

LOK SABHA DEBATES

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Vol. XI

First Day of the Fourth Session
of the Fifth Lok Sabha

No. 1

LOK SABHA

Monday, March 13, 1972; Pha'guna 23,
1893 (Saka)

*The Lok Sabha met at forty minutes past
Twelve of the Clock.*

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

MEMBER SWORN

Shri L. N. Mishra (Darbhanga)

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

SECRETARY : I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the President's Address to both Houses of Parliament assembled together on the 13th March, 1972.

President's Address

Hon'ble Members of Parliament, the nation has come through a great test. It has shown unity and courage, compassion and clarity of vision in the face of the external threat. The world now has a clearer idea of the quality of our people. The life and liberty of 75 million people were at stake in Bangladesh. While the world wavered, India gave refuge to ten million fugitives from tyranny, and when attacked, met aggression stoutly, defended her own freedom and went to the aid of Bangladesh in defence of human freedom.

2. Our armed forces fought with valour, ability and a sense of purpose. The co-ordi-

nation among the three services and other paramilitary forces was exemplary, as was the spirit of comradeship between officers and jawans. Many jawans and officers made the supreme sacrifice. Many more will bear for life the marks of their patriotism. As Supreme Commander of the Defence Forces I salute them and offer the nation's sympathy to their families. I acclaim the spirit of the people of our border areas who showed calmness and fortitude in the face of danger and the disruption of their normal lives. We are aware of our responsibility for the welfare and rehabilitation of those who have been displaced from their homes due to aggression. Civilians elsewhere also remained united and rose to the occasion.

3. The guidance of Parliament, the judgement and leadership displayed by the Government in its political, diplomatic and military policies and decisions, the effective functioning of the administrative machinery at all levels and the morale and determination of the people as a whole have contributed to our success. This has given the country a justifiable sense of confidence and pride.

4. When I addressed you last year, I called upon you to give undivided attention to economic and social transformation. We could not have foreseen that a war would be forced upon us. But every great challenge met, every risk taken for a high cause, every task well done, generates new capacity and strength. Our unity, strength and resolve have grown during the year.

5. We should use these now to enlarge our programmes of social justice and equality, to forge ahead in our quest for self-reliance and to pursue even more actively our basic policy of response to friendship, resistance to pressure and dedication to national interest and world peace.