

ADDRESS TO PROVISIONAL PARLIAMENT—31 JULY 1950

Session	—	Second Session
President of India	—	Dr. Rajendra Prasad
Prime Minister of India	—	Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru
Speaker, Provisional Parliament	—	Shri G.V. Mavalankar

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT,

We have met here today earlier than was intended when the last session of Parliament was adjourned, because of the great emergency that has suddenly arisen to confront the world. The shadow of war has descended again upon this earth, and though fighting is still restricted in its scope, fear of its extension to wider areas grips the world.

Since the last session of Parliament, my Government has been reconstituted in accordance with the procedure laid down in our Constitution. On May 5th, 1950, the Prime Minister, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, resigned his office so that I might take action to appoint a Council of Ministers under the new Constitution. I accepted his resignation and called on him to accept responsibility again as Prime Minister and advise me in regard to the appointment of other Ministers. He agreed to do so and, in accordance with his advice, I have appointed, under Article 75, a Council of Ministers to advise me in the exercise of my functions and be responsible to this House for the good government of India. Most of these Ministers are members of the old Council of Ministers.

My Government are deeply concerned over the present conflict in Korea. India supported the first two resolutions of the Security Council on this subject since, apart from border incidents, the aggression of North Korea had been established by the weight and proven preparedness of its onslaught. The course of events has confirmed this conclusion. It has been India's policy not to submit to aggression, for submission to aggression, in any part of the world, is to invite its repetition in other parts and thus to imperil peace and freedom. While India supported the first two resolutions of the Security Council in regard to the conflict in Korea, she made it clear that she would continue to pursue an independent policy based on the promotion of world peace and determined by her ideals and objectives.

My Government have been conscious of the threat to world peace inherent in a continuation of this conflict and because of the possibility of its extension. It was for this reason that my Prime Minister appealed to Premier Stalin and to the Secretary of State of the United States of America, Mr. Dean Acheson, that the authority and power of these two great countries should be exerted to localise the armed struggle in Korea, and to break the deadlock in the Security Council of the United Nations over the admission of the People's Republic of China, so that the present international tension might be eased and the way opened to a solution of the Korean problem by discussion in the Security Council. This suggestion was not intended to condone aggression or to weaken the authority of the United Nations; it was meant to add to the strength and moral force of the organisation and to facilitate the early termination of a dangerous situation. Had it been acceptable to all concerned, my Government would have actively cooperated in bringing about a settlement through the agency of the United Nations and on the basis of the two resolutions of the Security Council that it has supported.

It is my earnest hope that the Korean conflict will soon be ended and world peace assured through the unremitting efforts of all peace-loving nations. Peace remains the paramount need of mankind and its one hope of survival.

My Prime Minister recently paid visits to the United States of Indonesia, to Malaya and to the Union of Burma*. His visit has strengthened the close and friendly relations which existed between our country and these countries of South-East Asia. The conflict in Korea has made it even more necessary than before that there should be co-operation among the independent countries of Asia for the maintenance of peace and the preservation of their own freedom. I rejoice that the Government and people of Indonesia are strengthening the foundations of their newly-acquired freedom, and that Burma, after long travail and suffering, is overcoming her difficulties.

The Prime Minister of Pakistan was recently in Delhi as our guest. My Prime Minister and he discussed the Kashmir issue with the U.N. Representative, Sir Owen Dixon. These conversations, which lasted five days, enabled the parties to examine fully the principles that ought to govern the arrangements for ascertaining the will of the people of Kashmir and the practical problem of applying these principles. It was natural that, in the course of this examination, new points of view should come to light. These also are being examined and it is proposed that the two Prime Ministers should again meet in Karachi with the U.N. Representative to continue exploration of ways and means to find a just, peaceful and lasting solution of the Kashmir problem.

* Now known as Myanmar.

