

**12.10 hrs.**

**Title:** Tributes to Shri Vithalbhai J. Patel on 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Day of the assumption of Office of President of Central Legislative Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, 24<sup>th</sup> August is a historic day in the evolution of our parliamentary system. It was on this day, seventy-five years ago, that Shri Vithalbhai J. Patel, the first elected President of the Central Legislative Assembly, assumed the office.

Shri Patel firmly believed that it is only through the impartiality and independence of the Chair that the privileges and rights of the Members could be effectively safeguarded. Fearless, firm and impartial, his rulings were characterized by objectivity and a deep knowledge of parliamentary rules and procedures which helped in creating for posterity, sound and healthy parliamentary traditions and practices.

Shri Patel had a clear perception on the need to maintain a Legislative Secretariat independent of the Executive. One of his first tasks as President was to press for such a Secretariat in which he eventually succeeded. Shri Patel also established the convention that the President does not participate in the debate and does not vote. In case of a deadlock, he may use his casting vote in favour of the *status quo*.

By his dignity, uprightness and impartiality, Shri Patel left us traditions, which will always be a part of the heritage of the Chair in India. There could be no more permanent memorial to Shri Patel than the institution of Speakership itself.

24<sup>th</sup> August, 2000 was the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Day of the assumption of the office of the President of the Central Legislative Assembly by Shri Vithalbhai Patil. On this occasion, I, on behalf of the whole House, offer humble tributes to the memory of this outstanding parliamentarian and Presiding Officer. Let us rededicate ourselves to the tasks which he ceaselessly strove to accomplish.

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