

LOK SABHA DEBATES

(English Version)

First Session
(Fourteenth Lok Sabha)



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OFFICERS OF LOK SABHA

THE SPEAKER*

Shri Somnath Chatterjee

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER**

Shri Charnjit Singh Atwal

PANEL OF CHAIRMAN***

Shri Balasaheb Vikhe Patil
Shri Giridhar Gamang
Lt. Col. (Retd.) Manabendra Shah

SECRETARY-GENERAL

Shri G.C. Malhotra

* Elected on 4.6.2004

** Elected on 9.6.2004

*** Nominated on 29.05.2004 by President

The following three separate orders were issued by the President of India on 29.05.2004 :

*1. Whereas the office of the Speaker will become vacant immediately before the commencement of the first sitting of the House of the People on the 2nd June, 2004 and the office of the Deputy Speaker is also vacant.

Now, therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred upon me by clause (1) of article 95 of the Constitution of India, I hereby appoint **Shri Somnath Chatterjee**, a Member of the House of the People to perform the duties of the office of the Speaker from the commencement of the said sitting, i.e. the 2nd of June, 2004 and until the commencement of the sitting of the House of the People on 4th of June, 2004.

A.P.J. Abdul Kalam,
PRESIDENT OF INDIA*

*2. And whereas appointment of Shri Somnath Chatterjee as Speaker pro term is only upto the commencement of the sitting of the House of the People on the 4th June, 2004;

Now, therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred upon me by clause (1) of article 95 of the Constitution of India, I hereby appoint **Shri Balasaheb Vikhe Patil**, a Member of the House of the People to perform the duties of the office of the Speaker from the commencement of the sitting of the House of the People on the 4th of June, 2004 till the election of the Speaker by the said House.

A.P.J. Abdul Kalam,
PRESIDENT OF INDIA*

*3. I hereby appoint **S/Shri Somnath Chatterjee, Balasaheb Vikhe Patil, Giridhar Gamang and Manabendra Shah** to be the persons before any of whom members of the House of People may make and subscribe the oath or affirmation in accordance with the provisions of article 99 of the Constitution of India.

A.P.J. Abdul Kalam,
PRESIDENT OF INDIA*

LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Friday, June 04, 2004/Jyaishta 14, 1926 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock

(MR. SPEAKER PROTEM (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL)
in the Chair)

MEMBERS SWORN

MR. SPEAKER : The Secretary-General may please call out the names of those Members who have not yet taken the oath or made affirmation.

Ms. Mehbooba Mufti (Anantnag)
Shri C. Kuppusami (Madras North)
Shri A. Krishnaswamy (Sriperumbudur)
Shri A.K. Moorthy (Chengalpattu)
Prof. K. M. Kader Mohideen (Vellore)
Shri D. Venugopal (Tiruppattur)
Shri E.G. Sugavanam (Krishnagiri)
Shri K.C. Palanisamy (Karur)
Shri A.K.S. Vijayan (Nagapattinam)
Shrimati M.S.K. Bhavani Rajenthiran (Ramanathapuram)
Shrimati V. Radhika Selvi (Tiruchendur)
Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh (Gonda)
Kunwar Devendra Singh Yadav (Etah)
Shri Tarit Baran Topdar (Barrackpore)
Kumari Mamata Banerjee (Calcutta South)

11.17 hrs.

ELECTION OF THE SPEAKER

MR. SPEAKER : Now, we take up the Motions for the Election of Speaker of Lok Sabha. I call upon Shrimati Sonia Gandhi to move the Motion standing in her name.

SHRIMATI SONIA GANDHI (Raebareli) : Sir, with your permission, I beg to move :

"That Shri Somnath Chatterjee, a Member of this House, be chosen as the Speaker of this House."

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : Sir, I second the Motion.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE (Lucknow) : Sir, I beg to move :

"That Shri Somnath Chatterjee, a Member of this House, be chosen as the Speaker of this House."

SHRI L. K. ADVANI (Gandhinagar) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I second the Motion.

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : Sir, I beg to move:

"That Shri Somnath Chatterjee, a Member of this House, be chosen as the Speaker of this House."

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I second the Motion.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move :

"That Shri Somnath Chatterjee, a Member of this House, be chosen as the Speaker of this House."

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I second the Motion.

[English]

PROF. RAM GOPAL YADAV (Sambhal) : Sir, I beg to move:

"That Shri Somnath Chatterjee, a Member of this House, be chosen as the Speaker of this House."

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN SINGH (Deoria) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I second the Motion.

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : Sir, I beg to move:

"That Shri Somnath Chatterjee, a Member of this House, be chosen as the Speaker of this House."

SHRI RAMCHANDRA PASWAN (Rosera) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I second the Motion.

THE MINISTER OF COAL AND MINES (SHRI SHIBU SOREN) : Sir, I beg to move :

"That Shri Somnath Chatterjee, a Member of this House, be chosen as the Speaker of this House."

SHRI HEMLAL MURMU (Rajmahal) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I second the Motion.

KUMARI MAYAWATI (Akbarpur) : Sir, I beg to move :

"That Shri Somnath Chatterjee, a Member of this House, be chosen as the Speaker of this House."

SHRI BHAL CHANDRA YADAV (Khalilabad) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I second the Motion.

[English]

THE MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (SHRI K. CHANDRA SHEKHAR RAO) : Sir, I beg to move :

"That Shri Somnath Chatterjee, a Member of this House, be chosen as the Speaker of this House."

SHRI MADHUSUDAN REDDY (Adilabad) : Sir, I second the Motion.

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR (Nalanda) : Sir, I beg to move :

"That Shri Somnath Chatterjee, a Member of this House, be chosen as the Speaker of this House."

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (Maharajganj, Bihar) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I second the Motion.

[English]

SHRI AJIT SINGH (Baghpat) : Sir, I beg to move:

"That Shri Somnath Chatterjee, a Member of this House, be chosen as the Speaker of this House."

DR. SHAFIQUK RAHMAN BARQ (Moradabad) : Sir, I second the Motion.

SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH (Srinagar) : Sir, I beg to move:

"That Shri Somnath Chatterjee, a Member of this House, be chosen as the Speaker of this House."

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN (Trichur) : Sir, I second the Motion.

SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY (Basirhat) : Sir, I beg to move:

"That Shri Somnath Chatterjee, a Member of this House, be chosen as the Speaker of this House."

SHRI SURAVARAM SUDHAKAR REDDY (Nalgonda) : Sir, I second the Motion.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hooghly) : Sir, I beg to move:

"That Shri Somnath Chatterjee, a Member of this House, be chosen as the Speaker of this House."

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH (Uluberia) : Sir, I second the Motion.

SHRI P.K. VASUDEVAN NAIR (Thiruvananthapuram) : Sir, I beg to move :

"That Shri Somnath Chatterjee, a Member of this House, be chosen as the Speaker of this House."

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA (Panskura) : Sir, I second the Motion.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : Sir, I beg to move:

"That Shri Somnath Chatterjee, a Member of this House, be chosen as the Speaker of this House."

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS (Palghat) : Sir, I second the Motion.

SHRI BIR SINGH MAHATO (Purulia) : Sir, I beg to move:

"That Shri Somnath Chatterjee, a Member of this House, be chosen as the Speaker of this House."

SHRI HITEN BARMAN (Cooch Behar) : Sir, I second the Motion.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL (Joynagar) : Sir, I beg to move :

"That Shri Somnath Chatterjee, a Member of this House, be chosen as the Speaker of this House."

SHRI JOACHIM BAXLA (Alipurduar) : Sir, I second the Motion.

MR. SPEAKER : Now the Motion moved by Shrimati Sonia Gandhi and seconded by Shri Pranab Mukherjee is before the House for consideration. I am putting this motion to the vote of the House.

The question is :

"That Shri Somnath Chatterjee, a Member of this House, be chosen as the Speaker of this House."

The motion was adopted.

MR. SPEAKER : The Motion is carried and Shri Somnath Chatterjee is declared elected as the Speaker of this House. I have great pleasure in inviting him to occupy the Chair.

(Shri Somnath Chatterjee was conducted to the Chair by the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, the Leader of the House, Shri Pranab Mukherjee and the Leader of the Opposition, Shri L.K. Advani)

11.29½ hrs.

(MR. SPEAKER (SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE) *in the Chair*)

FELICITATIONS TO THE SPEAKER

11.30 hrs.

[English]

THE PRIME MINISTER (DR. MANMOHAN SINGH) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru once said that in affairs of the State, one should be full of sentiments but never be sentimental. You will forgive me for being somewhat sentimental on this occasion.

Some 50 years ago, when I graduated from my college, your illustrious father presided over the Convocation where I got the degree and today, Sir, when I am going to assume a new office, you are in this illustrious Chair as our guide, friend and philosopher.

Sir, it is a privilege for me to congratulate you and felicitate you on behalf of our Party and on my behalf on your unanimous election as Speaker of this august House.

You, Mr. Speaker Sir, have been an illustrious Member of this august House for over three decades. The Members of the House, quite correctly, showed their appreciation of your vast contribution to the proceedings by conferring on you the Outstanding Parliamentarian Award some years ago, and now by unanimously electing you to this august House as Speaker.

Sir, your life and work as a parliamentarian have been a source of tremendous inspiration for many of us. Like you, I have always believed that politics has to be used as an instrument of social change. To realise this vision, heavy responsibility rests on the Members of this august House and Sir, in you, we have a wise shepherd to guide us. The Members of my party and of the United Progressive Alliance will be with you in your endeavour to improve the quality of debate, discussion and the content of the legislative outcome of our proceedings.

Mr. Speaker Sir, this House reflects the diversity of our vast and plural nation and debates here do reflect the diversity of opinion in our democracy. However, the manner in which our proceedings are conducted and the effectiveness with which we use the time at our disposal to redeem our pledge to the people determine how effectively we can contribute to the holy endeavour of the nation building.

