

LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Tuesday, February 20, 2001/Phalgun 1, 1922 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock

(MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*)

OBITUARY REFERENCE

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Members, I have to inform the House with profound sorrow of the passing away of one of our esteemed colleagues, Shri Indrajit Gupta.

Shri Indrajit Gupta was a sitting Member of Lok Sabha representing Midnapore Parliamentary Constituency of West Bengal. He was earlier a Member of Second and Third Lok Sabha from 1960 to 1967 representing Calcutta South-West; Fourth and Fifth Lok Sabha from 1967 to 1977 representing Alipore; Seventh and Eighth Lok Sabha from 1980 to 1989 representing Basirhat; and Ninth to Twelfth Lok Sabha from 1989 to 1999 representing Midnapore parliamentary constituencies of West Bengal. Being the senior-most Member, Shri Gupta was popularly known as 'Father of the House'.

An able administrator, Shri Gupta served as Minister of Home Affairs in the Union Council of Ministers from 1996 to 1998.

A well-known Parliamentarian, Shri Gupta was Chairman of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence during 1995-1996 and was presently Chairman of Committee on Subordinate Legislation since 1999. He was also a member of various Parliamentary Committees like Rules Committee during 1990-1991; General Purposes Committee during 1985-1989 and from 1998 onwards; Committee on Defence from 1998-2000; Committee on Petitions during 1986-1987; Business Advisory Committee 1986-1987 and 1989; Library Committee during 1990-1991 and Committee to Review Lok Sabha Secretariat Rules, 1955 during 1990.

A popular trade unionist, Shri Gupta represented various trade unions and lost no time in highlighting the problems faced by the workers.

A man of letters, he had to his credit two publications, namely, 'Capital and Labour in the Jute Industry' and 'Self Reliance in National Defence'.

[Translation]

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE):

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have lost one more colleague of ours

who was known as a stalwart in the Parliament. I saw him here as an M.P. from the year 1960. He was committed to the ideology of his party, but he presented his thoughts and arguments in a very polite language. Though there was difference of opinion with him yet he had an attractive personality. There was firmness in his personality. He was committed to the ideology and his life was like an open book. He always expressed his views as a seasoned Parliamentarian and contributed greatly for evolving consensus in the time of crisis. He was associated with trade union movement which catapulted him onto the centrestage of politics. He made concerted efforts to safeguard workers' interests. He used to propagate the interests of the working class in and outside the country. He had always a deep sense of concern for the problems of the country and the lot of the downtrodden and the exploited. He had a towering personality. Though he could not keep himself aloof from the pandemonium in Parliament yet he always maintained dignity. We all had cordial relations with him. On his death the Lok Sabha has suffered a great loss. I have already said, he was a great stalwart who is no more amidst us. I pay tributes to him on behalf of the Government and my party and on my own behalf and I would like that our condolences should be conveyed to the bereaved family.

[English]

SHRIMATI SONIA GANDHI (AMETHI) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the passing away of Shri Indrajit Gupta is not only a loss for Parliament, not only a loss for West Bengal but it is a national loss. He was the senior-most Member of the Lok Sabha. Every intervention by him was heard in with silence and with great respect. His analytical mind was able to delineate the most complex political, social and economic issues in a manner that always convinced his audience. His understanding of the problems facing our country was quite remarkable.

He did not ever raise his voice or use harsh words, and his masterly debating brilliance will be remembered for a long time by all of us and by all his colleagues. He was truly a great patriotic Indian.

My family's close links with him go back to the 1930s when he used to study in England with my mother-in-law.

My husband and I continued our association with him. We looked up to Shri Indrajit Gupta as an elderly statesman whose vision of India was all inclusive, never exclusive. He left no one out. His example will continue to inspire future generations.

On behalf of the Congress Party, I would like to express