

17.48 hrs.

Title: Valedictory references made on the conclusion of third session of the Thirteenth Lok Sabha.

SHRIMATI SONIA GANDHI (AMETHI): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to thank you for guiding the business of this House during this very important Session and bringing it to a successful conclusion. Several important Motions and Bills have been passed in the House. We realise that many of these were necessary for the smooth functioning of the Government and for the continuation of its policies.

As a responsible Opposition Party wedded to the principles of parliamentary democracy, we shall always abide by the wisdom of the House. Equally, as a responsible Opposition Party, we shall always raise issues which we feel are important and to oppose moves which we feel are against the interests of the people. This we have done throughout and we shall continue to do so.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I must state with regret that we have not received satisfactory answers and responses from the Government on several major issues which we had raised, like the increase in prices, declining trends in agricultural outputs and income, stagnation in poverty alleviation programmes and schemes, the problem of reservation, the rising incidents of attacks on minorities and the vital subject of national security.

At the end of this Session, I must confess we continue to carry with us many of the fears and concerns which we had at the beginning of the Session. Our hopes that the forum of this august House will help provide solutions to a number of problems which in our view have been caused by the policies of the present Government have been belied. Many of the Opposition parties have joined our efforts and endeavours on these issues and for this I would like to thank them.

During the forthcoming break, the Standing Committees and the Consultative Committees will be looking at a large number of Bills of vital importance. In this context, Sir, through you, I would like to ask the Government to pay more attention to the Reports and recommendations of the Parliamentary Committees when devising policies. We feel that the best traditions of parliamentary democracy are being eroded by this Government through the increasing practice of ignoring the work and efforts of the Committees.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I thank you once again for Chairing the business of this House through an eventful Session and I hope that you will continue to encourage and allow the hon. Members to take up the issues which require further answers and to debate fully and frankly the concerns which we bring to the House.

प्रधान मंत्री (श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, बजट सत्र अपनी समाप्ति पर है। हर बजट सत्र महत्वपूर्ण होता है।

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Prime Minister, Shri Somnath Chatterjee wants to say something.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (BOLPUR): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am obliged to the hon. Prime Minister for giving me this opportunity. I am thankful to you and I wish to express our appreciation about your guidance and the leadership that you have given in conducting the proceedings of the House. No doubt there have been periods of tension and maybe some turbulence also but that shows probably the inherent strength of the system of parliamentary democracy in this country.

In the ultimate analysis, we are all friends here trying to serve our country to the best of our ability on the basis of our own perceptions, our own policies and programmes. But, I am sure, everybody is concerned with the development of the country and the economic well being of our people. We have had different ways and we would like to express our views, programmes and policies. This is the highest forum of the country where people have sent us as their representatives. Therefore, Sir, we shall always endeavour, maybe not always, in a perfect manner to espouse the causes of the people, to articulate their urges and aspirations. At least this is a forum where people's view can be expressed in an adequate manner.

Sir, there have been certain periods when we cannot obviously agree with the Government and we have not agreed. Naturally, whatever parliamentary methods are open to us, we have tried to take recourse to them. But, in view of the complexities of the situation, complexities of the problems becoming more and more these days. There are newer and newer areas of Governmental functioning or Government shedding its own functions and responsibilities, and lesser and lesser opportunities are being had for the purpose of discussing and raising the issues inside the House because of lack of time. In spite of that, there are some important issues like the price rise, PDS and so on. We all know it, the Prime Minister is being asked every day about it. Yesterday also, the Leader of the Opposition was shown to be listening carefully. I am sure she did. But forthwith, a rejoinder was issued rejecting all her views. I found this in Paper. But, certainly, Sir, this is an issue – I am requesting the hon. Prime Minister

since he is here – which should be considered for the sake of the common people of this country.

We missed one Bill here. Every minute we missed Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee. After her passing away, the day we paid our homage to her, we felt that the befitting tribute would be paid to her by passing the Women's Reservation Bill in this House but unfortunately this has not even been brought.

Sir, I hope in the next Session, the Prime Minister will not leave it to mere consensus. This seems to be the only Bill where consensus is insisted upon. We wanted a little time on Information Technology Bill to consider some of the abstruse provisions, you did not concede. We are not getting adequate time for so many Bills. Today, but for the tearing away of these things, what has happened is something unique. They tried to bring controversial Bill at the last stage through supplementary Agenda. It was asked at 3 o'clock. Even then, there was no response from the Government that these Bills are going to be introduced today. It is being done and you have seen what has happened. These are not good developments.