Sir, given your wisdom, given your commitment to our Republic and its ideals, I am sure you will conduct the proceedings of the House in the highest traditions of our great democracy. I assure you, Sir, of my fullest cooperation and indeed of our Alliance and of our Party. I sincerely wish you well, Mr. Speaker Sir, in your responsibility to make the best use of the time at our disposal so that we can deliver on our promises, lighting a lamp in the lives of our people, particularly, the deprived sections of our community. We are committed to taking our nation forward as a modern, progressive, open, secular and liberal democracy and a just society.

Under your guidance, Sir, this House will not disappoint the nation. I sincerely hope that our deliberations will be characterised by reason, compassion and a deep commitment to both efficiency and equity in the processes of governance. We have, Sir, to recapture the high noon of idealism, which inspired our freedom struggle. This idealism is best captured by Rabindra Nath Tagore's famous Poem, and I shall conclude with the prayer that under your distinguished guidance, in our deliberations we live up to the high ideals embodied in that poem :

"Where the mind is without fear, and the head is held high;
Where knowledge is free;
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;
Where words come out from the depth of truth;
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;
Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;
Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening thought and action—
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake."

I congratulate you, Sir, once again on this occasion.

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I join the Prime Minister in congratulating you on your unanimous election to this august office.

Sir, the first Lok Sabha, under the new Constitution, had the privilege of having your illustrious father as a Member of this House. Since 1971, you are Member of this House and you have contributed very effectively in the deliberations of the House your recognition as one of the outstanding parliamentarians, keeping in view your contributions, speaks the quality of your mind and heart.

Sir, today you have joined the line of illustrious predecessors starting from Shri Vithalbai Patel to Shri Mavalankar and many others who have not only raised the status of this office but also upheld the dignity, prestige and honour of our Sovereign, Democratic Republic.

Sir, this high-domed hall has witnessed many histories. Even long before Independence our legislatures asserted for 'autonomy. If I remember correctly, in 1924, a question arose about the independence of the Central Legislative Assembly as it was called then, and then under the inspiration of the then Speaker, Shri Motilal Nehru, as leader of the Swaraj Party, moved the Motion that let the establishment of the Central Legislative Assembly be placed under the control of the Speaker, not under the control of the Executive. And since then, we have maintained this tradition. As the hon. Prime Minister has very correctly pointed out, you would be the custodian, you will guide us; and we do hope that with your experience and vast knowledge of the Constitution, you will uphold the right of this House of having control on money and finance. Not a single paisa can be withdrawn from the Consolidated Fund without the approval of this House. Not a single penny can be spent. But, unfortunately, in our preoccupation on other matters, this aspect has been lost sight of. I remember when our budgetary transactions did not cross four figure, when our First Five Year Plan was in the order of Rs. 2000 crore, Parliament used to, especially Lok Sabha, spend more than two-thirds of its time on money and finance. And when the budgetary transaction has crossed more than four lakh crores of rupees, hardly we have any time to ponder, to scrutinise it. I do hope that under your guidance, Parliament will assert its authority over Executive and surely the debate and deliberations of this House will inspire the new generation which has come.

Thank you Mr. Speaker Sir and once again my heartiest congratulations.

SHRI L.K. ADVANI (Gandhinagar) : On behalf of my party, the opposition and the NDA. I extend my warm felicitations on your unanimous election as to the office of the Speaker of the fourteenth Lok Sabha. Unlike my senior colleague, Shri Vajpayeeji, I do not have a very long association with you since half of my Parliamentary life has been spent in the Rajya Sabha. However, at this juncture, I recall your working in various Joint Committees which is reminiscent and reflective of your talent, erudition and dedication coupled with your strong desire to working for the welfare of the Country. You might remember that I have had the good fortune of being associated with you in all the Electoral Reforms Committees constituted so far and Vajpayeeji has also been a Member of most of them. All of us have collectively tried to see democracy is strengthened and with this view, proper electoral reforms are carried out. Right now, Shri Pranab Mukherjee mentioned and incident of the year 1924 that reminded us of Shri Vitthal Bhai Patel. It is a very famous and historical incident. At that time Central Legislative Assembly did not form a part of this House. This House did not exist then. The Chamber of Central Legislative Assembly used to be at the place where Delhi Vidhan Sabha building stands today. The Session of the then constituted Metropolitan Council was held there. The very first

public office that I occupied was that of the Chairman of the Metropolitan Council. I was accountable to that small forum as you are accountable to this apex body. At that juncture I had sought to know and learn as to what is the role and responsibilities associated with the post of the Chairman. I can say that the ability and the potential you possess, would certainly go a long way in your role as the Speaker. We have witnessed the speakership of Shri Balyogi ji and Shri Manohar Joshiji during the last five years in this House and both of them were also elected unanimously. However, there is a difference between the situation of yester-years and the present one. I would like to give credit to Shri Vajpayeeji for this. Today the Opposition has also moved a motion supporting your name and this has probably never happened in the past. I am of the opinion that despite our ideological differences, it would be better if we shun the practice of ideological untouchability. I am of the opinion that there are several occasions when one can express to one's opinion about an ideology. However, the ideological differences should not be allowed to come in way of evolving a consensus over the election to the office of the Speaker and the manner in which Shri Vajpayeeji proposed your name sets an example in the annals of unanimous election of the speaker. It reminds me of the days when I used to hold a similar Office. At that time two sentences I read have had an appealing effect on me. One of them was

[English]

'The Speaker of the House ironically is the Member who speaks the least.'

The other thing is that so far as the Opposition is concerned, the Speaker always ensures that the Opposition has its say because, after all, he knows that the Government with its majority would always have its way. Therefore, it is the duty of the Speaker to ensure that the Opposition has its say.

[Translation]

I had tried to do so during my tenure. It would certainly to be place given your nature and temperament. I congratulate you on assuming this responsibility.

[English]

SHRIMATI SONIA GANDHI (Raebareli) : Let me add a few words of greetings to the newly elected hon. Speaker Shri Somnath Chatterjee.

Somnathji's Parliamentary skills have been widely recognised and justifiably applauded. His legal acumen has been much appreciated and, if I may say so, also rewarded. But today I also greet another Somnathji, a much respected colleague whose counsel my party and I have sought and valued.

In honouring him this morning, we are reaffirming our deep and abiding faith in the best tradition of India in her diversity and in her plurality. The election that brought all of us to this House has one overriding message and that message is that the people of our country have rejected the politics of divisiveness. In many ways, the multi-faceted personality of Somnathji reflects that verdict. He is a thoroughly modern man steeped in tradition, a person rooted in ideology but wedded to pragmatism. He combines an unwavering commitment to certain basic principles with a rare ability to reach across the political divide and make good friends. Somnathji has an unflinching commitment to the liberal values of Indian culture, yet is always open to debate and discussion with those who do not share his passion for those values. In honouring him today, we honour one who has graced this House for over three decades with his erudition, his wit, his vast learning and experience.

Somnathji has elevated the proceedings and deliberations of this august House. As a Speaker, he would, I suppose, have to speak less and listen more. We would miss his debates but our political life would be, I am sure, immeasurably enhanced with him in his new role.

On my behalf and on behalf of my party, I wish to assure him of our fullest co-operation at all times, both in the House and in his Chambers where much of Parliamentary business gets transacted. We know that he would be fair. We know that his rulings would always be reasoned and measured and his decisions would always be taken in the national interest.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, this marks a new innings in your long and distinguished career. We wish you all the very best.

[Translation]

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE (Lucknow) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, today you have adorned the office of the Speaker after serving as an esteemed Member of the House and our good wishes are with you.

As a Member of Parliament you have discharged your responsibilities quite well. You never missed an opportunity to criticise and put a reasonable check on the Government and you have always expressed your views while maintaining the decorum of the House. Now, when the Parliament has come to be represented by various parties, it has become imperative for the person occupying the Chair to be more impartial in his conduct and working and steer the House in the appropriate direction and in turn, the House has also an obligation to co-operate with the Chair in order to conduct the proceedings of the House properly.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is a need to check several new propensities that are being noticed in the House for quite some time now. I do not think that any occasion will arise

during your tenure when a Member will be forced to come to the well after leaving his seat for this situation may not arise because it is expected that you would take such measures in advance that a Member won't think of taking resort to this practice. Ours is a country populated by a billion people. The way we have conducted our elections and have been making our democracy function successfully, is an example before the entire world. The need of the Hour is that we should play our role in an exemplary manner.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, being a member you used to speak more, now you will have to speak less. You have been elected from Bolpur, your speaking would not be helpful, rather silence on your part would make things easy.

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, on my behalf and on behalf of the entire Left Group, I congratulate and felicitate you on your assumption of this high office.

I have not seen during my 24 years in this House that a Speaker was elected with an overwhelming support from the entire House. For the first time I have seen such an overwhelming support that you have received from all sections of this House.

We are delighted to see that such an eminent parliamentarian like you, with a very long experience of Parliament, has now been elevated to this high position. It has been done unanimously which demonstrates that the Indian democracy has matured, which is now reflected in the recent Lok Sabha elections.

Sir, we are doubly happy and proud on this solemn occasion because you are the leader of my Party and one of the top leaders of Left Front. We have seen how you had sincerely tried to unite, when you were in the Opposition, all the Parties belonging to the Opposition and the secular forces of our country. You took the lead to unite all the political parties believing in secularism.

Sir, it goes without saying that you will be very successful in running the House and listening to and giving opportunities to all sections of the House, not only the leader of the CPI (M) but to all, not only to leaders but to all Members of the House. Sir, this time majority of the Members are new. Most of them have come for the first time to this House. We have seen also how you always tried to uphold the dignity and decorum of this House. With your elevation to the post of Speaker, we sincerely hope that the decorum and dignity of the House which has deteriorated in the last several years, can be lifted under your guidance and under your leadership.

Sir, you have excellent ingredients in your personality to present to our countrymen and the outside world also that the

people's representatives have been functioning in most responsible and befitting manner which is now necessary. What we have seen in the past is that there are burning issues and problems which the people of our country are facing. We have poverty, we have unemployment, and we have starvation deaths in our country. We, the representatives of the people, should get the opportunity to ventilate the grievances(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : It seems I will have to start with controlling the leader of the CPI(M) first. Please try to conclude.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, with your elevation to this high office, we have lost a great speaker and a leader outside. I wish you all success and I assure you all cooperation, fullest cooperation from the entire Left Group. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER : Thank you very much.

