



Commerce Minister reiterates that GeM is the most transparent, accountable and efficient public procurement portal

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Commerce and Industry Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman has reiterated that GeM is the most transparent, accountable and efficient public procurement portal and has already resulted in savings of crores of Rupees to the Government. In a press conference today she strongly denied the charges levelled against GeM by the Congress Party.

In the Press conference held on 21st April 2017 by Congress spokesperson Sh. Randeep Surjewala, he levelled charges of irregularities against the Government e-Marketplace (GeM). The basis of Sh. Surjewala's allegations were the alleged letters written by a Union Minister and few BJP MPs to the Hon'ble Union Commerce & Industry Minister.

Department of Commerce strongly denies the baseless, motivated and malafide charges levelled by Sh Surjewala against GeM.

Sh Ajay Nishad, Hon'ble MP(LS) has already denied in writing for having written the said letter to Hon'ble Commerce & Industry Minister and has instead complimented her for setting up a transparent portal for public procurement. It is pertinent to mention that the letters of Sh. Nishad and Sh. Ashok M Nete (MP)(LS) are exactly similar. In addition, the letters written by 6 Hon'ble MPs (LS), Sh Harish Dwivedi, Sh Arjun Lal Meena, Sh Alok Sanjar, Sh Rajesh Verma, Sh Radheshyam Biswas and Sh Kaushal Kishore, have all put in the similar request of extension of Software, Storage, Networking, Security items on DGS&D Rate Contract. Shri Faggan Singh Kulaste, Hon'ble MoS Health and Family welfare, in his letter to Hon'ble Commerce and Industry Minister has just forwarded the representation of a company which lost out a big order due to timely intervention by GeM.

The above-mentioned facts clearly indicate that there are vested interest operating behind this malicious campaign against GeM and in all likelihood, it appears to be the handiwork of certain interested group who have been badly hit owing to discontinuation of RC and development of a transparent platform. It is unfortunate that the Congress Party is supporting an opaque system and is against transparency in public procurement and good governance and has allowed its spokesperson to speak against GeM without verifying facts.

The items for which Sh. Surjewala has given GeM rates and e-Commerce portal rates are different items and they cannot be compared. On the contrary, GeM rates are much lower than the market rates and it has been worked out that Government has made a saving of over Rs 100 Crore in the total procurement of about Rs 450 Crore that has so far taken place through GeM.

Government as a policy is reducing the items on RC and bringing them on GeM which is a transparent portal. RC system has a number of limitations.

The processes on GeM are completely transparent and GeM is the first Government portal that places all the procurements- big or small- by Government organizations in public domain, with details about the buyer, seller, item, quantity and price.

GeM has removed all the registration restrictions on businesses for supplying to the Government. For the first time, vendors from small towns are getting an opportunity to do business with the Government, in contrast to the erstwhile RC system where not more than 2500-3500 suppliers were holding monopoly to supply to the Government at fixed rates. There are adequate checks and balances in place on GeM which do not allow suppliers to get away with supplying at a higher price to the Government, than the prevailing market or Last Procurement Price (LPP). A number of advisories issued by GeM in this regard to Government buyers along with action taken against a few delinquent suppliers speak volumes about the high transparency and accountability standards on GeM.

MJPS

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