Sir, the Leader of the Opposition has spoken about the minorities. Sir, what we have really not discussed in the House is the spirit of intolerance that has developed in this country. Such a serious matter has not been fully discussed. We are always running short of time on important issues.

Sir, as regards Standing Committees, more and more questions are coming and whether you like it or not you have to face it. It is very unfortunate that insinuations are being made even about the unanimous reports of the Standing Committees. If this is done, it will be very sad day for the functioning of Parliament. Sir, you appoint Chairmen of Committees and if insinuations are made even with regard to the unanimous reports, then it will be very difficult to function. Shri Shivraj Patil is here. We always appreciate the great contributions he made...*(Interruptions)*

DR. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (SOUTH DELHI): Sir, we can discuss these things for days together. When the Congress was in Government, I was also the Chairman of a Committee. This matter can be discussed separately...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : Hon. Prime Minister, Sir, this is the attitude of intolerance I spoke of.

MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI (GARHWAL): Shri Chatterjee, you could not tolerate me for one minute and now you are preaching us tolerance...*(Interruptions)*

श्री शिवराज सिंह (विदिशा) : नयी परम्परा प्रारम्भ हो रही है।...*(व्यवधान)*

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : Sir, I feel this is somewhat a touchy subject. I would only say that it is for you to see that the Standing Committees can function in a manner which is contemplated by rules. I would not say anything more.

Sir, of course, I express my thanks to the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs. He is accommodative and has been helpful. I am sure I wish to express my sincere thanks to Shri Ram Naik who is a very good friend of ours. I thank all of you.

Sir, many of the urgent matters which we could not discuss in this Session, we will be able to do that in the next Session. Let us hope that with greater cooperation, we shall be able to serve people better through this House.

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : अध्यक्ष महोदय, सबसे पहले मैं भी, आपने जिस कुशलता से सदन का संचालन किया है, उसके लिए आपको बधाई देना चाहता हूँ। सचमुच में, आपका धैर्य बढ़ा गहरा है। बार-बार उसकी परीक्षा होती है और आप सफलता से निकल आते हैं। मेरा विश्वास है कि आपका यह धैर्य बना रहेगा और हमारे आचरण की मर्यादा भी कायम रहेगी। जैसा मैं कह रहा था, बजट सत्र है, समाप्ति पर है, महत्वपूर्ण है,

18.00 hrs.

बजट पर मतभेद हुआ करते हैं, पहली दफा मतभेद नहीं हुए हैं, लेकिन शायद पहली दफा प्रतिपक्ष ने इसको एक मुद्दा बनाकर अखाड़े में उतरने का फैसला किया है। इसकी आवश्यकता नहीं थी। अगर बिना बोझा लादे हुए, हम सरकार का काम चला सकते, देश का वित्तीय भविष्य बना सकते, तो अलोकप्रियता अर्जित करने के लिए हम बोझा लादने का निर्णय नहीं करते। कीमतें बढ़ती हैं, उनकी चोट सबको लगती है, लेकिन एक संतुलन बनाकर हमने काम किया है और हमें विश्वास है कि देश की जनता इसे पसन्द करेगी। आखिर हम जनता का विश्वास लेकर यहां आए हैं। हमने अपने घोषणा पत्र में कहा था कि ...

कुछ माननीय सदस्य : महंगाई बढ़ायेंगे।

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : हमने कहा था कि जो भी बोझ देश पर लादा जा रहा है, उसके बारे में हम विचार करेंगे और उन्हें एक तर्कसंगत रूप देंगे। हमें आश्चर्य हुआ, जब मुख्य विरोधी दल ने, मुख्य प्रतिपक्ष ने, जिन्हें शासन चलाने का अनुभव है और जो फिर से शासन में आने की बात जोह रहे हैं, यद्यपि उनकी आशा पूरी होती दिखाई नहीं देती, लेकिन एक यथार्थवादी दृष्टिकोण बनाकर, अगर हम आर्थिक क्षेत्र में नहीं चलेंगे और संकुचित दलबन्दी से बन्धे रहेंगे, तो इस देश की नैया को पार लगाना बहुत मुश्किल होगा। कल डा. मनमोहन सिंह जी ने राज्यसभा में भाषण दिया, वह हमारी इस बात की पुष्टि करता है कि सत्ता पक्ष में भी बुद्धिमान लोग हैं, सत्तापक्ष में भी दूरदर्शी लोग हैं। *(व्यवधान)* उनके भाषण को नकारा नहीं जा सकता, वह रिकार्ड का विषय है। उसे ध्यान से पढ़ना चाहिए। *(व्यवधान)*