12.00 hrs.

[Translation]

PROF. RAM GOPAL YADAV (Sambhal) : Sir, on behalf of Samajwadi Party and myself, I welcome and congratulate you on your unanimous election as Lok Sabha Speaker.

Sir, your life as a parliamentarian has been a long, flawless and illustrious one. The evolution of the office which you have occupied has faced a very interesting history right from the British House of Commons till now. The Speaker used to put up matters before the Members of Parliament on behalf of the King and later on before the King on behalf of the Members of Parliament, hence this office is named as 'Speaker' and now we have also adopted the same. But those circumstances were different when leader of the opposition and leader of the House used to take the Speaker to the chair of that office. Its history has been a very interesting one. At that time, it happened that sometimes the despotic king used to put the Speaker behind the bars or get him beheaded. Hence, nobody used to accept that post, such person was forcibly conducted there. Today, that has become a very respectable tradition where leader of the House and leader of Opposition take the Speaker to the Chair. Presently we are following this practice.

Sir, I have been elected to the Lok Sabha for the first time. I have been a member of the Rajya Sabha for the last 12 years. Sometimes I used to come in the lobby to hear your speech. Hon'ble Advaniji, as the Minister of Home Affairs, had constituted a High powered State Funding Committee under the Chairmanship of hon'ble late Indrajit Gupta where I got the opportunity of being with you.

Sir, there is no doubt that you will run this House efficiently like your renowned predecessors but I want to

request you one thing that on many occasions a member of the Parliament wants to put his/her points in the interest of the nation, state or the constituency and he/she tries to do so even after the refusal of the Chair. In that situation, if a member of the Parliament disobeys the Chair, his feeling of respect towards the Speaker never decreases. This should always remain in the mind of the Speaker and I pray you that a member of the Parliament should not be taken as he/she is disobeying you or insulting you. Everybody will have the feeling of respect for the senior-most person like you.

Sir, I feel that the time has come when people of Bengal may unanimously elect the Speaker in the coming days and the tradition of "once a Speaker, always Speaker", prevalent in the British House of Commons may be implemented in India afresh.

Sir, at this moment I wish that your fame be spread not only in India but all over the world. You are already famous all around the world and you are known as a good parliamentarian, but I wish that you may achieve next higher post than the office you are occupying.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): Mr. Speaker, Sir, on behalf of myself and my party, I heartily welcome and congratulate you on your unanimous election as the Speaker.

Sir, it is a matter of great happiness that you belong to my neighbouring state. After occupying this post you do not belong to your party anymore. Shri Basudeb Achariaji just said that you belong to his party.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : I, said he was from my party.

SHRI LALU PRASAD : No, you said, "is" not "was".

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : I said 'he was'.

SHRI LALU PRASAD : O.K., you have corrected, now.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, when you were in the Opposition, we were also on that side and we unhesitatingly used to blame the ruling side and used to attack them. Now, by unanimously electing you as the Speaker of this House, Indian Parliamentary democracy has set an example. This is good for the country.

Sir, at present, we have coalition era and in future too, it will continue, I see no other alternative.

Sir, there are arduous and strenuous problems in this country. Hon'ble Members have been elected in this summer season and have expressed their happiness on your election as the Speaker. This is the largest Panchayat of India, we hope that this House would discuss various problems being faced by the country like poverty, afflictions, unemployment etc. while maintaining decorum under your guidance. We also

hope that this House would especially discuss the questions relating to deprived, poor, downtrodden and people of minority communities.

Without wasting time, lastly I wish you all the best and congratulate you. Former Prime Minister has rightly said that when you were in the Opposition you used to speak frequently and dynamically and now you will have to speak less and I think you will also have to bear a lot. I appeal the members of all parties to be firm in their determination of assurance given to you for the smooth functioning of the House. I assure you that I will fully co-operate you on behalf of my party and we will follow your guidance.

KUMARI MAYAWATI (Akbarpur) : Sir, today you have been unanimously elected as the Speaker of this House. On my behalf and on behalf of my party, I congratulate you.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the greatest characteristic feature which I have noticed in your personality till now is that have always tried your best in uniting all the members which is very necessary for maintaining the dignity of this office. On the other hand, your political platform has been such that you have been constantly touch with the basic problems of common people. Hence, occupying this office, you will pay more attention towards them. Simultaneously, I also want to say that the population of weaker section of this country especially Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes and Sikhs, Muslims, Christians, Parsis and Budhists from religious minority society is very large. Even today in independent India they are facing many problems. When issues related with their welfare or development come before the Parliament, I request you to pay attention towards them and when important issues are raised in the Parliament, being in the Chair, you will take care of their interests showing your personal interest.

Sir, I also request you that there are many new MPs in this House who have been elected frist time, especially there are few small parties which have two or three MPs in the House and you will certainly give them oportuntly in the House.

Lastly, on my behalf and on behalf on my party I assure you that my party will provide you every sort of co-operation in running the House properly in a disciplined way. You will not feel that you are facing any problem on behalf of my party in running the House properly. In every respect, we will co-operate you, but I request that you will give us full co-operation to protect the interest of weaker section. With these words, I once again congratulate you on your unanimous election as the Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER : Thank you very much.

[English]

SHRI C. KUPPUSAMI (Madras North) : Hon. Speaker, Sir, Vanakkam.

On behalf of respected Dr. Kalaignar M. Karunanidhi, the President of the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, and the rank and file of the DMK Party, I express our felicitations and unstinted support to you, Sir, as you embark upon a new chapter in your distinguished political career as Hon. Speaker of the Fourteenth Lok Sabha.

Our founding fathers decided to adopt the parliamentary system of government for our great nation. The Lok Sabha along with the Rajya Sabha occupies the pivotal position in our democratic set up. As democratically elected representatives, the Parliament provides us the sacred opportunity to highlight and find solutions for the problems of the common people, the peasants, the working class and the vulnerable sections of the society.

Since 1971, Sir, you have created a chequered history in the Indian Parliament during your long innings. In recognition of your immense and invaluable contributions towards strengthening of our parliamentary set up in its every aspect, you have been honoured with the Outstanding Parliamentarian Award in 1997.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, this august House and this great country knows very well that you have been a speaker for the downtrodden, the poorest of the poor, the exploited ones, the peasants, labourers and workers and all the toiling masses of the Indian society, which reverberated in this great House for many decades. In the real sense, you are the torch-bearer of the downtrodden.

With great pleasure and pride, I would like to once again compliments you, Sir, on your taking over as the hon. Speaker of the Fourteenth Lok Sabha.

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE (Aurangabad, Maharashtra) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I congratulate you on behalf of Shiv Sena and wish that your tenure would be very good and successful. Your name is Somnathji, may be your grand father gave this name to you being a follower of Hinduism. I pray to Somnathji of 12 jyotirlinga that you tenure be very very successful. Though you are a communist, but, for this reason also I will say that there is a very old relation between Bengal and Maharashtra...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I am sure about your name. Kindly go ahead.

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE : There is very similarity between Marathi and Bengali. I say that when hon'ble Manohar Joshi took charge of this office, you provided him a good support. This is your continuous tenth term in the Lok Sabha. This Lok Sabha is second for some of us third for some others, fourth for some of us and even first for some others, but you have such a vast experience. Owing to your experience, we used to listen your speech, we used to wait for your turn to listen your speech. Somnathji, I congratulate you have occupied this chair, although your party is a coalition partner in the UPA Government, yet you have given support from outside, so we have great expectations from you. I would like to submit that as Shri Balasaheb Thackrey, Shiv Sena Supreme had not let labour Reform Bill to be introduced though he was coalition partner of NDA Government, you too had supported him, I would like you to act in some manner, since you too are the coalition partner of UPA Government. Hon'ble Prime Minister is very learned person, he can bring this bill any time, but you will stop him, I expect this from you. I would like to submit that I heard your discussion with Shri Manohar Joshi many times. First, Shri Mavalanker ji, had his influence, there after it became a convention. You too will follow the same convention as followed by hon. Shri Shivraj Patil, Sangma Ji, Balyogiji.

I would like to congratulate you on behalf of Shiv Sena. You asked me not to create mess during oath taking ceremony. Hon'ble Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee too had advised me to always avoid to jump the well of the House. I would like to submit only that everybody expects justice from you, we too expect the same. It would be very difficult for you propagate 'Hindutva', but when we do it, you should support us. I expect only this from you.

MR. SPEAKER : Thank you very much.

[English]

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY (Puri) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a great pleasure and privilege on my part to extend to you my warm welcome. On this auspicious occasion, I felicitate you on my own behalf and on behalf of my party, Biju Janata Dal.

Sir, in the past, you have been rightly rewarded as the Best Parliamentarian. You are not only one of the Best Parliamentarians of the time, you are also a leading legal luminary of the country. You have the expertise in interpreting the constitutional laws. In this interpretation, you have earned vast experience. You have vast experience of practising law in Apex Court, the Supreme Court of India. So, we have that advantage.

On the one hand you have the advantage of making laws in this apex Panchayat, in this Parliament; and on the other hand you have the experience of implementing the decisions and interpreting the same laws in the Supreme Court, the Apex Court. So, we, the Members, have the advantage of getting your judicious advice and your guidance in this august House.

Sir, I am extremely happy that you have been chosen as the Speaker of this House rightly and unanimously. I hope, you will maintain the high dignity and decorum of this House and you will also be able to strengthen the parliamentary democracy not only in our country but also the world over. We are sure, you will give a leading light to strengthen the parliamentary democracy.

Sir, I hope, your parliamentary career with vast experience and your entire devotion for the human lives and the common man will definitely help this august House to extend the best for the country.

I wish you again the very best from all of us for all the time.

MR. SPEAKER : Thank you.

SHRI P.K. VASUDEVAN NAIR (Thiruvananthapuram) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, on behalf of my party and myself, I have great pleasure in extending to you our hearty congratulations on this very happy occasion.

Sir, a person like you was normally not expected to occupy such a constitutional Chair in the old days. The fact that you are sitting in that Chair shows that the times are changing, that our political scenario is going through a big change. And, I hope, much bigger changes are coming. This is an indication, of that according to me.

