

Sunderbans, terror comes in many forms such as deadly sharks, hungry crocodiles, higher on the prowl, death-trips of the swamps and so on. But there is also another source of horriot in the form of the medieval high sea pirates who are still very much active in this area, where fishing is the principal source of livelihood for most of the families. Only recently, the pirates attached the poverty-stricken fishermen, held them captive and demanded huge ransom, which these poor people could ill-afford. The pirates are mostly Bangladeshis and they know this area better than even the local inhabitants. These pirates do not even spare the womenfolk of the area. The bane of the whole problem is that the local police is not well equipped to deal with the pirates, who have trawlers with more advanced technology, fitted with Japanese motors. They have also sophisticated weapons and after striking, they easily escape to their safe havens.

Sir, it is high time that immediate action is taken by the Central Government in consultation with the West Bengal Government to get some fishermen still held hostage by these pirates released; assist the State Government in equipping the local police with the latest weaoirt and high-powered mechanised boats to eradicate this menace in sunderbans and thus help the poor fishermen in this area, who now face starvation as a result of not being able to resume their only p-profession of fishing to sustain themselves.

14.44 hrs.

MOTION OF THANKS ON THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: We shall now take up further discussion on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, moved by Shri Digvijay Singh.

Prof. Venkatagiri Gowda to continue his speech.

PROF. K. VENKATAGIRI GOWDA

(Banglore South): Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, last evening, just before 6 o' Cock, I was called upon to speak not he Motion of Thanks on the President's Address. I rose to speak and spoke for some time and you asked me to stop, as the time was up. Now, I resume from where I stooped yesterday.

Sir, there was a reference to allegations against the BJP. The Congress Party, its friendly allies-not so friendly allies and hastily allies say that the BJP is communal, the BJP is fascist, the BJP is anti-secular, the BJP is anti-minority, anti-Muslim and so on. These allegations are totally unfounded. What is secularism? Secularism is an interpretative concept, indemnified and indefinable. It is only a state of mind. I must remind you that as early as in 1940, Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, who was the then Congress President, addressed the Congress Session and said, "I am a Muslim and I am proud of being a Muslim: But mu Islam does not come in the way of my nationalism and democratic secularism. "He was a great patriot., a great humanist and a great secularist also. Suppose, I say, I am a Hindu, it is not communal because I am Hindu and I am secular also. BJP want to say that they are Hindus and they are also secular. Therefore, secularism preached by the Congress Party and its allies is not secularisem in the real sense. It is pseudo-secularism.

The President in his Address said that there is a danger to secularism in the country. Where does the danger lie? They say that India is secular. They say that the Constitution is secular. In my opinion the Constitution is most unsecular. Can we call it secular when it envisages two sats of civil laws for the people of the country? Therefore, unless this Constitution is replaced by another Constitution, which is really secular, the country will not be free from disturbances; free from quarrels. I urge the Government to immediately appoint a Commission to redraft the Constitution and replace the present Constitution with a new one.

Last time I referred to several crisis facing the country. There are political,

[Prof. K. Venkatagiri Gowd]

social, economic and educational crisis facing the country. Indian politics is in a state of crisis. The Congress Party is a divided house. See, what is happening in the Congress Party. The Central Cabinet is in a state of disarray. There are four people who want to become the Prime Minister. But the point is that the Congress Party in spite of its unified vision, in spite of the fact that it presents a unified picture, it is a divided house. So, the Congress is on the decline and is on the way out. If it goes out what will be the alternative? The alternative is BJP. BJP is ready to take over the Administration of the country. In our country already five States are under President's Rule. Some more are likely to go under President's Rule. If this happens, there will be political instability. This fact needs no reference in the President's Address.

There is a social instability in the country. The Mandal factor has disturbed peace in the society. Every caste group, every religious group wants quota for itself in Government jobs and if the quota is not given then they create trouble and create other difficulties. We know what happened two years' ago when students, especially in Delhi, set ablaze became victims of suicide.

Fundamentally, there are two types of economic crises; one is inflationary crisis and the other is the balance of payment crisis. These two crises were gifted to India by Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru.

When the Government took over, the inflationary rate was 17 per cent and it said that within hundred days it will bring down the rate of inflation to what it was in March, 1990 or so. But the point is, has the inflation come down? In spite of the rates coming down inflation is rising.

People talk of Reaganomics. It is an embodiment of the economic philosophy of the President Reagan. There was Thatcherism, which continued the economic philosophy of Margaret Thatcher. Now, people talk of Clintonomics, which

contains the philosophy of President Clinton. In the same way there is Manmohanomics. It is good enough for a country but it is overshadowed by its politics. It has got something different to offer, he has to go by his politics, thanks to the Congress party.

So, I told you, there are two crises. The gap in the country's balance of payment position is widening. Exports are rising at the rate of 4 per cent and imports are rising at the rate of 18 per cent. There will be a big gap which will be filled by borrowings from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. What would be its consequence? India is about to enter the debt trap. External debt of India is of the order of Rs. 2,30,000 crores. Who is to repay it? It is not you and me, not our children not even our grand children. If it is not paid, the country will enter into a debt trap. Therefore, unless these crises are resolved, country's economic progress will come to a standstill. It is unfortunate that the President has not referred to these two crises.

