, Bangalore Urban District

*Respected Prime Minister,*

25 August, 2010

**Subject: Salary hike to MPs, One Rank, One Pension**

This is with reference to the ongoing debate in the public domain on the issue of salary increase for Members of Parliament.

I concur with the Government's view that MPs must be compensated better and good performing MPs thus have a financial safety net that allows them to serve the people they represent – better and with more dignity, and not have to depend on other sources of income to supplement their meager income.

However, there are many questions that arise from this decision and the process used by the Government to arrive at this decision. One, around the lack of objectivity and independence of the process and speed of the decision, and two, the seemingly double standards adopted when there are other legitimate demands that have been pending for many years with the Government.

The lack of objectivity and independence of process relates to the fact that in this case, the Government has accepted the recommendations of a Parliamentary Committee comprising MPs on this issue, whilst in other cases like the One Rank, One Pension – the government has chosen to use bureaucratic committees to evaluate and decide. As you would agree, this leads to the perception that when your Government wishes to deny a claim, you rely on committees of bureaucrats, who by now have developed a fine tuned reputation of obstructive conduct – as demonstrated recently in the case of questioning the citizenship of one of finest sons - Vishwanathan Anand.

The issue of double standards is a far more damaging and hurtful one. The demands of One Rank, One Pension of the Armed forces veterans is a known issue. The Parliamentary Committee of Defence has repeatedly recommended it to the Government (just as in the case of MPs compensation). This request has been endorsed by a wide section of society, including icons like



Marshal of the Airforce Arjan Singh, but has been repeatedly blocked by Government which moved astonishingly fast on the issue of increased salaries to the MPs.

Sir, I say this with humility but with absolute conviction – that **these actions of your Government send very misleading and somewhat dangerous signals to the country and all its people, majority of whom are young Indians – that there are two sets of standards in this country – that public service and duty to nation as exemplified by the Armed Forces veterans are secondary to political expediency and politics.**

I have written to you many times urging your intervention to resolve the issue of One Rank, One Pension. However, the issue remains unresolved even as MPs demanded and received a generous salary hike. Given this continued injustice to the demands of Armed Forces veterans, I shall decline the pay increase for myself individually for the above reasons till the Government re-examines the case of the One Rank, One Pension.

I am marking copies of this letter to H. E. Shri Mohammad Hamid Ansari, Hon'ble Vice President of India and Chairman, Rajya Sabha.

I realize that as an Independent Member of Parliament, my action may not amount to much, and in the kind of politics being practiced today, may not cause concern to anyone in Government. But I hope that somewhere in the Government and in the political system, there still exist some people who value ideals and principles and will deem it worthy of response.

Respectfully,

RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR

**Dr. Manmohan Singh**

Hon'ble Prime Minister  
Government of India  
New Delhi

Copy :

H. E. Shri Mohammad Hamid Ansari, Hon'ble Vice President of India and Chairman, Rajya Sabha