Sir, this election has shown that millions of toiling people in this country are in utter despair and they are feeling frustrated. After more than half a century of freedom, it is a pity that these millions of people are feeling like that. So, let us take note of that in all seriousness. I am happy that a person who can understand the aspirations of these toiling millions is occupying this Chair at this point of time.

Sir, I would like to say one more thing. Of course, there is no need to advise you on your functioning. Even before occupying that Chair, you have said that you would be very considerate to the Opposition. You said that you would even like to pamper the Opposition.

Our legislatures are under criticism by the people of the country these days. Very unfortunate things are taking place in our legislatures. We used to be blamed, but it is not the

question now. I have felt that there was a tendency to steamroll the Opposition - whichever Party it may be. But your idea, that the Opposition should be given consideration or a little more partiality, is a very good step in restoring the noble practices of our parliamentary democracy. I wish you all success.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : Sir, you have been unanimously assigned this new responsibility, therefore I am very happy to felicitate you. You have been the Member of this House since eighth Lok Sabha and I got the opportunity to work with you sometimes as a member of ruling party and sometimes as that of opposition. I am sure that whenever you rise to speak, you always advocated the interests of poor-whether it was the problem of farmers, labourers, minorities, you always raised your voice in their favour in the House. Many times there were conflicts in the House, but during that time also you always tried to maintain the dignity of the House. You have worked in many fields. Countrymen know you as a good lawyer, good orator. They have witnessed you as a good parliamentarian for many years, but now I am sure, you will be an example to them as a good Speaker, enjoying the unanimous support of all his colleagues to conduct the proceedings of House. You have been in politics for many years, but you have never compromised with the dignity of the House. Besides politics, you have been active in sports too, the impact of which is visible here.

I know that you are an office bearer of West Bengal Cricket Association, you are President of Table Tennis Association over there. You are active in athletics also and you are supporter of Mohan Bagan also...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV) : He is also President of Wrestling Association ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : He is the President of Wrestling Association....*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Probably he wants companion, but I would not join him.

[Translation]

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR : You have made a great contribution in the field of sports in your lifetime. Similarly you have worked in many fields of education. You have established

many good institutions. Today, you have been assigned the role of Speaker of country's biggest House. Here, hon'ble Members have different ideologies. It is the responsibility of the Prime Minister to establish proper coordination with these ideologies and run the Government smoothly and this is not an easy task. But I am sure that after accepting the responsibility of the Speaker, your experience will help to conduct the House smoothly and to satisfy the Members of both the sides.

It appears to me that your tenure would prove successful. I assure full cooperation from my party's Members. With these words, I felicitate you.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR (Nalanda) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, on behalf of my party and myself I congratulate you on your unopposed election. You have got the support of everybody and it should be so. You have been honoured as best Parliamentarian. Nothing can be better if best Parliamentarian takes over as Speaker. On this occasion, I would also like to congratulate CPI(M), the party from which you have been selected and which gave you permission to accept this post. Generally, your party do not grant such permissions. But they gave you permission to accept this post. It is good fortune of this House and Shri Basu Deb Acharia is also fortunate, that when he went to the other side, you got the Chair of the Speaker, but I am confident that you will keep full check on Shri Basu Deb Babu also. From our side, I assure you that we will follow the convention : what you did while remaining in opposition. We too would like to do the same and will do it. I am confident that the way you raised issues while remaining in opposition and gained the opportunity and whenever you wanted to speak, you got the opportunity from the Chair, it appears to me that you will show the same generosity to us. We expect this from you and I assure your full cooperation and support and with these words I would like to congratulate you for accepting such a prestigious post.

SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH DHINDSA (Sangrur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I feel elated while felicitating you as behalf of my party and myself for being elected unopposed Speaker. It is a great honour for this country and this Chair, that the person like you, a veteran parliamentarian and also the best parliamentarian is sitting on this Chair. I too feel proud because you have been in opposition for a very long time. Today your party is neither in opposition, nor in Government. Therefore, you will pay attention particularly towards small parties, regional parties in opposition, you will allot them time and protect them. I hope that you will do it, therefore I would like to express my gratitude to you.

During 1984 riots your Government was in power in West Bengal. It was the time when Sikhs became victim of riots in

many parts of the country, but your Government did not let any untoward incident take place in West Bengal. You played an impressive role at that time, and for this, Sikhs will remain grateful to you. Therefore, I hope that the kind of role you played there for minorities, will continue to do the same here for minorities. Not saying much, I would like to assure you that my party will fully cooperate with you the way you run the House. With these words, once again I congratulate you.

[English]

PROF. M. RAMADASS (Pondicherry) : Hon. Speaker, Sir, the Pattali Makkal Katchi of Tamil Nadu, the party I represent, deems it a pride and pleasure to congratulate you on this historic occasion of your elevation as the Speaker of the Lok Sabha. Our Founder-President Dr. Ramdass Aiya, one of the architects of UPA's resounding victory in Tamil Nadu and the labour community of Tamil Nadu, whose aspirations the PMK represents in this august House, join me in offering their choicest felicitations to you on your elevation.

Sir, I should also compliment Shrimati Sonia Gandhi who has been instrumental for a consensual approach to elect you unanimously as the Speaker with overwhelming support of all shades of opinion in this House. This is a rare gesture of not only the hon. Members who are present here to elect you unanimously and through them the people of India have also chosen you as the Speaker of the Lok Sabha. Even when the first Speaker of Lok Sabha Shri G.V. Mavalankar was elected, in 1952, there was a contest. But today, a consensual approach initiated by Shrimati Sonia Gandhi in your election augurs well for this Lok Sabha and I hope that this is the beginning of a healthy political tradition that we are going to unveil in the near future. For setting this highest tradition of democracy, the Pattali Makkai Katchi compliments Shrimati Sonia Gandhi in an abundant measure.

Sir, as the architect of your unanimous elections, I humbly feel that Shrimati Sonia Gandhi seems to have followed two of the major recommendations of the Page Committee which was constituted in 1967 to suggest some of the conventions on the election of the Speaker. Two of the recommendations of the Page Committee were : First the party in power should evolve a consensus on who should be the Speaker. In this case, the party (Congress) in power had been trying to evolve this consensus over the last fortnight and it has been successful. The second recommendation was that the person nominated should be of considerable seniority and should enjoy a prestige similar to that of the Leader of the House. Sir, in your election, these two conditions are more than satisfied and I hope that the people of this country should feel happy for choosing you as the Speaker of the House unanimously. We hope that with your rich experience in this House, you would be able to conduct the proceedings of the House in a dignified and decorous way.

Sir, you have said two three days back in the Press that you would try to pamper the Opposition by giving them enough opportunity and the same should be extended to parties like us, who are not numerically strong enough but who have a lot of ideas to contribute to the larger issues that would be coming up before the Lok Sabha. Therefore, I would appeal to you Sir that you should be able to give us opportunities for offering our views. Sir, I come from Pondicherry the land of Aurobindo and Bharatidasan - the people of that land also join me in offering the choicest felicitations to you. I hope that during in your tenure as the Speaker you would be able to see Parliament as an instrument of change. Our hon. Prime Minister in his felicitations address said that politics is going to be the instrument of change. This politics has to be translated into a reality through the businesses that we are going to transact in this Lok Sabha. Therefore, you are the custodian of the people of this country. One hundred and three crore people of this country expects much deliverance from you. I hope, with the good wishes of the people of India you would be able to render your services more effectively and efficaciously.

THE MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (SHRI K. CHANDRASHEKHAR RAO) : Sir, I congratulate you profusely on your unanimous election as the Speaker of this august House. In fact, this House is privileged to have a veteran parliamentarian like you as the Speaker. You are one of the best parliamentarians of the country who is held in high esteem by everyone in this country. Your vast and rich experience will be a great source of inspiration to the old and newly elected Members of this House and to the aspiring masses of the country.

I wish you all success and all the best on my own behalf and on behalf of the Members of my party, Telengana Rashtriya Samiti.

Sir, I also assure you our fullest co-operation in maintaining the dignity and decorum of this House.

DR. M. JAGANNATH (Nagar Kurnool) : Sir, on behalf of the Telgu Desam Parliamentary Party and on my own behalf, I congratulate you heartily for unanimously getting elected as the Speaker of the Fourteenth Lok Sabha.

Sir, you have created history by being the first communist leader to occupy the coveted post of the Lok Sabha Speaker. It is really a fitting tribute to your honour as you have been elected for a record ten terms to Lok Sabha mostly from the famous Bolpur constituency known for the Vishwa Bharati University.

I also welcome you as a senior Member who has enjoyed respect and prestige similar to that of the Leader of the House. You are a powerful speaker known for your wit and sarcasm

and a recipient of the Outstanding Parliamentarian Award in 1996. Sir, your elevation will be a loss to us in the sense that we will miss your oratory in the House but we will get benefited by your guidance in running the House properly. I do not know how many of us are aware that you are a renowned Barrister-at-Law and actively associated with various educational, cultural and professional institutions like the Indian Law Institute and the International Law Association. Sir, you are also connected with a number of trade unions which are helping the working class.

You have been in Parliament for more than three decades and have earned a reputation for doing your homework meticulously and maintaining civility and decorum in dealing with political opponents. Your career as the Speaker will call for tactfulness, patience and above all an unwavering impartiality.

On behalf of myself and on behalf of the Telugu Desam Parliamentary Party, I extend my assurance for co-operation in running the business of the House smoothly. I expect that, after sitting in the Opposition benches for decades, you would take the liberty of giving more time to Opposition Members to express their views on various matters under discussion in the House.