Now, there is an educational crisis. Higher education in the country is in a state of crisis. The UGC which funds research in the Universities and in various institutes of learning is extraordinarily liberal. But where is this research? The research is for the most part plagiarism or rehash of what is done already. It is true that there are a few centers of excellence in the country but they are few and far between and the progress depends upon high quality of research. Therefore, unless we create centers for excellence, there is no point in funding this research which is only plagiarism or rehash. In our country, there are several medical colleges collecting heavy captivation fees from the students and select them on the basis of merit. In some colleges, the captivation fees range from Rs. 2 lakh or 3 lakh and even goes upto Rs. 10 lakh also. Unless the students are prepared to pay this money, they won't be able to get admission in the colleges however merited they may be. Therefore these are the points which the President has ignored in his Address. Therefore, unless these gaps are filled, unless

these crises are averted, India will be in great trouble in the days ahead.

With reference to the defence expenditure, the hon. Minister for Defence had said that the expenditure should be cut. But it is unwise to cut expenditure on defence. Shri Manmohan Singh, The Finance Minister has said that he has raised the defence expenditure to Rs. 19180 crore. It is good India is within the ring of fire. India is surrounded by neighbours who are unfriendly and hostile like Bangladesh, Pakistan and so on. Pakistan has got seven nuclear bombs at their disposal. Unless India goes nuclear, India's future will be very bleak.

Therefore, I urge upon the Government to step up defence expenditure and to go in for the manufacture of nuclear bombs so that in the event of any hostility, India can defend. I do not say India should drop nuclear bombs on Pakistan or Bangladesh or any other country but we should possess nuclear bombs as a matter of defence. Unless somebody attacks us, we should keep them in the cold storage, and drop them only when they drop bombs on us. These points were not them only when they drop bombs on us. These points were not raised by the President in his address.

Therefore, I thank the President with great reluctance, because he is a great humanist, a great scholar and a great intellectual. Unfortunately, the Address was prepared not by him but by the Government.

I think the President for delivering the Address impressively

PROF. K.V. THOMAS (Ernakulam): Sir, at the outset, if support the Motion of Thanks moved by my good friend Shri Digvijaya Singh. Sir, this Government, under the leadership of Shri Narasimha Rao is in power for the last twenty one months. But within these twentyone months, this Government has to face a number of problems which no other previous Governments had faced. Political and economic crises came one after another just like huge and angry

waves slashing the sea rocks during the thunder storm. Government and the Congress Party showed unprecedented courage and wisdom to carry the torch of freedom kindled forth six years ago by our great fore-fathers through the path tread by Panditji, Shastriji, Indiraji and Rajivji.

Sir, in June, 1991, when this Government took the reigns of power, we inherited an economy in a shambles and a political system in cracks. Balance of Payments positions was shaky, foreign exchange reserve was meager.

Sixty-five tonnes of gold had to be mortgaged just to pay the interest of foreign loans and to import some very essential commodities. India was surely losing its credibility in the world market and in the international forums.

Internal economic situation was taking an alarming shape. The annual rate of inflation reached its peak of 118.7 per cent in August 1991. The price of essential commodities was skyrocketing. Blackmarketers and hoarders were taking advantage of the situation. Essential commodities like rice, wheat, edible oil and pulses were in source.

From this situation of economic piracy now we have reached a stage of consolation. Foreign exchange reserve is now on the safer side of 5 million US dollars. Gold Sortaged is completely redeemed. More that, as a result of the liberal economic policy of the Government, large quantity of gold and silver are now flowing into the country. Hawalavalas are losing their grip on the blackmarket. International community has shown faith to deposit more money for the development has shown faith to.

The annual inflation has come down to 7 per cent in January 1993. Rice, wheat, pulses and edible oil and other essential commodities are freely available to the people at reasonable price. Price rise is controlled. Farmers are getting remunerative for their products. The decision for free movement of agricultural product is a boon

[Prof. K. V. Thomas]

to the farmers. Small and medium industries, who employ about two lakhs of persons, are getting more employment. Licence, permit quota raj is over.

The world leaders like Russian President, Yeltsin and the British Prime Minister, John Major and others who visited this country, have congratulated India for the economic stability it has reached. But we have still problems to face.

We have to feed lakhs and lakhs of people. Today, morning, our friends from Orissa, have been raising a point about people who have died of starvation. So, our aim should be full stomach for everybody. We have to find employment for unemployed people. An idle mind is a devil's workshop. If a large number of youngsters are going into the hands of terrorist and separatist forces, one reason is unemployment.

Government has made earnest attempts to solve the problems which have crept into our political system even from the time of independence. In June 1991, when this Government came to power, there was no elected Government in Punjab. Terrorists and separatist forces had a free hand in Punjab. Now, after 211 months, we have a peaceful and prosperous Punjab under a democratically elected government. Municipalities and Panchayats have again come under the rule of the people of Punjab. At this time, I salute the valiant and courageous people of Punjab who have shown unusual courage to free Punjab from the clutches of terrorists.

I also remember with tears those men who have laid down their lives for fighting against separatist and fascist forces. I also remember our left party friends who have laid down their lives during this fight against the terrorists in Punjab.

15.00 hrs.

Now the North-East Region is slowly coming under the democratic umbrella. Boda

Agitation is taking a peaceful turn. I still remember in 1989-90 when V.P. Singh Government came to power in this country, we lost Jammu and Kashmir by just simply sending a Governor to Kashmir. Now that Jammu and Kashmir is slowly coming to the National mainstream and we are sure that within the shortest period, we will have a democratic elections in Jammu and Kashmir and the elected Government will find solutions to the Jammu and Kashmir problem.

Sir, the LTTE in Tamil Nadu is under control. Naxalite movement which is spreading from Andhra Pradesh to the neighboring States is slowly contained within Andhra Pradesh itself. So the forces which were trying to divide the nation on South and North, Urban and Rural, Hindi and Non-Hindi, Majority and Minority are slowly losing their teeth.