A previous meeting of the two Prime Ministers in Delhi in April last had led to an agreement, which eased a dangerous situation and brought relief to minority communities. While this Agreement brought about a significant change for the better in the situation and created a more friendly atmosphere, many difficulties persisted and migrations of large numbers of people continued. The two Prime Ministers, during their recent meeting, examined the working of this Agreement with a view to overcoming the difficulties that impede the return of normal conditions and of a sense of security among the minorities. My Government are fully conscious of the need for improvement and of the sad plight of large numbers of people, whom the compulsion of events has forced to migrate from their homes. The Central Ministers of India and Pakistan, responsible for the implementation of the Agreement of April last, will confer with my Prime Minister and later with the Prime Minister of Pakistan. The Chairmen of the Minority Commissions of East Bengal and West Bengal will also be invited to Delhi and Karachi respectively to meet my Prime Minister and the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

Another problem of far-reaching importance, both to India and Pakistan, is that of evacuee properties. Progress has thus far been slow, but the approach of both Governments to this problem, as recent conversations have indicated, is inspired by a desire to find an early solution.

Honourable Members will recall that, last February, an agreement was reached between the Governments of India, Pakistan and the Union of South Africa to hold, at a later date in the course of this year, a conference for the discussion of the Indian problem in South Africa. This agreement presupposed that nothing would occur between the preliminary conference held in February and the main conference to vitiate the atmosphere for a friendly adjustment. Unfortunately, this expectation has not been fulfilled. The administration of existing oppressive laws, applicable to the Indian community in South Africa, has been tightened and the enactment of the Group Areas Law has reaffirmed and extended the application of the Union Government's policy of segregation, to which the Government of India have consistently and firmly objected over a period of nearly seventy years. My Government, therefore, decided that no useful purpose would be served by their participation in the conference which the Union Government had proposed should be held early this autumn. They feel that the subject must again be raised in the United Nations and have asked for its inclusion in the agenda of the General Assembly of the Organisation, which is due to meet in New York in September.

Honourable Members are aware that the economic situation in the country has been a matter of constant concern to my Government. With a view to formulating a plan for the balanced development of the productive resources of the country and thus ensuring the maximum possible social

and economic progress, a Planning Commission has been established, which is applying itself with ability and earnestness to its work. The prevailing crises and complexities in international affairs add greatly to the difficulties of the economic situation. The new threat to world peace, which affects every country, has potentialities of grave import to our economy. The situation calls for constant vigilance and examination of measures likely to assist in holding the price level. The greatest economy has to be practised in all Departments of Governments and restraint in spending exercised by the public.

The food situation continues to be given the highest priority by my Government. The overall position in regard to it shows considerable improvement. There has been record procurement of wheat in the *rabi* areas. This, coupled with imports, for which arrangements have already been made, will place an adequate quantity of wheat at our disposal. As regards rice, however, the procurement in certain areas has not been satisfactory. In some States, notably Madras, West Bengal and Bihar, difficulties have arisen and these have been added to by natural disasters and by the influx of large numbers of migrants. Government are taking every step to prevent the development of any serious situation, partly by supplying wheat and millets and partly by importing rice. My Government are determined to overcome all these difficulties and are confident of the success of the programme that has been laid down to make India self-sufficient in regard to food by the end of 1951.

Considerable progress has been made in the rehabilitation of displaced persons. But a great deal remains to be done and large numbers of these refugees are undergoing privation and suffering. As the problem was being brought under control in the North, a large and continuing influx of migrants in Bengal, Assam and Tripura upset previous calculations and added greatly to its complexity and magnitude. This problem can only be handled effectively on an all-India basis and with the co-operation of all States.

The commerce of India, during the past year, gives us a better picture than that of the previous year. As a result of the measures taken to increase India's exports and to regulate imports, with due regard to the availability of foreign exchange, the year ending 30th June 1950 closed with a credit balance in regard to foreign exchange. This is a welcome and striking contrast to the position for the previous year, which closed with a deficit of Rs. 247 crore. Our exports during this year have been double those of the corresponding period in the previous year.

Though the main purpose of this session of Parliament is to consider the international situation, Government will place before the House such other matters as is convenient for Honourable Members to consider during its

brief duration. A supplementary statement of estimated receipts and expenditure of the Government of India will be laid before you for your approval. Some ordinances, which have been issued since Parliament adjourned, will be placed before you in the shape of new Bills. There are other legislative measures and important motions relating to matters of general public interest, which will be brought before you during the course of this session. Of these, the more important are: The Mines Bill, The Contingency Fund Bill, The Indian Finance (Amendment) Bill and the Electoral Bill.