Finally, besides felicitating you as the Speaker, I extend our best wishes once again on my own behalf and on behalf of Telugu Desam Parliamentary Party.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STEEL (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, first of all I would like to congratulate you on behalf of my Party and myself for your unanimous election to the post of Speaker of Lok Sabha. Our relation is very old. We have been the Members of the House since 1977. At the time when your name was being proposed for the post of Speaker, I was very pleased but also a little bit sad. When I became MP for the first time in 1977 you have already had 6-7 years experience as a Member of the House and had ample knowledge about the functioning of the House. I was very much impressed by that and there was hardly any occasion when I did not seek your advice. However, the new MPs will certainly miss that opportunity. They will be deprived of your guidance. The post you have been designated for, is the most prestigious post of the Parliament which is the supreme institution of this country. The Speaker is the highest authority in the House. Whether it is treasury benches or the opposition, all would work under your guidance. You have proved from your experience that there are many leaders however, a leader in the real sense must be good at heart besides having a sharp mind. It is needless to mention that you possess both the qualities. You have a long experience. Just now in the capacity of the leader of the House. Pranab ji was submitting

that more and more discussion should be held in the House on the economic issue. I fully agree with his view. You understand the sentiments of the hon. Members. 85 percent population of the country belong to Dalit, Tribal, OBC minority community and the poor persons among the upper class people. Even after so many years of independence they could not join the main stream of the nation. So problem related to them are very complex. The hon. Members, whether they belong to the ruling party or the Opposition always desire to hold discussion regarding their problems. They always try to seek information from the Government. I do hope that you will pay special attention towards them. We should not forget that India is like a garden where there are variety of flowers. There are Hindus, Muslims, Dalits, OBC and forward class people in the country. A good gardener is one who has different types of flowers in his garden. You are like the gardener and opportunity will be provided to each of the Member's to express his or her views.

At the end, I would like to submit that once I had said that all Rams are in our side whether it is Ram Vilas, Kanshi Ram or Jagjivan Ram or Ramdas or Ramchandra. However, today Somnath is in the Chair. To me it seems that Somnath Yatra has started in true sense in the history of India that will maintain unity and integrity of the country. Thank you very much. I would once again like to congratulate you.

[English]

SHRI P. A. SANGMA (Tura) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, seven years ago, on the 19th of March, 1997, I had the privilege of conferring on you the 'Outstanding Parliamentarian Award' for 1996. On that occasion this is what I said about you. I quote:

"Internally I have always assigned to Shri Somnath Chatterjee the status of my *guru*."

Sir, today after this unanimous election to the post of Speaker, you have indeed become the *maha guru* for everyone of us here.

I had privilege of travelling with you both in India as well as abroad. On more than one occasion, I have told my friends that being with Shri Somnath Chatterjee itself is an experience, knowledge and an intellectual elevation. I do not forget the important role you have played on behalf of Indian Parliament in Beijing in the IPO Conference where you have been unopposedly chosen as the rapporteur of the Conference.

Today, I feel really very happy to see my *Guru* sitting in the Chair. I wish you all the best. I wish you a very successful tenure and I congratulate you from the core of my heart.

May God bless you, Sir!

MR. SPEAKER : Thank you very much. Next, Shri Bir Singh Mahato.

SHRI BIR SINGH MAHATO (Purulia) : Sir, I join with the views expressed by the hon. Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition and also the other leaders of this House.

Sir, it is a rare occasion that all the sections of this House have elected you as the Speaker of this House...*(Interruptions)* It is a great privilege for the House that our Speaker has more than three decades of parliamentary experience. He is a good orator and an outstanding Parliamentarian. He is also a good lawyer. It is a red-letter day for the Left Parties, for us, that we got the first Speaker amongst the Left Groups. So, on behalf of my Party and the Left Group, I congratulate you.

[Translation]

SHRI JOACHIM BAXLA (Alipurduars) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to congratulate and extend my best wishes to you on behalf of my party, RSP and myself for your election to the post of Speaker of Lok Sabha. You have been Member of this August House for a long time and you hold a distinct position in the House. You are very talented and we are proud and pleased that you are holding this post. I would like to submit that you are worthy of this Chair. You should have been elected to this post long back. It is better late than never. Ultimately you have been elected to this post. We are pleased that you have been elected to this post as per your capability. Till now your role with regard to the basic problems was different in 13th Lok Sabha and you had to play that role. You participated in discussions regarding the problems of poor people and led them to a right direction. You succeeded in such efforts, however today you are in new role. You are prepared to take up a new responsibility. Myself and my party have full confidence that after accepting this challenge you will certainly succeed in guiding us in this august House. I and my party will fully cooperate with the Chair.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, a new message is being conveyed to the nation that a new role is being assigned to you to maintain the dignity of the House. So the people of the country are looking at you with pride that you will make the discussions on the issue of basic problems especially of poor people, unemployed and youths, more constructive. I am hopeful that you are commanding the cooperation of all the Members ranging from the opposition to the ruling party.

In the end, I would like to submit that our best wishes are always with you and you will get our full cooperation. May God bless you with good health so that you may reach to the top of the success. With these words, I conclude.

[English]

DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA (Lskhimpur) : Hon. Speaker,

Sir, on behalf my party, Asom Gana Parishad, my President, Shri Brindavan Goswami and on my own behalf, I congratulate you and also felicitate you on your unanimous election to the office of the Speaker of this august House.

Sir, I will be failing in my duty if I do not express the special feelings of the people of Assam. Since you were born in Tezpur of Assam, I take the privilege of conveying the special greetings to you on behalf of the people of Assam.

MR. SPEAKER : Thank you.

DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA : Sir, considering your vast experience and long association with parliamentary procedures, I am confident that the House would be greatly benefited and would be able to deliver the goods to the nation. And also your being a member of the legal profession, I hope your neutrality, judicious decisions and logical conclusions will satisfy all sections and all political entities of this House, especially the smaller parties by getting adequate opportunities to express their viewpoints.

Sir, I am not very old to parliamentary proceedings in Lok Sabha. I have the experience of only 18 months in the 11th Lok Sabha. With that experience, I feel that we waste more time in accusations and counter-accusations made by bigger parties. There is hardly any serious debate on serious issues through which we can deliver the goods to the nation. I hope, with your ability and statesmanship, you will be able to curtail the unproductive deliberations in the House.

Lastly, I assure you full cooperation and wish you a successful tenure on behalf of my party and on my own behalf. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Members, I hope you will spare little time to the Speaker to respond. We are now nearing one o'clock. But I will call some other hon. Members who have been kind enough to send in their names with a request. I am sure they will appreciate that brevity is a virtue.

[Translation]

MS MUFTI MEHBOOBA (Anantnag) : Hon. Speaker, Sir, I would like to congratulate you on behalf of my party People's Democratic Front and I wouldn't hesitate to add that the first time parliamentarians like me would get a lot to learn from you in debate.

[English]

We wanted to learn from you as to how discuss the issues which are very close to your heart so dispassionately and how well you maintain that delicate balance, because I am unable to do so. May be it has more to do with the situation in my home State and may be it has more to do with the miseries and the sufferings that my people face there.

[Translation]

The people have come here after being elected from several States that have their own problems. However, I would request you to consider the situation of the MP's representing Kashmir with a different perspective. Several innocent lives have been lost in the process of holding elections in J & K that has paved the way for us here—Lives of several security personnel, police personnels small children aged 2½ to 3 years especially in my constituency have lost their lives and several of them are still injured. Despite all this people gave us the mandate. I also hope that you won't go by the numerical strength of our party in the House. I expect that you would give us an opportunity to express the sentiments of the people in the House and the heal their wounds in some way. Our State Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh is like Mini India. Our views may be divergent but our purpose is the same that

[English]

We want to bring peace and prosperity to our State.

[Translation]

I hope that you would give us full opportunity to express our views in the House as well as outside it.

[English]

So that you can guide us on many important issues. Thank you very much.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS BANDU ATHAWALE (Pandharpur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, we are proud on your being elected as Speaker. You are a man of towering personality. I have been a Member of the House for five years, five months and 3 days during 12th, 13th and 14th Lok Sabha. You have been supported by the Members of all parties that has set up a good democratic convention in the House. We would have elected you even if opposition had not supported your candidature. However it is always better to games the support of the opposition in democracy.

Sir, I had declared early that the NDA Government had to leave the office but they used to maintain that they would again come back in power but it did not happen and now we have replaced them. I have several of my colleagues who have been sworn in as Ministers. Hence it hardly matters if I have not got the Ministership. One day I am certainly going to be a Minister.

Sir, your personality is source of inspiration for us. We have put our demand to amend the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution to provide reservation to the dalit community and similarly there is a proposal for providing 33 percent reservation to women. Now there would not be any hurdle in

providing 33 percent reservation to women including women belonging to SC, ST and OBC sections of society. Our's is a small party and I don't know when it would become a large party but our party has been working for the poor we would continue to raise the issues to provide socio-economic justice and party as per the ideals of Baba Saheb Bheemrao Ambedkar and those enshrined in our constitution. We would also keep on participating in the discussions on these issues and it would not remain mere rhetoric alone for all the persons like Sonia, Manmohan Singhji, Paswanji and Shivraj ji are present here to implement these ideals. Though I am not in the Cabinet but I have several of my colleagues to take care of this thing. Our Cabinet would continue to deliver and you would continue to get the co-operation of the House that you deserve to get.

Sir, when you used to sit in the opposition, I always used to sit behind you. I used to go into the well whenever you used to represent the arguments of the opposition during any debate or discussion. However now a very good thing has taken place that you have been elected speaker and are in the Chair, hence you won't allow me to go into the well. Still, I may come into the well occasionally on some of the issues that are anti-poor but would take care. But I would not go into the well frequently for the Government is our own United Progressive Alliance Government is in power. This government will complete its full tenure of five years. Mandate of the people for their party is to sit in the opposition. Hence they are sitting in the opposition. I expect that they will try to come this side in future. If they come this side even then there is none to remove us before five years. They might have noticed the strength of the public and the strength of the voters. They gave the slogan of 'Feel Good' but all the feel good came here.

Sir, on my behalf and on behalf of my Republican Party of India on behalf of Baba Saheb Ambedkar's party I extend my heart-felt congratulations to you and with these words I welcome you once again.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Thank you. Give up the bad habits of the past.

13.00 hrs.

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR (Ballia, UP) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, first of all I extend my heart-felt congratulations and felicitations for being unanimously elected as the Speaker of the House and especially for you have accepted this office. This has not only increased the prestige of the House but also the prestige of democracy. I assure you that when you were sitting here as a member, whatever I said, I have always been inspired by you. I spoke only when you said me to speak

on a particular subject. I feel that there is none left for me to inspire likewise, that is why I did not want to speak today. Even today, I got inspiration from you only and I am highly obliged for this. I feel that you have always talked about the exploited suppressed and deprived people.