Our relationship with the neighbouring countries are also improving. Russia was our closest friend. Even though the former Russia is no more, still we keep very good relationship with the Soviet Union.

With China, we are trying to create a new relationship. The visit of Rajiv Gandhi to Beijing in 1988 turned a new era the new Indo-Chinese friendship.

Similarly Pakistan and India have a particular relationship as they belong to the same such continent. We have become two countries but the people are common. I am sure that a time will come when India-Pakistan relationship will improve and we will move together as a single nation in the sub-continent.

Sir, I cannot conclude my speech without a word about the 6th December 1992 incident. It is the darkest day in the history of our country. A political party which was in power in four States, which is a recognised Opposition in this House, which has got 119 Members in this House, had given assurance not once or twice but several times both in the House and in the Supreme Court of this country that nothing

will happen to the structure in Ayodhya, but the structure is no more. It is not the structure that has been demolished, it is the heart of the people that has been demolished.

I am sure this political party which has started this communal divide among the people not only now, but earlier also it has come in different names. We have seen agitation's on Cow Slaughter, we have seen agitation's on Ganga Jal and in 1977 we have seen the same party coming into political power. In 1989 we have seen the same party ruling the Government indirectly.

Sir, a time has come when all the democratic forces in the country have to stand united will face this communal party so that the country can survive. I am sure we will prove to the world that this ancient nation which has a great culture and tradition and which has nurtured on diversity and tolerance, is still a big reservoir which can supply the water of love and brotherhood of mankind to this world, which is fragmenting into further divisions of regionalism, race, religion and language. We think of a nation which is united. We think of an India which is strong.

Before I conclude, I would like to quote what Panditji has said.

"Who lives if India dies, and who dies if India lives."

Whatever may be our political differences we have to stand united so that these 83 crores of people will think about a nation which is united from Kashmir to Kanyakumari.

1505 hrs.

[SHRIMATI MALINI BHATTACHARAYA
in the Chair]

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA (Midnapore):
Madam, Chairperson, I have gone carefully through the Address presented by the President to the joint House on 22 February. I

don't it impossible to support this Address. This is not meant as any kind of disrespect to the hon. Rastrapatiiji because he is a noble and eminent person known for his noble and eminent person known for his human virtues and qualities. But everybody knows that this speech is not his. It has been prepared for him by the Government, by the Cabinet and is supposed to be a statement of the Government's performance and their programmes for the future.

In this Address there is not a word said anywhere about the massive loss of human life and property which took place in various parts of this country as a fall out of 6th December. Some words of remorse, some word of pity, some words of solace or comfort one would expect from the head of the State towards these unfortunate victims, who they might be, whichever, religion they may belong to the victims of rioting, of arson, of murder, of loot, of rape. Those ghastly incidents which took place and which are an external shame for our country, do not find a place in this address. There is not a word said about the failure of the Government and particularly of the Prime Minister to live up to the assurance which were given—I am not bothered about Shri Kalyan Singh's assurances, they do not have any value for me—the assurances which were given repeatedly by the Prime Minister in this House, in the National Integration Council from the ramparts of the Red Fort assuring the country that the protection of the Babri Masjid was the responsibility of the Government and that protection would be carried out, me what may. Well, there was a failure, failure may be due to many causes, many many reasons. But, some regret must be expressed at the failure to carry out these assurances. But, there is not a word here in this Address. There is not a word here about the very grievous injury which has been done to the psyche of the main minority community in this country. This injury which has been done to their psyche will take many many years to get over, if at all, I do not know. It has caused a lot of trepidation among other minorities also though they were not perhaps directly the victims of the assault on them. But other

[Sh. Indrajit Gupta]

non-Hindu minorities also who live in this country are apprehensive of their future because of what happened. So, from this point of view, this being the first President's Address after the 6th December, one would have expected some references to these dark developments. Unfortunately, nothing is there. Although there is a reference in the first paragraph to the fact that:

"The basic premise of secularism and the rule of law has been threatened, and that everybody must strive to counter the communal propaganda that has been let loose. This is welcome so far as it goes, but the President has failed to indicate or to identify in any way which are the forces which are responsible for this. What are the people supposed to learn from this observation of the President, who is responsible for this. I say this because so many theories are now being propounded in this country as to who is really responsible for this orgy of communal violence which has taken place and this assault on the basic ideas of secularism as we have understood them all these years. Sometimes it seems to me from what some of our friends say, that it is the minority community who is responsible or those who speak in the name of the minority community, they are responsible for creating this situation, not the others. Of course, the BJP is not directly involved in the Bombay events, they say. I am prepared to believe them because there was no need for them to act in Bombay because their partners, their bed-fellows, the Shiv Sena was there. The leader of the Shiv Sena has, in cold print, given a theory that all aggression which was committed was committed by Muslims, there was no aggression on the part of the Hindus and all the Hindus did was to retaliate. When you use the word 'retaliation' it means that you are being attacked by somebody and in your own self-defence you are having retaliation. This is the doctrine which is being preached by the Shiv Sena.

