

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : No slip for moving the amendments was received at the Table. Therefore, no amendment has been moved on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address.

SHRI LOKANATH CHOUDHURY (Jagatsinghpur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the President in his address has spoken very high of the Government's achievements in every sphere, but I strongly feel that our country is now passing through a very complex and bad period. We should take corrective measures. I am not going to speak on the economy. All our democratic institutions, I do feel, are not functioning correctly. As the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court has said that when the democratic institutions do not function correctly, do not do their duty and put their burden upon the other and do not solve the problem at a particular moment of time, then there comes a conflict between the democratic institutions.

We have been discussing communalism during the last five years. We have not been able to cope up with communalism. Communalism is our greatest enemy. The bedrock of our democracy is secularism and sufficient steps are not being taken during the last five years to strengthen the spirit of secularism or to cure the wound that was created after the demolition of Babri Masjid. Though promises were made, they were never implemented. Both casteism and communalism are very high in the country side and everywhere. Everyday, there is a conflict in our village life which was ideal, and which according to Pandit Nehru was the basis of India's strength. That strength is disintegrating now. I am saying this because we have given powers to *panchayats*, we have amended the Constitution by passing the Constitution (Seventy-third) (Amendment) Bill, but what is practically happening? Despite all the empowerment which is made in the Constitution, both in the Eleventh Schedule and Twelfth Schedule, are the State Governments implementing it? Sir, you know elected *panchayats* are being dissolved... (Interruptions). Of course you have lost your patience but I have not lost my patience.

I am seeing greater dangers to our country. We must take into consideration the international scenario which is emerging. The imperialism has started offensive and is destabilizing our country. How can the stability come? Have you thought over it? Has the President given any indication of it as to how the stabilization will come? You know, Sir, now the World Trade Organization has brought on its agenda to interfere in every country's economy. They want free hand. They want equal treatment. That has been the agenda of World Trade Organization. You know the present scenario, the imperialists, for their conflict, want to put the burden on our country. At this point of time, if we are not very conscious of it and strengthen our democratic institutions, if we do not have electoral reforms and other things, it will corrode our democracy and socialist fibre. Then, we will not be able to resist imperialist pressure.

These are the aspects which have not been manifested in the President's Address. You may make very high claims, but those claims are only for the time being. Your temporary gains are no gains at all. Stability does not mean having a majority by manipulation. Stability means that it is one which brings economic with some common objectives. Without a common objective, as you know, Sir, the people's problems are not being discussed in the Parliament now. They want to hide everything under the carpet. The Parliament has to speak for the people's problem. But they want to hide everything under the carpet. That is what is taking place and most of time, the problems of the country and the people are not discussed in the Parliament.

Sir, I would thank you for having brought out the Standing Committee system to scrutinise the Demands for Grants and other functions of different Ministries. But, are the recommendations of the Standing Committees being implemented by the Government agencies? That is another question.

So, Sir, this is the last day of this Tenth Lok Sabha and I hope that we have already spent much time. The real leadership of this country today has to unite all the secular and patriotic forces into a common front to ace the imperialist and communalist aggression. That is the agenda before the country and if we are able to stand up to this, then, I think, India will not only become the largest democracy, but it will also maintain its heritage and whatever has been told of India will come true.

With these words, I oppose the Motion because it does not manifest all that is good.

**THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI P.V. NARASIMHA RAO)**

: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I only wanted to respond to Mr. Ahamed. He has given one or two good suggestions in regard to the minorities. He knows that there is a visible improvement in the situation as we are going along. We will certainly make more funds available to the Corporation. All these things we will do and he may rest assured that whatever he has said will be taken into account.

Sir, on any other matter, there is really no criticism or no point raised from the other side in order to reply. So, I would respectfully submit that you may kindly put the motion to the vote of the House.

MR. SPEAKER : I shall not put the Motion moved by Shri P.C. Chacko to the vote of the House.

The question is :

"That an Address be presented to the President in the following terms :

"That the Members of Lok Sabha assembled in this Session are deeply grateful to the President for the Address which he has been pleased to deliver to both Houses of Parliament assembled together on the 26th February, 1996."

*The motion was adopted.*