Sir, with grief I have to say that during last few years voice of these people have not been paid any heed in the Parliament. I think, with your being in the Chair, attention will be paid towards them. People will again raise their voices because if their voices are left unheard, it will not be possible to keep the Parliamentary democracy alive.

Sir, it is a fact that you have always adhered to the decorum of the House but the words from Nitishji surprised me a little bit and I felt it necessary to mention. Sometimes there is fault of the company you keep. I have always accepted your advice except to walk out from the Parliament or to boycott a minister. I could not accept your this advice. If Nitishji is all set to do this, I request you not to permit him to do so. I request Shri Nitishji that he should forget this matter. The Parliament is not meant to boycott the Cabinet. To respect them who are elected, whom the Prime Minister selects is the duty of all the members of Parliament...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI HARIN PATHAK (Ahmedabad) : There were walk-outs for two years against Shri George Sahib...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR : Whatever happened, I did not do...*(Interruptions)* You are asking the answer from me! Pathak ji, I was not aware that you are so ignorant. I have never done so. I have never violated any tradition of the Parliament during these many years. I was elected to the Parliament 42 years ago and I do not remember that I have walked-out even on a single occasion, and have not complied with any order during these years.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am confident that after assuming this office you will still inspire the Members that the convention of the Parliament are not breached. I hope so. You have always casted yourself as the circumstances did warrant and at this moment too, you will establish a new tradition beyond that situation. The whole House have expressed their confidence in you, winning the confidence of the House you please spread new confidence in the country and hail high the voices of the suppressed people. With this expectation I want to recite a couplet in Urdu - "Jahan bhi jata hai roshani lutata hai, kisi chirag ka apna makam nahi hota."

Sir, today you are free from parties and limitations, you are above them. My expectation from you is that being there you will give a new direction to the country.

MR. SPEAKER : Thank you very much.

[English]

SHRI H.D. DEVEGOWDA (Hassan) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is one of the happiest occasions for me to extend my heartfelt congratulations and felicitations.

Sir, I have always been inspired by you, as a Member of this House, since I entered this apex institution in 1991. Today, you have been elected unanimously. That shows the love and affection you have earned in the last three decades as a Member of this House.

Sitting in the Opposition, you have inspired the entire House by your eloquent speeches. You have never spared anybody while exposing the failures of the Government - whether this Government or that Government - whenever you felt I am very happy that today you have accepted this high office and you are the custodian of this apex institution.

Sir, with much pain if I say a word, the erosion of parliamentary democratic system in this country is painful to all of us. Within a short duration of about seven to eight years, I witnessed how we are all responsible for the erosion of all values in public life. The people talk with worry and they give such a scant respect to the political parties and to the political system, for which we are responsible. I do not want to blame anybody in this country, but we all contributed to such a situation.

May I humbly request the leaders of the ruling party as well as the Opposition to extend their full co-operation, their total co-operation, their absolute co-operation to restore the values, to restore the dignity, decorum and decency of this House? Unless that is done, I am sorry, Sir, we are not going to achieve anything. At this stage, it is not the issue to discuss our political ideologies and commitments. I know the commitment of the Left for the working class and for the poorer sections of the people. I am with you on this. I do not want to elaborate on this issue.

But today your responsibility is more. We are all concerned to make this House functional to deliberate on the issues. Whether it is the issue of minorities or the oppressed or the suppressed or the working class or the organised or the unorganised, that is left to the entire House, especially to the ruling party which has to take more responsibility on these issues.

Sir, in my political career of 44 years - but most of my career was spent in the State Legislature - only once I broke the tradition. You were all here. Late Indrajit Gupta was here. Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, one of the senior-most parliamentarians, was sitting this side. Sir, on the issue of farmers, on the issue of the World Bank's conditions and conditionalities, I opposed it and I went to the Well breaking all the norms in

my political career. Remember these words. I only request the ruling party and the entire House to deliberate and spend the valuable time for the purpose of solving the problem of suffering masses.

With these words, from the core of my heart, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations and felicitations to your elevation to the highest office. I convey my good wishes on behalf of myself and on behalf of my Party.

MR. SPEAKER : Thank You.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF COAL AND MINES (SHRI SHIBU SOREN) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, you have become the guardian of the Parliament of our country, coincidentally in today's prevalent situation in the country. You are so familiar and close to everybody that each one acknowledges it. You come from Left Front where poor people are talked about and movements for them are launched. We have been quite influenced by this. You take care of and are aware of the condition of poor people, scheduled tribes and scheduled castes coming from towns to villages, we also feel that. It is most fortunate that you have elected unanimously. This would be of great help for you to conduct the business of the House consequently, everybody in the House has accepted it and my good wishes are with you. You have always been adhering to the high Parliamentary conventions and I on my behalf and on behalf of my party extend my good wishes to you with the hope that in future too, adhering to this glorious decorum you would continue strengthening the roots of democracy.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I have got the names of three more hon. Members. May I request them to associate? But I will call their names.

SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI (Hyderabad) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I congratulate you on your unanimous election as the Speaker of this august House.

With your long experience in the field of Parliamentary democracy, I am sure, you would get the support of each and every Member of this House. At the same time, I would like to say that the new Members are most fortunate to have you as the Speaker of this august House.

It has been already expressed by various Members that there are many Members who represent smaller parties. I am one of them. I represent the historic city of Hyderabad. I am sure, with you in the Chair, the Lok Sabha would really shine and India would really shine through lively debates in this august House.

I know that you had been called to the bar from Middle Temple. The barrister in you would not forget barrister in me who has been called from Lincoln's Inn. I request you that smaller parties may be given more time and opportunities to raise issues concerning the common man and in particular issues relating to the minorities.

I once again congratulate you.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS (Muvattupuzha) : I take this opportunity to congratulate you on your elevation as the Speaker of this august House.

With your long experience, your stature as a good statesman, your experience as a good Parliamentarian and one of the best Parliamentarians India has seen, I am sure that justice would be done to this House and also to the nation at large.

I come from Kerala and I come from a constituency where pineapples are grown. It is not spicy but it is very sweet. I would like to offer a sweet pineapple to you just now but I am sorry I would not be able to bring in here. I just want to highlight the issues of farmers. Pineapples, coconut and rubber are farm products of Kerala that are a little different from farm products which are grown elsewhere. So, we may be given opportunities to raise the issues of those farmers. I am sure that you are a person who has got common sense which is very uncommon nowadays. I am sure that you would be able to give opportunities to all sections of people to raise in this House all matters which are relevant.

I would also like to say that all my colleagues from Kerala are sitting on the other side. So, sometimes, you may have to look at me just to give me a little more chance to say a word of dissent.

I take this opportunity to congratulate you once again and also to pray to God that the experience you have would be of great help to all the Members of this House and to all the sections of this House.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE (IDUKKI) : Sir, let me at the outset join all my respected elderly colleagues in the House to congratulate you on the assumption of the high office of the Speaker of the Lok Sabha.

Your smooth and unanimous election to this office shows more about the high esteem in which you are being held, cutting across party lines, along with the high traditions of our parliamentary democracy.

You have been a model in the House to seniors and juniors alike, especially in the way you have conducted yourself in the House, the cut and thrust you have given to Parliamentary debates and also the civility and decorum you have always brought into the House.

You have a very onerous task to perform. The people of this country expect the Fourteenth Lok Sabha to take several corrective steps, especially on the economic front. I am sure, you would be able to guide us and we hope that the Government would be taking corrective steps to help the agricultural and labour sectors in the country. The hon. Minister of Finance is sitting to my left. I hope, he would take corrective steps to help these crisis - ridden sectors of our country.

We have a lot of new Members in this House. We feel sorry for all our old friends who could not make it this time.

We have about 200 new members and as Kumari Mayawati and some other hon. Members said here, I hope you will give chance to small parties and to new Members instead of taking a benign neglect policy like we had to face several times before....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Let us hope for the best.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE : I am not a new Member, I belong to a small party.

So, Sir, once again, I take this opportunity to congratulate you. When I finally wish you, I can only say – I do not know how you will take it – let the Lord Almighty bless you abundantly in your personal life and also in your new Office to carry out your duties with unwavering impartiality, with poise and with élan to the satisfaction of all sections of this House.

SHRI SANSUMA KHUNGGUR BWISWMUTHIARY (Kokrajhar) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a proud privilege and a great honour for me to congratulate your honour on my own behalf and on behalf of several million people of Bodoland territory on your having been unanimously elected as the hon. Speaker of this august House and that too from our most neglected and backward North-East India.

[Translation]

You are an elected M.P. from Bengal. Bodoland area is adjacent to your state. My only humble request to you is that MPs like me, who have been elected from very backward areas, would be given ample opportunities to discuss our problems like the issues regarding Bodoland, tribal and backward people.

[English]

Sir, in the long run, I would like to appeal to your honour to help to include the Bodoland and other deserving regions in questions also within the parameters of the terms and reference of the proposed Second States Reorganisation

Commission as and when it is set up as per the MP of the UPA govt. at the Centre. The terms and reference of the proposed Commission should not be confined only to the question of the creation of the Telangana State. But should also include the regions like Bodoland and others. This is my humble appeal.

Sir, once again, I would like to appeal to you to provide adequate time, scope and facilities to small Parties' MPs, like me, to expose the untold tragedies and multifarious problems being faced by the downtrodden people of the whole country.

[Traslation]

Finally I convey my best wishes to you and also congratulate you on behalf of people of Bodoland and on behalf of other people.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Members, I am extremely thankful to you for unanimously electing me to the high office of the Speaker of this august House. I do not have words adequately to express my feelings for the great honour bestowed on me and I accept the same with all humility and gratitude. I am overwhelmed by the generous sentiments expressed for me by all sections of the House.