My friend Atal Bihari ji, a very eloquent speaker, probably the most eloquent speaker that we have got, spoke here yesterday. Of course, he was trying to preach a kind of very complicated and evolved theory but which also does not make it clear in the end as to which are the forces which are basically responsible for what has happened because after the 6th December, this country, as we knew it before 6th of December, has hanged completely. The whole atmosphere has changed. The whole thinking of the people has changed. The whole country was thrown into a turmoil. Perhaps such a turmoil may overcome us again, I do not know, on this one single issue which was screened. Under this question of the mosque and the temple, but behind it was this dangerous doctrine of majority and minority and Atalji said that some time other, my respected and now deceased senior leader Bhupesh Gupta in the other House, had said or had him- I do not know what- that- there is no such thing as Muslim communalism or Muslim fundamentalism. Well, I cannot contradict him and I cannot verify this because Bhupesh Babu is no more. But I find it extremely difficult to believe this because certainly communalism, fundamentalism and all these pernicious ideas do exist within every religious community. There is no doubt about it. Among the Muslim friends also, there are many elements and forces which are preaching ideas, which are definitely communal and fundamentalist. We cannot support them. But then, as Pt. Nehru once said and Gandhiji said several times, it is primary duty and secularism and the tolerance of this country, to ensure that all the communities can live together, and if the majority community take it into their heads that they will not practise tolerance, that they will not allow the other communities to function as they wish, in their social life, in their customs, in their religious practices, then perhaps there is no future beliefs, in their religious practices, then perhaps there is no future for this country.

Madam, there is a reference here by the President in the second paragraphs, which reads as follows.

* The Central issue of the Ram

Janmabhoomi Barbi Masjid dispute has been referred to the Supreme Court under Article 143 of the Constitution".

As we know, this was done. I wish to express my vehement opposition to what has been done. I do not know if anybody in the country has supported this after giving it due consideration.

A single point reference has been made under Article 143 which does not enjoin upon the Court to give any binding verdict or decision, but simply to give an opinion. The opinion of the Court is, of course, an important thing. But we can understand if it is on a legal issue. But this is not a legal issue, as to whether a temple or some other Hindu structure existed before the Babri Masjid was built. Is it a legal issue? There is nothing to do with law. It is a question of fact or evidence. You Madam, or I or anybody could be asked to sit in judgement on the basis of whatever evidence can be produced before us and make up our mind as to whether something existed there before or not. This is neither here nor there. It is not a legal point at all and I do not understand why the judges of the Supreme Court should be dragged into this. This is not their job. I may humbly say so. They are people who are supposed to apply their mind to judicial matters and to legal matters. What will then happen? They will give an opinion, an opinion which is not binding. Anybody is free either to accept it. Anybody is free, after this, to say that the similar procedure should be applied to any other place in this country which are so many, one so-called historical or archaeological or other evidence which anybody may try to conjure up.

All other places- there are thousands of places in our country-whose history runs into hundreds and thousands of years- have to be dug up again to find out what existed there beforehand and that also there is no final proof of anything. Some people, who are individuals, are asked to give their opinion.

Therefore, we consider this reference to be highly dangerous thing which the

Government has done and we oppose it. We had always asked for a reference under Article 138 and not the single point reference, but a reference on all the pending petitions which relate to this dispute at Ayodhya. There are several pending petitions. They should all be referred under Article 138 so that the Court can go into all the legal disputes involved and give a binding award which everybody will have to obey. That has not been done. The Government has kept the door open. As they say, a Pandora's Box has been opened. It will lead to all sorts of bitter consequences. Even now the Government should reconsider this matter. I only hope and pray that some of the judges, at least, I am sure, whose conscience is still alive, will refuse to be embroiled and refuse to be dragged into this exercise. It is not a part of their job at all.

Madam, all of us who sat in the House this morning, of course, have been very much distressed, I should say, at what we heard about the conditions prevailing in three districts of Onssa-Kalahandi, Koraput and Bolangir- where children are being sold, women are being sold in order to alley the pangs of hunger and starvation and no water is available for drinking.

Is the plight of the poverty-stricken masses of various parts of our country reflected anywhere in this Address of the President? We talk so much about rural development programmes. I know that the allocation in terms of rupees for rural development has been increased in this year's Budget. But the whole point is how much of this money goes where and for what purpose it is spent. Even Shri Rajiv Gandhi had made a remark once saying that out of the money that we allocate, the budgetary allocations for various types of poverty alleviation schemes, 75 per cent of that never reaches the people for whom it is actually meant down below at the bottom. The rest of it gets eaten up on the way. There is no use Mr. Mnmohan Singh patting himself on the back only as a result of showing some figures and saying that the allocations have been increased. When you think of that and when you think of the picture of these women

[Sh. Indrajit Gupta]

and children selling themselves in order to get a few grains of rice or drops of water, it is really something which defies description, Madam.

There are so many problems, I am not desirous of taking much time, Madam. Of course, the people of Punjab deserve a word of praise and we are all very much relieved and happy, not that the terrorist problem is completely finished, but to a large extent it has been overcome and the evidence of that is the massive turn out of voters in the Panchayat elections in the Punjab. The security forces have, it appears, managed to get the upperhand over the terrorists and the evidence of that is the demise of Mr. Manochahal only a few days ago, the most dreaded of all the terrorist leaders who have been functioning from both India and Pakistan, and I am sure that gradually the backbone of the militants having been broken in the Punjab, the security problem from which the people were suffering will gradually be solved. That is something for which we should be really happy **about**.

I am not mentioning this, Prof. Thomas has already done that for me, but the fact is that not only the security forces, but so many cadres of our party, cadres and leaders of particularly the Left parties and the two Communist Parties, have fallen victim to the bullets of these terrorists in the Punjab over the past several years. That was part of their duty to the people, to be with the people and not to remain sitting inside their homes in order to save their own lives. But now the Rashtrapati has spoken about the fact that a package is required. Some people had been saying recently that 'we do not want to hear anything about any package solution because the Punjab is already on the road to solution.' Bit in paragraph 5 of his Address, the President says:

"The Centre remains committed to finding a just and amicable solution to all the outstanding issues in the Punjab."