अध्यक्ष महोदय, एक बात मेरी समझ में नहीं आती, आप क्षमा करेंगे, क्या सभी स्टैंडिंग कमेटीयों की सभी सिफारिशें हमेशा सरकार द्वारा मंजूर की जाएंगी। (व्यवधान)

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : I never said that.

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : फिर शिकायत क्या हो रही है ? आज जिस सर्वसम्मति रिपोर्ट की बात कही जा रही है, क्या आपको मालूम है, उसमें हमारे भी सदस्य हैं। उन्होंने नोट-आफ-डिसैंट नहीं देना है, यह सोच कर नोट नहीं लगाया है, वरना कोई भी रिपोर्ट ऐसी नहीं आ सकती, जिसमें हमारे सदस्यों की टिप्पणी न होती और वे अपना विरोध प्रकट न करते।

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : Can you yield for a second? ... (Interruptions) A definite statement has been made with regard to the Committee of which I am the Chairman. Are you referring to that?

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: I have made a general statement.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : I noticed, you were pointing your finger at me.

MR. SPEAKER: This is a valedictory reference!

(व्यवधान)

श्री माधवराव सिंधिया (गुना) : ऐसी कोई परम्परा नहीं है कि नोट-आफ-डिसैंट नहीं लगाया जा सकता है। (व्यवधान)

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : मैं मानता हूँ कि समिति की सिफारिशों पर ध्यान दिया जाना चाहिए। सरकार को उन्हें गम्भीरता से लेना चाहिए। केवल इस आधार पर आप यह नहीं कह सकते कि आप जो बात कह रहे हैं, उसे सरकार स्वीकार करे - यह जरूरी नहीं है। मैं भी प्रतिपक्ष में रहा हूँ और किस तरह से हमारी सिफारिशों को नकारा जाता था, इसका मैं भुक्तभोगी हूँ, लेकिन हमने कभी इसको शिकायत नहीं बनाया।

इस सत्र में सर्वसम्मति से संविधान संशोधन पारित हुए, इसके लिए हम प्रतिपक्ष के आभारी हैं। कुछ मुद्दे ऐसे हैं, जिन पर देश एक मत है और होना चाहिए।

जहां तक परिगणित जातियों और जनजातियों के अधिकारों का सवाल है, नौकरियों में पदोन्नति के प्रश्न को लेकर जो बैकलाग का मामला उठा था और कहा गया कि परिगणित जातियों एवं जनजातियों के साथ अन्याय हो रहा था, कोई अदालत का फैसला था, लेकिन सारे सदन ने मिल कर उसे परिवर्तित किया। सदन में हमारा इतना बहुमत नहीं है कि हम अपने बल पर संविधान संशोधन विधेयक पारित करा सकते, लेकिन यह मुद्दा ऐसा है कि जिस पर सारा सदन एकमत हो गया। राज्यों को अधिक वित्तीय स्वायत्तता देने के बारे में, अधिक धन देने के बारे में बात हुई - इसके लिए भी संविधान संशोधन किया गया। उसमें सारे सदन का सहयोग मिला। इसी तरह के जो राष्ट्र हित के और सब के कल्याण से संबंधित मामले हैं, उन पर अगर सदन एक होकर चले तो इसमें किसी तरह का संकोच नहीं होना चाहिए कि हम किस तरह से मिल सकते हैं, किस तरह से एक दूसरे का साथ दे सकते हैं।