Today I cannot help remembering the day when I first entered this great Chamber in the year 1971 as a new Member and I must confess that I was overawed in the presence of giants and luminaries who added great lustre to the proceedings of the House. As a back bencher, I had the opportunity to listen to some of the great orations inside the House which inspired me to be worthy of the confidence reposed by the people by electing me to the House. I cannot also forget witnessing from the Visitors' Gallery on occasions the proceedings in the House when my father, late Shri N.C. Chatterjee, was one of the Members. I had the great privilege of hearing some of the most inspiring interventions by, amongst others, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel, Pandit Pant, Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, Shri N.C. Chatterjee, Prof. Hiren Mukherjee, Shri Nath Pai and many others. Please excuse me for the nostalgic feeling that I have on this occasion.

I am also grateful to the hon. Prime Minister for his kind reference to my father. I find his award of degree to him was well justified and he has more than proved his merit, and today I must congratulate him once again for occupying this position of high honour.

Hon. Members, the Fourteenth Lok Sabha has got the people's mandate to usher in a new era. This is a unique responsibility bestowed on this august House. Our country has made progress in various fields since Independence. However, a lot more needs to be done for the benefit of the

common people. We have to ensure that the creative potential and energies of our people are harnessed for fulfilling the hopes and aspirations of various sections of our society, particularly the deprived and the dispossessed, by providing a developing, pro-people and secular administration.

Lok Sabha is the highest elected body in the largest parliamentary democracy in the world and occupies the pivotal in our political system. Our founding fathers, after considerable deliberations, decided to adopt the parliamentary system of governance with the Lok Sabha elected on adult franchise and the Council of Ministers responsible to the same. The people of India participate in the parliamentary process through their representatives in Lok Sabha. Members of Parliament who are elected on the basis of their pledge contained in their manifestoes are expected to articulate the urges and aspirations of the people, to discuss problems and issues facing the nation and to deliberate upon the formulation of national policies and programmes with a view to finding solutions to them. The very postulate of parliamentary democracy as is enshrined in our Constitution is the collective responsibility of Central Council of Ministers to the House of People. For every action of the Government it is liable to answer in this House.

This House represents all sections of our people with their very socio-cultural identities, ethos and genius, differences of ideas, interests, approaches and objectives as they are bound to arise during the deliberations in the House. As a strong integrating force in the country, this House, which is the people's institution in the true sense of the term is called upon to resolve the various socio-political and economic problems faced by the people.

Even after more than five decades of Independence, in course of which we have celebrated the Golden Jubilee of our Parliament, a very substantial number of our people still face awesome problems and do not enjoy even the minimum rights which the Constitution, our organic law contemplates for them. Abysmal poverty, illiteracy, high child mortality, absence of adequate healthcare, lack of job opportunities, non-availability of pure drinking water in many areas, amongst others, are the problems which still haunt the common people and resulted in effective denial of the constitutional and indeed the basic human rights to our people.

The common people of our country, particularly the toiling sections, the workers, the peasants and the farmers, the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, the women and the minorities have not been able to fulfil their minimum needs. The condition of the working class in the country is still extremely uncertain with mounting unemployment figures. In such circumstances, I humbly feel that it is the bounden duty of us all, as Members of Parliament, to play a very active, responsible and effective role to meet the aspirations of the people.

The Parliament is constituted by the people. It has to deliberate upon and deal with the problems of the people and ultimately find their solutions for the people.

The Rules of business and procedure in Lok Sabha have been framed for the orderly conduct of its business and several avenues for obtaining redressal of the people's grievances have also been provided in the rules. My appeal to all the hon. Members is to utilise these rules in a proper manner so that they can play an effective role as Member of this august House.

Nowadays considerable criticism is being faced by the Members of Parliament about their failure to maintain decorum and dignity in the House. The behaviour and conduct of some legislators have become subject of justified criticism and in some cases even of ridicule. Unfortunately, there is developing more and more an attitude of confrontation than cooperation in our political life which finds its reflection in the House. We should resolve to change this perception in the minds of the people by our own conduct, both inside and outside the House.

Hon. Members, I am fully conscious of the responsibility bestowed on me as the Speaker of this august House. The willing co-operation you have promised today on the floor of the House gives the strength to shoulder the great responsibility and prove myself worthy of the trust you have reposed in me. Conscious as I am of the responsibility that has been entrusted, I can assure you that I shall always endeavour to conduct the business of this House in keeping with the lofty ideals and noble goals enshrined in our great Constitution and in the Rules of Procedure and in tune with the highest parliamentary traditions.

I am fully aware that as the Speaker, my conduct and behaviour will always be under close scrutiny. Maintaining the high standards laid down by the distinguished predecessors starting from Shri Vithalbhai Patel, Shri G.V. Mavalankar up to Shri Manohar Joshi, I shall spare no effort to uphold and, if possible, further enhance the dignity and prestige of this high constitutional office in regulating the proceedings of this House and addressing the concerns of its Members.

I shall discharge my functions entrusted to this office more as a duty rather than as an authority. The non-party character of the office of the Speaker in our parliamentary polity places on me a special obligation to be totally non-partisan and judicious while regarding the proceedings of the House. So long as I occupy this exalted Chair, I assure you that I shall always strive to protect to the best of my ability the rights and privileges of the House and of its Members irrespective of their political affiliations.

Hon. Members, I can assure you that to me, all the hon. Members are of the same status and are entitled to the same

facilities, irrespective of the party to which one may belong, and will be entitled to the same opportunity. The only status that I recognise is that all of you are elected and hon. Members of this great institution.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had observed at a Seminar on Parliamentary Democracy held on 6th December, 1957 that:

"Deliberately and after long argument, we in India adopted a Constitution based on parliamentary Government. We praise the parliamentary form of Government because it is a peaceful method of dealing with problems. It is a method of agreement, discussion, decision and accepting the decision even though one may or may not agree with it. However, a minority in a parliamentary Government has a very important part of play. Naturally the majority by the mere fact that it is majority must have its way."

Parliament should function through debate, discussion and consensus and it can only do so if the deliberations are marked by a sense of commitment to the cause of the people and the atmosphere in the House is kept free from bitterness and acrimony. Unless the rules, regulations and well-established parliamentary conventions are respected by each and every Member and unless the Members exhibit mutual accommodation and respect whenever there are differing points of view, our parliamentary democracy will remain imperfect. The Treasury Benches and the Opposition have equal responsibilities in ensuring good governance in the country. While discharging their parliamentary responsibilities, both sides are expected to be accommodating and forbearing to each other, particularly when contentious issues are debated on the floor of the House.

A Member of Parliament occupies a very high place in the eyes of the people. The effectiveness of the functioning of this House would depend to a great extent on how scrupulously we, the Members follow various rules and guidelines which are a prerequisite for the orderly transaction of parliamentary business. Here, I need hardly emphasise that the observance of discipline and decorum on the part of the Members is an essential pre-condition for the smooth and efficient functioning of the House. Besides the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business, there exist numerous customs and conventions, rules of parliamentary etiquette and unrecorded traditions, which have to be observed by every Member in the interest of parliamentary decorum. One need hardly emphasise that it is the quality of our behaviour and the substance of our deliberations that will decide whether we are able to enhance the prestige of this august House and promote faith in our parliamentary institution.

With many young faces making their debate in the Lok Sabha in the just concluded General Elections, this House

has the benefit of utilising a pool of constructive energies together with experience of the senior Members in responding to the issues concerning the hopes and aspirations of the common masses.

I hope every newly elected Member will function with commitment and follow the rules of the game and make valuable contributions to the proceedings of the House. May I suggest the newcomers may get themselves conversant with the established parliamentary traditions and conventions and learn to make full use of all their valuable procedural devices so that they may contribute effectively towards redressal of the people's grievances.

The role of the media in providing an effective interface between the people and the Parliament cannot be overemphasised. I am fully confident that a responsible and adequate coverage of the proceedings of the House by the media will go a long way in projecting the right image of the supreme national forum. I seek a meaningful cooperation from the media.

I am grateful to the hon. Members for their warm expressions about me and for assuring me their unstinted cooperation. I express my grateful thanks to the hon. Prime Minister; hon. Leader of the House; Shrimati Sonia Gandhi; Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee; hon. Leader of Opposition, Shri L.K. Advani; Leaders of various Parties; and other distinguished friends for the warm sentiments they have expressed about me. To run the House successfully, I look forward to your cooperation. On my part let me assure you once again that I shall endeavour my best to justify the trust that you have reposed in me and meet your expectations.

Let us all join our hands in heralding a new era of peace, progress and prosperity for our country through the discharge of our duty as the chosen representatives of the people. I earnestly seek your kind cooperation and help in the discharge of my onerous duty.

As a Leftist, as one belonging to the Left Party, friends on my left may be rest assured that I have a natural leaning towards the left. Let us resolve that we shall perform the task assigned to us to the best of our ability and with sincerity. We should ask ourselves when the House rises for the day every evening as to what we have done during the day for the country and for the people and whether we have justified the people's faith in sending us here. Nothing will give us more satisfaction than the feeling that we have tried and done our best.

Thank you very much.

Friends, there are three hon. Members who have not yet been able to take oath, and out of those three hon. Members, one is very unwell. May I give them the opportunity to take the oath? Yes Secretary-General, please call the names.

13.33 hrs.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MEMBERS SWORN – Contd.

Shri Ramchandra Veerappa (Bidar)

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Ramchandra Veerappa, We all wish you a very speedy and complete recovery.

MR. SPEAKER : I earnestly appeal to you to please take your seats.

Shri Gaurishanker Chaturbuj Bisen (Balaghat)

MR. SPEAKER : I am there to protect everybody. Please take your seat.

Shri R. Dhanuskodi Athithan (Tirunelveli)

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seat.

13.35 hrs.

...(Interruptions)

INTRODUCTION OF PRIME MINISTER,
LEADER OF THE HOUSE, AND LEADER
OF THE OPPOSITION

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seat. I will request the Leader of the Opposition to be very brief on this because this is not the usual time when we take this up. However, I have allowed him because he wanted to be very brief. Please make a very brief point.

[English]

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Members. I have great pleasure in introducing to the House, the Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. He needs no elaborate introduction. We extend to him our good wishes and wish him all success in his task.

MR. SPEAKER : The hon. Prime Minister will introduce his Ministers.

Also, I have the pleasure in introducing the Leader of the House Shri Pranab Mukherjee, and the Leader of the Opposition Shri L.K. Advani.