That means that there are many issues still

outstanding, and it also means that the Government is committed to finding a solution which I prefer to call a package solution, which was what we had always been advocating, to the question of division of river waters, the question of the transfer of some territory, the question of transfer of Chandigarh, the question of economic development of Punjab. All these questions and many more have yet to be solved and I would urge upon the Government to work out such a package, as soon as possible, in consultation with all the people who are involved including the people of Haryana and the Government of Haryana and come forward—this is the moment when the initiative has to be seized. When the back of the terrorists has been broken, this is the time when the initiative should be seized and proposals should be put forward concretely which will pave the way to solving all the other problems.

About Kashmir, I only wish to say, Madam, that the first step which is required to initiate some sort of political process is to dismantle this bureaucratic set up which is functioning there in the name of a Governor. It is totally alienated from the common people. There is a Governor. I have nothing to say personally against him. But, I am told on good authority that conditions are such that the Governor cannot travel from Srinagar Airport to the Raj Bhavan except by a helicopter. He cannot travel by road and once he reaches the Raj Bhavan he sits there inside and he never goes out. He and his so-called advisors have no contact with the people, no communication with the people. Therefore, it is essential to think of a new set up, a new democratic, a more political experience and a political outlook, if they are to be only advisors, alright, let them be advisors for some time more, but not by sitting inside the Raja Bhavan or their offices. The people must feel that there are people in authority here to whom we can go, to whom we can speak, to whom we can ventilate our grievances, who will come and help us and try to give us some relief. This situation is not there and most of the officers who are in position of authority, in Kashmir today, I think 95 per cent or more of them whether

they are civilian officers or military officers or police officers, are from outside Kashmir. They are no Kashmiris and they are from outside Kashmir. That itself has an inbuilt estrangement and alienation among the people.

Madam, there are people available who can be put in these posts; only one has to look for them and one has to trust them. You cannot solve problems like this on the basis of mistrust and distrust. They are our people, they are part of our country. Whatever Pakistan may say, Kashmiris are our brothers and sisters and we must trust them to this extent that today we do believe that they want to return to normalcy and peace. So, the whole system by which we are trying to administer the country is grievously wrong and it should be changed. I hope some steps will be taken in that direction.

Madam, I would say one or two sentences about our foreign policy. Something has been said here about our relations with other countries. There is a reference to the fact that there was visit from the President of the former Soviet Union, which is now called the **Russoan Federation**. **Of course, it is a good thing that as a result** of the visit and the agreement that was signed, roughly one-third of our foreign debt has been wiped out, but two-thirds still remain. It is a quite massive amount and further debts are being incurred daily. Before us, is looming the prospect of the kind of a debt trap into which so many countries of the Third World have already fallen and from which it is almost impossible for them to extricate themselves. But, another very thorny and important question which was being widely mooted before Mr. Yeltsin came here, was regarding the military supplies. It is no secret that our whole structure of our Armed Forces, their equipment, their training had been almost entirely dependent on the help we got from the Soviet Union. Now, there was this question that these supplies are being discontinued. Then, what will happen because we have become dependent on one power? That dependency was on very favourable terms. Now, we will have to pay in hard currency if we want to acquire armaments

and equipments from other countries. Above all, our Armed Forces were worried very much about the non-supply or the discontinuance of supplies of spare parts for our planes, for our tanks, for our guns and for our ships. No Armed Forces can survive without adequate stockpiles of spare parts. So, when Mr. Yeltsin came here, I believe, this was the major issue which was taken up with him.

Something has appeared in the Press that some assurances have been given to the Government of India regarding supply of spares, regarding even production of some of that equipment in our own country and so on. But nothing has been revealed to us. I do not know whether the Defence Ministry is going to take this House into confidence at any stage. I doubt it very much. We are never told. In this President's Address, there is no mention of this topic at all. But this is vitally important for this country, for its security and therefore we have to know what exactly we can expect or not expect from the traditional source which used to supply us in the past. I am sorry that this omission is there.

For this year, Rs. 19,000 crores Budget for Defence has been provided. It is true, though this amount is in terms of real value because of the declining value of the rupee may be even less than last year's Rs. 17,000 crores. Anyway, it is a massive amount for a poor country like ours. But in real terms what it will mean, capital expenditure part of it, what it means? As far as modernisation of our armed forces goes and regular supply of equipment and spares we do not know. We are lay men who are sitting here. There are a few people a few people sitting here who are retired servicemen and they should look into this matter more carefully, if they know enough on this. But we have to depend primarily for information on the Government to which the House is entitled and the House must get that information.

About the economic questions, of course, we will have some more occasions to discuss in detail. The Finance Minister has said many things about the new reforms

[Sh. Indrajit Gupta]

policy. I cannot go into all that now. The major liberalisation which has taken place, according to the President's Address in the sphere of direct foreign investment and the substantial reduction of import tariffs, customs dues.

As far as our indigenous industries are concerned, domestic industries have been built up at great expense from the Government funds, from the exchequer, in the public sector in order to strengthen our self-reliance and our self-sufficiency, particularly in the field of machine building. Developing countries of the Third World have always been weakest in the sphere of capital goods and machine building. Here it was that our public sector was called upon to fill in many of the gaps and many very prestigious public sector concerns—don't tell me that they are all making losses because they are not have been set up relying on the public funds which have been invested in them, whether it is Bharat Electricals which by the way is the only Company in the whole of the Third World which is capable of manufacturing the entire range of power equipment. There is no other concern like that anywhere. How are the Bharat Heavy Electricals or Hindustan Machine Tools or such other factories which specialise in certain types of capital goods going to be affected by this direct foreign investment being allowed as part of an open door policy? We have said in black and white that we are not going to tell where they should come and where they should not come. They are free to come wherever they like.