महोदय, अस्पृश्यता सामाजिक क्षेत्र से नट हो रही है लेकिन राजनीतिक क्षेत्र में अस्पृश्यता को फिर से आरम्भ करने से काम बनने वाला नहीं है। हम सब इकट्ठे होकर चलें, आज इसकी आवश्यकता है। बजट सत्र में कई बार ऐसे अवसर आए, जब पता लगा कि हमारे बाहरी कितने भी मत्तमेद हों लेकिन जब महत्वपूर्ण प्रश्न आते हैं, उदाहरण के लिए जैसे श्रीलंका का सवाल है, उस पर विस्तार से चर्चा नहीं हुई, मगर मौटे तौर पर श्रीलंका के मामले में सारा देश एक है और पूरा देश चाहता है कि श्रीलंका में शांति स्थापित हो, श्रीलंका की एकता और अखंडता बनी रहे। लेकिन इन सवालों पर हम लगातार प्रतिपक्ष से सलाह लेते रहे हैं, विचार करते रहे हैं। आज ही काश्मीर की आंतरिक स्थिति के बारे में कांग्रेस पार्टी के एक प्रतिनिधि मंडल से मेरी चर्चा हुई थी। कल एक कांग्रेस के प्रतिनिधि मंडल ने मेरे घर पर भी आने का कट किया। उन्होंने अपना मेमोरेंडम दिया और हमने उसका उत्तर दिया, लेकिन अभी भी शिकायत जारी है कि हमारी बात मानी नहीं गई। मैंने कल भी कहा था और आज फिर कहना चाहता हूँ कि हमारा दौा यही है कि हम इस समय सरकार में हैं। लेकिन कोई औचित्य, कोई कारण नहीं है, जिससे कि कुछ मुद्दों पर, और आर्थिक क्षेत्र का मामला ऐसा ही मामला है क्योंकि देश गहरे आर्थिक संकट में है और इसलिए कुछ कठोर फैसले करने पड़े हैं।

महोदय, यह आशा लगाई गई थी कि सरकार फैसलें दबाव में आकर बदल देगी - हमने भी फैसले कोई खुशी में आकर नहीं किए हैं, लेकिन जो फैसलें किए हैं वे सोच समझ कर किए हैं और इसीलिए उन पर हमारा आग्रह हो रहा है। हम अपने मित्रगण को संतुष्ट करने का कोई रास्ता निकालेंगे, इसका हम आपको विश्वास दिलाना चाहते हैं।

अध्यक्ष महोदय, इनफोर्मेशन टेक्नोलॉजी के संबंध में विधेयक सदन में आया है, उससे पहले इनफोर्मेशन की स्वतंत्रता के बारे में हम एक बिल आज इंद्रोड्यूस करना चाहते थे, वह पेश नहीं हो सका, लेकिन वह विधेयक हमारा तैयार है। लेजिस्लेटिव बिजिनेस के मामले में, इस बजट सत्र में बहुत अच्छा काम हुआ है और मैं समझता हूँ कि सब के सहयोग के बिना यह संभव नहीं था। मुझे कभी-कभी लगता था कि शायद ऐसा बंदवारा हो गया है कि स्वरे का समय सार्वजनिक महत्व के मामलों को उठाने में दिया जाएगा और शाम का समय ठोस काम करने के लिए दिया जाएगा। इसलिए सत्र शाम तक, रात तक चलता रहा और उसमें सब सहयोग देते रहे। सचिवालय को इसमें जरूर कठिनाई होती है, स्पीकर महोदय, आपको भी आना पड़ता है, डिप्टी स्पीकर महोदय आज दिखाई नहीं दे रहे।... (व्यवधान)

MR. SPEAKER: He is on tour.

(व्यवधान)

श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी : वे ब्राजील गए हुए हैं। अब तो बहुत से मेम्बर्स वहां जाने की तैयारी कर रहे हैं। महिला मेम्बर्स की ओर से एक मांग आई है कि पुरानी सरकार के जमाने में सारी महिलाएं, जो संसद सदस्य हैं, उन्हें विदेश यात्रा में भेज दिया गया था, उन्हें उस समय चीन भेजा गया था, वैसे ही इस समय भी करना चाहिए। अगर सबकी आम सहमति हो तो मैं स्वीकार कर लूंगा, आम सहमति की बात तो माननी ही पड़ेगी।

अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं आपको एक बार फिर हृदय से धन्यवाद देता हूँ।

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, today, we come to an end of the Third Session of the Thirteenth Lok Sabha which commenced on 23rd February, 2000 with the Address by the hon. President to Members of both the Houses

assembled together in the Central Hall. During this Session, the House had 38 sittings, spread over 211 hours and 30 minutes.