...(Interruptions)

The hon. Prime Minister may now introduce his Council of Ministers.

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Members, please cooperate.

If the Leader of the Opposition wants to say something briefly, let him speak. Then, I will also give you the opportunity to reply.

[Translation]

...(Interruptions)

SHRI L.K. ADVANI (Gandhinagar) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, as soon as the election results were declared, hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayeeji tendered his resignation because we accepted the fact that NDA Government have not got mandate again. After a few days when the President invited Dr. Manmohan Singh as Prime Minister to form the Cabinet despite having political differences, as it is usually in every democratic country, we all were happy that a person having clean image has taken over as Prime Minister ... (Interruptions) My humble submission to hon'ble Prime Minister is that when Cabinet was constituted, many people were disappointed that a person having such a clean image... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I will give you full opportunity. Hon. Members, please take your seats

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Raghunath Jha, I earnestly request you to please cooperate with the Chair. Please take your seat.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Advaniji, please briefly submit your point.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : May I request the hon. Members to please take their seats?

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seat.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : We know that it is the prerogative of the Prime Minister to choose his colleagues. But if the Leader of the Opposition wants to make a brief submission, I will allow him to do so. Then the hon. Prime Minister will speak.

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Members, why are you standing?
I have allowed him to speak.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please, let us start with the new way of functioning. I know, Shri Advaniji, you are articulate. I would request you to be brief in making your submission.

SHRI L.K. ADVANI : I have said only two sentences.
...(Interruptions) I have not said anything ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Yes, I know that.

May I request you all to please cooperate with the Chair. All of us are aware that the hon. Prime Minister has absolutely the discretion to choose his Council of Ministers. But I cannot ignore the Leader of the Opposition if he wants to make a brief submission. I would request him to make a very brief submission.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I am allowing Shri L.K. Advani to make his submission.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : The hon. Prime Minister will no doubt present his Council of Ministers, and if he wants to add anything on this, certainly he can do that.

Yes, now Shri L.K. Advani.

[Translation]

SHRI L.K. ADVANI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am grateful that you have given me an opportunity to raise such an issue on this occasion in which not only the opposition but the other allied parties of the Government had reservations that when this decision was taken ...(Interruptions) Who else than you know the truth better...(Interruptions) That is why yesterday more than 200 Members of both the Houses went to the hon'ble President and discussed the matter with him ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Your leaders is speaking. Your leader is speaking now. Why are you interrupting?

...(Interruptions)

SHRI L.K. ADVANI : They are interrupting ...(Interruptions) If they keep on interrupting, how can I speak ?
...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Members, please cooperate with the Chair. Let the Leader of the Opposition make his submission.

[Translation]

SHRI L.K. ADVANI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, right from the beginning, cabinet has been constituted several times
...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Please be brief.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI L.K. ADVANI : I cannot be brief if they go on interrupting like this...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Members, please cooperate. It would have been over by this time. Please allow him to speak.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I am earnestly appealing to all of you to cooperate. It would be over in two minutes.

[Translation]

SHRI L.K. ADVANI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is an established convention that while constituting the Cabinet, it is the prerogative of hon'ble Prime Minister to decide as to which members should be included in the Cabinet. It is also a convention that if a person has a criminal background then he should not be included in the Cabinet. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I would again appeal to all of you. All of you had been extremely gracious enough to offer your cooperation to the Chair. I am only requesting you to please hold patience for two minutes. I know that this is not a usual thing.

[Translation]

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH (Mathura) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, he has no right to say like this...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seat. I will not allow interruptions when the Chair is speaking. Please take your seat.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seat.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : I will not allow violations of the 'code of conduct'. Please be rest assured about that. If you do not allow the House to function in an orderly manner, at least 'this

Chair' will not tolerate that. I had been requesting all the hon. Members.

The hon. Prime Minister has absolute right to choose his Council of Ministers. I had called him to present his Council of Ministers here. But a request has been made by the Leader of the Opposition. I also felt that we should start a new chapter of cooperation and consensus. Now, I would again request Shri Advani, the Leader of the Opposition, to be very brief and try to avoid any controversies.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, he is working against the convention...(Interruptions)

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH (Mathura) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, he has no right to say anything like this...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : You may please sit down. Kindly do not force me to take unpleasant action.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : You have to sit down when I am standing.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : You may please take your seat. Otherwise, I will have to take unpleasant action on the first day itself. Please do not do that.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : All of you may please take your seats, when the Speaker is on his feet. Let us not take too many liberties.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

Prof. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, if the Leader of Opposition is not listened to, then members of Treasury Benches would also not be able to speak ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I had requested, Shri Malhotra. Your leaders have said earlier. Let us find out what is the response.

Shri Advani, I will request you to kindly be very brief.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : You please let me speak.

[English]

Let him say what he wants to. Why are you interrupting?

Shri Advani, I would earnestly appeal to you to please conclude.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI L.K. ADVANI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, there have been 14-15 Prime Ministers since Independence. If we consider Shri Nandaji, then you are the 15th Prime Minister but so far no Prime Minister has inducted such people in his Cabinet.(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Now, the hon. Prime Minister.

13.49 hrs.

INTRODUCTION OF MINISTERS

[English]

THE PRIME MINISTER (DR. MANMOHAN SINGH) : Hon. Speaker, Sir, with your permission, I wish to introduce to you and through you, to the august House, the members of the Council of Ministers.

Shri Pranab Mukherjee	Minister of Defence
Shri Arjun Singh	Minister of Human Resource Development
Shri Sharad Pawar	Minister of Agriculture and Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution

...(Interruptions)

Shri Lalu Prasad	Minister of Railways
Shri Shivraj V. Patil	Minister of Home Affairs
Shri Ram Vilas Paswan	Minister of Chemicals and Fertilisers and Minister of Steel
Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad	Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Minister of Urban Development

Shri S. Jaipal Reddy	Minister of Information and Broadcasting and Minister of Culture
Shri Sish Ram Ola	Minister of Labour and Employment
Shri P. Chidambaram	Minister of Finance
Shri Mahavir Prasad	Minister of Small Scale Industries and Minister of Agro and Rural Industries
Shri P.R. Kyndiah	Minister of Tribal Affairs and Minister of Development of North Eastern Region
Shri T.R. Baalu	Minister of Road Transport and Highways and Minister of Shipping
Shri Shankarsinh Vaghela	Minister of Textiles
Shri Kamal Nath	Minister of Commerce and Industry
Shri P.M. Sayeed	Minister of Power
Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh	Minister of Rural Development
Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi	Minister of Water Resources
Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar	Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas and Minister of Panchayati Raj
Shri Sunil Dutt	Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports
Shrimati Meera Kumar	Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment
Shri K. Chandra Shekhar Rao	Minister without portfolio
Shri Shibu Soren	Minister of Coal and Mines
Shri A. Raja	Minister of Environment and Forests
Shri Dayanidhi Maran	Minister of Communications and Information Technology
Dr. Anbumani Ramdoss	Minister of Health and Family Welfare

...(Interruptions)

Minister of State (Independence Charge) :

Shri Sontosh Mohan Dev	Minister of State of the Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises
Shri Jagdish Tytler	Minister of State of the Ministry of Non-Resident Indian Affairs
Shri Oscar Fernandes	Minister of State of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation
Shrimati Renuka Chowdhury	Minister of State of the Ministry of Tourism
Shri Subodh Kant Sahay	Minister of State of the Ministry of Food Processing Industries
Shri Kapil Sibal	Minister of State of the Ministry of Science and Technology and Minister of the State of the Department of Ocean Development
Shri Vilas Muttemwar	Minister of State of the Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources
Kumari Selja	Minister of State of the Ministry of Urban Employment and Poverty Alleviation
Shri Praful Patel	Minister of State of the Ministry of Civil Aviation
Shri Prem Chand Gupta	Minister of State of the Ministry of Company Affairs

...(Interruptions)

Ministers of State :

Shri E. Ahamed	Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs
Shri Suresh Pachauri	Minister of State in the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions and Minister of State in the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs
Shri Bijoy Handique	Minister of State in the Ministry of Defence and Minister of State in the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs

Shrimati Panabaka Lakshmi	Minister of State in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare	Shri M.A.A. Fatmi	Minister of State in the Ministry of Human Resource Development
Dr. Dasari Narayan Rao	Minister of State in the Ministry of Coal and Mines	Shri A. Narendra	Minister of State in the Ministry of Rural Development
Dr. Shakeel Ahmad	Minister of State in the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology	Shri R. Velu	Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways
Rao Inderjit Singh	Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs	Shri S.S. Palanimanickam	Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance
Shri Naranbhai Rathwa	Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways	Shri S. Regupathy	Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs
Shri K. Rahman Khan	Minister of State in the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers	Shri K. Venkatapathy	Minister of State in the Ministry of Law and Justice
Shri K.H. Muniyappa	Minister of State in the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways	Shrimati Subbulakshmi Jegadeesan	Minister of State in the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
Shri M.V. Rajasekharan	Minister of State in the Ministry of Planning	Shri E.V.K.S. Elangovan	Minister of State in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry
Shri Kantilal Bhuria	Minister of State in the Ministry of Agriculture and Minister of State in the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution	Shrimati Kanti Singh	Minister of State in the Ministry of Human Resource Development
Shri Manikrao Hodlya Gavit	Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs	Shri Namoo Narain Meena	Minister of State in the Ministry of Environment and Forests
Shri Shriprakash Jaiswal	Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs	Shri Jay Prakash Narayan Yadav	Minister of State in the Ministry of Water Resources
Shri Prithviraj Chavan	Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office	Dr. Akhilesh Singh	Minister of State in the Ministry of Agriculture and Minister of State in the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution
Shri Taslimuddin	Minister of State in the Ministry of Agriculture and Minister of State in the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution		
Shrimati Suryakanta Patil	Minister of State in the Ministry of Rural Development and Minister of State in the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs		

MR. SPEAKER : The House stands adjourned to meet again on Monday, half an hour after the President's Address.

13.59 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till half-an-hour after the Address by the President on Monday, June 7, 2004/Jyaistha 17, 1926 (Saka)

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