Secondly, I suspect that our capital goods and machine building industries are going to suffer a great recession because of this open door policy which has been followed. You may say that "the whole world is doing it. Why should not we do it?" I know that is the argument used now. Reforms means you have to do these things which everybody is doing throughout the world. There are now some dirty words in our vocabulary because we do not want to pronounce those words any more. At one

time, they were very much in vogue. Now they have become dirty words, such as 'self-reliance'. Is it to be wiped out completely? Such a word as socialism, which I considered to be dirty word when it was put into the Preamble of our Constitution where there is no semblance of socialism anywhere has been put into the Preamble of the Constitution many many years ago. Anyway, nobody mentions it now anymore because it is a dirty word now.

About independent growth, people laugh and ask: how can you have independent growth? You can only be dependent on somebody else. What about economic sovereignty? (*Interruptions*) So, I would say that these are dirty words now

Madam, I will just take out one or two points from this Address because it says that we should pride ourselves on the fact that India has become the world's largest sugar producer. But the irony of the situation is that when we are the largest sugar producer in the world, we have decreed only a few days before the Budget Session that people who buy their sugar requirements from the controlled shops, from the ration shops now would have to pay Rs. 8.30 for one kilogram of sugar—it is not in the open market but in the ration shops. Outside, of course, the prices will go up now to Rs. 14 or Rs. 16/-; I do not know what. This is the free market economy. Is it the meaning of free market economy? But, after all, the supply of levy sugar and the control system was not meant for most of the people who are sitting in this House. I realise it. It is meant for the poorer section, the weaker section. How they are expected to buy these things at phase prices, somebody should explain to us

Then, I would like to say about this National Renewal Fund here about which a mention has been made. I would like to know whether the Government has decided finally that the bulk of this Fund including whatever more installments they may get from outside, is not going to be really spent for providing alternative employment or re-de-

ployment of surplus workers. The bulk of it is meant simply for paying compensation to the workers who will go out; who have to go out; who will lose their jobs. Yes, some extra money is to be given to them as a prize, as a reward for the so-called voluntary retirement. But real, positive outlook of providing alternative jobs or giving re-deployment to those people is not there. Please go and see what is happening in China. Reference is made to China nowadays by so many people approving the references. Previously it used to be a taboo. Now, so many people say: "Please see how China is developing and all that." Yes, you may call it reformed China. But reform China has also got a big problem of surplus labour. I was there only three or four months ago. Some millions of people, who, they say are surplus to their requirement in their present jobs, are to be shifted. That means they have to be shifted to other jobs. They cannot be kept where they are. Of course, they do not want to go. That is a fact. They do not like to go. For example, if Shri Indrer Jit is told tomorrow that he would have to shift from his job to another job, he would not like to go. He will grumble. So, one can understand the psychology of human beings, of workers. But they are doing it. First of all, for example they have caught hold of the Government staff, the Government employees. They say the Government Departments are bloated and over-staffed. They have to be streamlined. The Government employees are being gradually shifted to the services sector. Even then it is proving a very difficult job. But here this National Renewal Fund, which, in the beginning we were told, is meant for this purpose, for re-deploying, for training the employees for new jobs and then shifting the people to new jobs. But I do not see any semblance of it anywhere now. I do not think that, in our country, unfortunately, we have got the system or infrastructure or anything for training people for new jobs and for re-deployment them. This money, the National Renewal Fund, is meant to pay them off. You give your resignation letter and you will get some extra money. With that, please go. After that, what happens to you is not our concern. This is what is the meaning of the National Renewal Fund.

As far as relations- I forget to mention this, Madam, with Pakistan and Bangladesh are concerned, of course, everybody here has expressed the view that we are long overdue in taking some more initiative for improving our relations with Pakistan. We cannot remain in a state of permanent hostility. We all know the attitude of the Pakistan Government. But that is no excuse for us to just remain marking time. We have to take initiatives. It is in our own interest. We should remember that part from the people, the anti-India and the aggressive sections who are three in Pakistan, there are democratic people in Pakistan also, there are many democratic people in Bangladesh also-anti-communal people, secular-minded people-who want better relations and friendship with India and nothing should be done in this country which weakens those forces and encourages the forces of fundamentalism and communalism. But now we should take some steps. Even if our are rejected, it does not matter. Let the world see that India is taking concrete initiatives to start some bilateral discussions with the Pakistan Government on certain issues which have been defying settlement for such a long time.

Shrimati Girija Vyas who spoke very eloquently yesterday-I must congratulate her, it was the first speech I heard from her- she said something about the great care the Government is taking or wanting to take for women in this country. Well, I wish all success to them. But women include Muslim women also. Women does not mean non-Muslim women only. During Shri Rajiv Gandhi's time, in order to placate the fundamentalist forces in the Muslim community the Supreme Court judgment was upset by a Bill here in the name of protecting the rights of Muslim women which satisfied nobody except the hardened communal, fundamentalist elements in the Muslim society. Women were thrown to the wolves the Muslim women were thrown to the wolves. We protested at that time and we voted against that Bill. Some Muslim people also who had progressive ideas, including some women came outside this Parliament House and tied themselves with chains to the railings outside protesting against this outrage.

[Sh. Indrajit Gupta]

But it was carried through. So, when we talk about helping women, please think of these Muslim women also, please think of those women in Bolangir and Koraput who are selling their children, think of the tribal women who suffer, God knows, how many indignities everybody. It is for those lowest, the poorest, defenceless sections of women that we should first give priority as to how to uplift them and give them rights which they deserve.