This being the Budget Session, a substantial part of our work related to financial business. The House passed the Railway and the General Budgets for 2000-2001. As has been the practice since 1993, the House took a brief recess to enable the Departmentally-Related Standing Committees to examine and report back to the House on the Demands for Grants in respect of the concerned Ministries. The House, which had adjourned for this purpose at the end of the sitting on 16th March, 2000, re-assembled on 17th April, 2000 whereafter the financial business was completed. The Standing Committees of the Lok Sabha submitted 69 Reports on Demands for Grants of various Ministries and Departments. As many as 150 Members participated in the discussion on the Railway Budget and 65 Members took part in the debate on the General Budget.

The House also passed the Motion of Thanks to the President for his Address on 25th April, 2000. The discussion on the Motion lasted over eleven hours with 25 Members taking part in it.

Substantial legislative work was also completed by the Lok Sabha during this Session. In all, the House passed 26 Bills. Some of the more important Bills passed include the Constitution Eighty-ninth and Ninetieth (Amendment) Bills; the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Amendment) Bill, 2000; the Recovery of Debts due to Banks and Financial Institutions (Amendment) Bill, 2000; the Designs Bill, 2000; the Mizoram University Bill, 2000; the Information Technology Bill, 1999; and the National Housing Bank (Amendment) Bill, 2000.

The House held meaningful discussions on four important matters of public importance under Rule 193. These related to: the participation of some State Government employees in RSS activities; the drought situation prevailing in various parts of the country; the rise in prices of essential commodities; and on the Statement made by the Minister of External Affairs regarding the hijacking of Indian Airlines plane IC-814.

Five important matters were raised by Members by way of Calling Attention and the concerned Ministers made Statements in response to these Calling Attentions. In addition, 23 Statements were made by Ministers on different matters. Three Half-an-Hour Discussions were also raised in the House. As regards the Question Hour, out of the 740 Starred Questions listed, 98 Questions were orally answered in the House. While written replies were given for 8061 Unstarred Questions, two Short Notice questions were also taken up by the House.

In respect of Private Members' Business, 60 Private Members' Bills were introduced. Of these, two Bills were discussed by the House which were later withdrawn with the consent of the House. One Bill remained part-discussed. Two Private Members' Resolutions were also discussed by the House which were subsequently withdrawn with the consent of the House. One Resolution remained part-discussed.

Members also made use of the provisions of Rule 377 to raise 225 matters in the House. Besides, as many as 281 Members raised matters of urgent public importance during the 'Zero Hour'.

One of the most significant developments during this Session has been the constitution of a Committee on Ethics which will oversee the moral and ethical conduct of the Members and examine the cases referred to it in respect of their ethical or other misconduct. I am confident that the constitution of this Committee, while further strengthening our Committee system, will also add a new dimension to ethics in public life.

As the hon. Members would have noticed, we have been able to transact substantial business of great import during this Budget Session. A good amount of this work was transacted during the second part of the Third Session.

On several days, the House sat late into the night to complete the listed business. All this was made possible because of the full cooperation that I have received from all sections of the House. I am extremely grateful to the hon. Leader of the House, the hon. Leader of the Opposition, the leaders of various Parties and Groups in the House as also the Chief Whips and Whips for their kind cooperation and the courtesy they extended to me and to my colleagues, the hon. Deputy Speaker and Members of the Panel of Chairmen. I would also like to thank each and every one of you for your valuable cooperation which facilitated the transaction of all listed business.

During this Session period, we were honoured to receive in the Central Hall of Parliament House, the President of the United States of America, His Excellency, Mr. William Jefferson Clinton. President Clinton's Address to the Members of the two Houses has been hailed as a landmark in the close and cordial relations between the world's largest democracies.

In our continuing endeavour to honour the memory of our nation builders, we installed the statue of Andhra Kesari

Tanguturi Prakasam Panthulu in the Parliament building. The statue of Prakasam Panthulu was unveiled by the hon. President of India on 5th May, 2000.

In sum, we have been able to transact important business during this Third Session of Thirteenth Lok Sabha and for this, I compliment all sections of this House.

Now, hon. Members may stand up as '*Vande Matram*' would be played.

18.16 hrs.

NATIONAL SONG

(The National Song was played.)

MR. SPEAKER :

18.17 hours

The Lok Sabha then adjourned sine die.
