

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES

TUESDAY, 6th MARCH, 1945

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## OFFICIAL REPORT



### CONTENTS

	PAGES
Death of Mr. K. S. Gupta	1057—59

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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 6th March, 1945

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber of the Council House at Eleven of the Clock, Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) in the Chair.

## DEATH OF MR. K. S. GUPTA

**The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed** (Leader of the House): Mr. President, we meet here this morning under the shadow of a great tragedy that took place in this House yesterday in the afternoon. Mr. President, as far as I know, there is no parallel to this event so far as this Legislature is concerned. Our friend Mr. K. S. Gupta had been connected with this House for the last seven years. He was a valued member of the Congress Party and while he was speaking on the Budget yesterday in his own characteristic vigorous style within five minutes of the start of his speech he collapsed and died forthwith. Mr. President, though it was known for a few days before his death that he was suffering from high blood pressure and perhaps also some heart trouble, no one, not even his best friends and neighbours in this House who were sitting next to him, realized that the hand of death was near him when he started his speech. Mr. President, Mr. Gupta represented the Non-Muslim constituency of Ganjam *cum* Vizagapatam for a number of years and throughout his association with this House and its activities, either in the committees or in the Legislature, his work was characterised by deep study of the subjects with which he had to deal and he was very anxious at every stage to be useful and helpful. Mr. President, our deep sympathies go to the Party of which he was such an active, enthusiastic and vigorous member but I am sure you will agree with me that the whole House must feel poorer by the absence of such a useful and helpful Member and so far as we individually are concerned we feel that we have lost a very dear, genial, amiable and charming friend. Mr. President, our hearts must go out to his widow, his children and the bereaved family in this hour of great distress. But it may be some consolation to them to know that their grief is shared by all those with whom he worked all these years in this Legislature.

Mr. President, his dead body has been flown to Vizagapatam and will be reaching its destination within two or three hours. It is amazing that this evening arrangements had been made for a party at the aerodrome and, believe me, it was mainly at his instance, because he was anxious to have a joy ride, that this party was arranged but little did we know that he will have a long flight from here to Vizagapatam today, a few hours before this party was arranged to give him a joy ride. Mr. President, as long as the cremation does not take place, our hearts must be full with grief and I do hope and trust that you will convey our feelings of condolence and sympathy to the bereaved family.

**Mr. Bhulabhai J. Desai** (Bombay Northern Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Mr. President, it is said, Sir, in the Holy Writ of the Christians that in the midst of life we are in death and the sudden passage of my dear comrade from life here to life beyond is a sharp reminder which we sadly need of the fleeting character of our existence. Mr. Gupta was an earnest man, so much so indeed that it was very difficult for us to ever ask him to feel any different on any issue which he made his own. We have been the poorer during the last three or four years by the death of several of our comrades. Mr. Satyamurti was the first to pass away, leaving this House poorer and us also. So did Professor Jehri, who was followed by Mr. Khedan Lal. Every time we meet in this House at the beginning of a Session, this melancholy duty always falls upon us to mourn the death of our comrades. Let us only hope, Sir, that the death which has taken place yesterday is one of a character which will always remind us that if a man lays down his life while espousing a cause which he believes to be just—whatever happens to those bereaved—he could not have

[Mr. Bhulabhai J. Desai]

died a more glorious death. He was an earnest and a sincere man, hard working, loyal. More than anything else, he had a sense of proportion and a sense of duty which defied every kind of malice, for indeed in a debating place of this kind, the greatest quality that one can possess and wish for is to be able to fight without rancour and lose without malice. That was the example that Mr. Gupta set in his life.

Sir, it is a truism that this House is poorer for his death. Inverting the Holy Writ to which I referred in the beginning, it is also true that in the midst of death we are in life and the immortality which Mr. Gupta has obtained by dying, while actually pleading for the cause in which he believed, is an immortality which everybody would wish the dearest of us. You will convey to his widow and children that we share the loss, share not merely the grief and the sorrow but the great shock which it naturally must give her at a time when she least expected it—to meet, instead of a smiling face, his last remains.

But nonetheless, the tribute that we pay would be to some extent a mitigation of the great loss that she has suffered. We will always remember his earnest and smiling face and it is difficult indeed to believe that his place is vacant even now. Sir, I join the Leader of the House in the tribute that he has paid with all the earnestness and sincerity that I can command, but more than everything else our love for him remains fully undiminished. I ask you, Sir, therefore, in the name of this House to convey these expressions of our sorrow and grief so that alleviation of suffering to some extent may reach those who are left behind and will serve, according to the belief which we have, as a solace to his soul.

**Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan** (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, on behalf of my Party, as well as myself, I express very deep sorrow at the tragic death of one of our colleagues. It has already been pointed out that Mr. K. S. Gupta was sincere and earnest throughout the time that he was a Member of this Honourable House. Sir, Mr. K. S. Gupta died at his post and it can be said that he literally breathed his last fighting for the cause of the people of India. I am sure that every Honourable Member of this House is full of grief and sympathy for the family of Mr. Gupta. We have lost a valuable colleague, the country has lost a sincere worker and the family has lost a dear friend and head of the family. I request you, Sir, to convey our deepest sorrow and sincerest sympathy to the widow and the children of Mr. Gupta.

**Dr. P. N. Banerjee** (Calcutta Suburbs: Non-Muhammandan Urban): Sir, I associate myself and my Party with the motion of grief and condolence which has been moved and I endorse all that has been said by the Honourable the Leader of the House and other speakers. I came in close contact with our departed friend and I was always struck by his sincerity of purpose and his keen and earnest devotion to the cause of the country. Our grief is all the greater because his death was so sudden and so tragic. But we find comfort in the fact that his death was a glorious one, for he died while rendering service to his beloved Motherland. Sir, our hearts go out to the bereaved members of his family in this hour of their severe trial.

**Sir Henry Richardson** (Nominated Non-Official): Sir, on behalf of my Group, I wish to join most sincerely in the tribute paid by the Honourable the Leader of the House and other Leaders to the memory of Mr. Gupta. Sir, as the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition has said, we have these occasions every Session when we are reminded of the fact that our lives are not in our hands, but when this Honourable House becomes the death chamber of one of our colleague and we see the tragic scene that happened yesterday afternoon, we cannot but help being more acutely reminded of that truth and feeling much more acutely the blow which has suddenly fallen on this House. We, in this Group, have had our own sorrow in such sudden losses and, therefore, we can

sympathise perhaps more than many in the loss which has been sustained by the Congress Party and relatives of Mr. Gupta. We ask you to join our sincere condolences with those that have been already offered to Mr. Gupta's relatives.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I fully share the grief that has been expressed by different Members at the tragic and sudden death of Mr. Gupta which took place in this Chamber yesterday. He died at his post, while discharging his duties as a Member of this Assembly. He was, as has been stated by the Honourable the Leader of the House, a very active Member of this Assembly and a very amiable gentleman. An incident like this very seldom happens and it has naturally cast a shadow over the Assembly Chamber. It will be my duty to communicate to the widow of Mr. Gupta and other members of his family, the motion of condolence that has been passed by the House.

I understand that under the circumstances, it is the desire of Honourable Members of the Assembly that no business shall be transacted today and I therefore adjourn the House till tomorrow.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Wednesday, the 7th March, 1945.