Finally, I would say that we are waiting for another fifteen minutes of 4 o'clock when, we are told, there is going to be statement about Tripura. Now it has become 4.45 p.m. It began with 12 o'clock, then went to 12.15 p.m., then to 4 o'clock and then to 4.45 p.m. In any case, this is a question now which has come up suddenly and on which the *bona fides* of the Government will be tested - whether they are loyal and true to the principles of democracy and principles of the Constitution or whether party considerations are going to prevent it. I am glad the hon. Home Minister has come in. The fact of the matter is that they are not called upon to dismiss any Ministry. If they were being asked by us to dismiss certain Ministries run by the ruling party, I could understand Members on that side of the House being very agitated about it. There is no question of dismissing any ministry. The ministry's life has already ended; on the 28th of February, the whole term of office has expired. Therefore, that is not the question. Now that there is not Government there and there is no Assembly there, the question is: How do you fill this vacuum? What do you want to put in the vacuum? (*Interruptions*)

This running commentary is not really required. It is quite superfluous, because, the Home Minister has already made a statement here, a couple of days ago, saying that they want the caretaker ministry to carry on till the next elections. The point is that the next election has got to be a free and fair one. Otherwise, it has no meaning. The Government is realising now about the methods operating of the Chief Election

Commissioner and whose language, sometimes, is a bit abrasive. Last year, when, three times, deputations on behalf of the opposition parties met the Prime Minister to complain against the behaviour of the Chief Election Commissioner and the way he was behaving, then of course, these gentlemen refused to touch him. They said, no, he must remain. (*Interruptions*) Now that the rubbish has come, you have to dismiss what he was said. Please do it. You say that you have inquired into the allegations made by the Chief Elections Commissioner and it is all rubbish. You say that it is all rubbish.

The point is, if elections are to be held as declared on the 3rd of April, there is not much time. Today, is 3rd of March and within this time, you have to ensure that those elections will be free and fair. Now, on our side of the House, whether you like it or not, we do not believe that a caretaker Government which means the same ministry remaining in power, which was there all this time and against whom serious allegations have been made, that ministry remaining in the name of being a caretaker, can possibly ensure free and fair elections. It is a heavily partism ministry, which does not, I think, believe in the doctrine of free and fair elections. I do not mention other people who were also there, perhaps, at that time.

I, therefore request the hon. Minister, when he makes his statement, to take courage into both hands and to say that this gap, this constitutional sort of a vacuum or void which has arisen should be filled only by the logical device which is provided in our Constitution and that is President's Rule. That should be proclaimed without any further delay. If you want to take the opinion of the Governor, please do so. Even that, we are not told up till now, what the Governor's view of the situation there is. So, please ask him to give you a report within some stipulated time. It cannot be left open-ended that until the 1st of April or 2nd of April. We do not know what is the assessment of the situation there. The Governor is there for that purpose. Please try to get some report from him within eight or ten days. That is also too much, I think. It can come much earlier. And

[Sh. Indrajit Gupta]

then, please inform the House, what is the final assessment and decision that you are going to take because it will certainly do no good to the ruling party, if they permit such people to remain in the name of caretaker, who can really rig these elections, I should say.

This also a very sensitive area of the North-East, where there is this massive tribal population. You should remember all these things. It will send some message to other North-Eastern States also. And, therefore, I think that the only reason that they are belking at the question of President's Rule is because it would appear that the caretaker Government's announcement which has already been made, cannot be revoked now. How can it be revoked? It is an embarrassing thing. Having said something once on the floor of the House, to retract from it and revoke it, is highly embarrassing for Shri Chavan. I know it But sometimes, you have to overcome embarrassments also in the interest of democratic political principles.

And, therefore, I would request you to please consider this matter and not to do something which will be considered afront to democracy and to the people of Tripura's right of free and fair elections.

Madam, that is all I wish to say. Thank you very much for the time you have given to me.

[*Transl .ion*]

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : (South Central Bombay): Mr. Chairman, Sir, first of all I would like to thank the Hon. President for delivring his Address in Hindi. It was highly commended both in and outside the country. Every country has its own language. But even after a lapse of 45 years of independence we have not able to develop a national language. We have a national flag, a national song, a national bird, but it is very unfortunate that we do not have a national

language. The first President of India Dr. Rajendra Prasad had said in this House or the inaugural function of the Constitution of India that the Hindi language which was being adopted as the official language of the country should become our national language. But even today it has not been made the national language although majority of the people in India speak Hindi.

What the Government wanted to convey has been given expression through the President's Address. It does not make any reference to price-rise. It appears as if the Parliament has got no importance, The prices of essential commodities were increased even before the Budget was presented. Custom duty and Excise duty have been revised. This compromising Government issued 24 ordinances in 36 days. It is an evidence of how weak the Government is. This Government is least concerned for the poor. It is only conscious of its seat. Today the Government has become a toy in the hands of the World Bank, IMF and the industrialists of the country. This Government is dancing to their tune. The Government which came to power with the promise to bring down prices within 100 days has taken no measures in this direction. The prices of all commodities are rising everyday but the Government is sitting silent. The Government is only concerned with the assistance it is getting from the World Bank, the IMF and least concerned for how it affects the country's self-respect. Arrears of income-tax and other taxes dues form big industries are continuously increasing. The Government is not taking any concrete measure. Our country ranks third amongst the borrowing countries. Such a state of affair has arisen in our country.

Although the Government says that it is working for the labourer's but its policies are anti-labour. All the mills in Bombay are lying closed and although Government has allowed to open them on cooperative basis it is not ready to provide equity capital. The labourers are out of employment the days. I am also a son of a mill worker. Twelve years back 70,000 mill workers were thrown out of employment. They have no food to eat. The

[Sh. Mohan Rawale]

Government should provide equity capital to revive the mills but the Government is not ready to provide that Government has taken no initiative in regard to their rehabilitation and employment. The Supreme Court had given a verdict on 21 October, 1972 that all the labourers of the cloth mills which had been taken over by the NTC should be given employment and paid all their dues past. But this has not still been done. The Attorney General of India had said in the Court that their past salaries would be paid within three months but even after a lapse of four and a half months neither the people have been given employment nor their dues have been paid. The Government should make its intentions clear in this regard.

The people of Maharashtra want that Bombay should be renamed as 'Mumbai'. Name of several cities have been changed viz-Baroda has been renamed as Vadodra, Cochin has been renamed as Kochhi, Trivandrum as Tiruvananthapuram, Benares as Varanasi, Tanjore as Tanjavur and Trichanapalli as Tiruchirapalli. I do not know why Bombay is not being renamed as Mumbai. In the Constitution written in other languages it is written as Mumbai. Despite all this the city is not being named as 'Mumbai'

Maximum revenue is collected from Bombay in the form of income-tax and excise duty. There the problems are so large in number that those cannot be solved without the assistance of Central Government. About three hundred people come to Bombay everybody from other parts of the country. It has made the facilities very scarce there.

I would like to request the Central Government that one year's earning of about Rs. 17944 crore from Bombay should be sanctioned for the development of the city so that facilities could be provided in Bombay city.

The Government has taken no concrete measures to solve Maharashtra-Karnataka border dispute which remains

unresolved for the last 35 years. It is not such a problem which cannot be solved. It calls for firm will to solve it. In order to keep its seat safe and to win the support of some parties the Government has dismissed Government in 4 BJP ruled States on the grounds of deteriorating law and order situation. If we closely watch the situation the number of people killed in riot hit areas were more in Congress ruled States than in BJP ruled States. 841 people were killed in Maharashtra and 369 in Gujarat in the riots.

15.58 hrs

[SHRI TARA SINGH in the Chair]

Since the Governments were their own they were not dismissed, Therefore it is clear that the Congress Party cannot tolerate a Government of opposition. The parties which were supporting the Congress party did not condemn the action of the Government, but praised it.

Mrs. Indira Gandhi had the policy of oppression and for that she had to tender an apology before the people of the country. She promised that such a situation would not recur. This Government has imposed a ban on the BJP rally just for winning Muslim votes and to please its supporting parties. Today they have oppressed the opinion of the people at the point of gun, tear-gas etc. but the Government should remember that people have the power to overthrow it out of power. The Government should remember that ballots are for superior to bullets.

Shri Indrajit Gupta has made a statement through Doodarshan. But he should reconsider over what he has said. He said maximum 1000 to 2000 people must have come for the rally and not 10 lakh people. He could have well understood had the ban not been imposed, then he could have seen the attendance. May I ask him where did he see those one thousand people? (Interruptions) Compensation is being paid to the riot victims of 1992-93, those affected by riots in Bombay are being paid @ Rs. 2 lakhs as compensation. But no such compensation is being paid to riot

victims who were killed in the aftermath of Smt. Indira Gandhi's assassination. People demand that ban should be imposed after the riots, but in fact it is the Congress Party which was behind the riots and killed people.

16.00 hrs

Why don't you ask to ban the Congress and to compensate those people. They have not killed in police firing; they have been killed in thier houses. Even the widows and children were killed. It is unfortunate that you are supporting the same Government.

Just now Shri Indrajit Gupta said about Shahbano case that his party had opposed it. This Congress has changed the verdict of the Supreme Court Shahbano case in this very House. You are supporting the same Congress. You support those people who behave in communal line.

The demolition of disputed structure in Ayodhya caused a commotion in the world.....

[English]

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Sir, the Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs made a commitment during Zero Hour, that is, after Question Hour, that the Home Minister would make a statement on Tripura at 4 o'clock. Now, it is 4 o'clock. So, you call the Home Minister to make a statement on Tripura. (*Interruptions*) He has to make a statement.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Mr. Rawle, you will continue after the statement is made.

Now, Shri S.B. Chavan.

16.02 hrs

STATEMENT BY MINISTER TRIPURA

[English]

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S.B. CHAVAN): I had made a statement in the Lok Sabha regarding holding of general elections in Tripura and matters

connected therewith on 1st March, 1993. Some Hon'ble Members had raised points regarding the orders passed by the Election Commission of India on 27 February, 1993 and 1 March, 1993 and the continuation of the care-taker Ministry in Tripura.

The Election Commission vide its order dated 27 February 1993 directed the State Government-

- (a) to take disciplinary action against certain police officers mentioned in the said order and to complete the said action before 21 March 1993 under intimation to the Commission; and
- (b) to remove forthwith the District level officers and the officers below the District level mentioned in the said order from post connected with the election duties under intimation to the Commission.

By its order dated 1 March 1993, the Election Commission in amplification of its order of 27 February 1993 directed that disciplinary action should also be taken forthwith against all personnel of any and all Government Departments other than the police especially (but no restricted) to officers of the general administration, such as District Magistrates, Sub-Divisional Magistrates etc. who were present in the party meetings, in addition to officers of the police as already directed. The action is required to be completed by 21 March 1993 under intimation to the Commission. The Commission has further directed that all such officers must be removed forthwith from all and any work connected with the election duties.

The Election Commission has clearly indicated that the responsibility of implementation of these orders lies squarely on the State Government of Tripura. The Election Commission has also mentioned that failure to implement these orders may compel the Commission to take further action including postponement of poll.