Asadha 4, 1902 (Saka)

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Third Session
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LOK SABHA

Wednesday, June 25, 1980/Asadha 4, 1902 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock

[MR SPEAKER in the Chair]

OBITUARY REFERENCES

DEATH OF SHRI V.V. GIRI, FORMER PRESIDENT OF INDIA

MR SPEAKER: I have to inform the House of the sad denuise of our former President, Shri V. V. Giri, at Madras yesterday. One of the veterans of the freedom struggle, Shri Giri was a leading figure in the country's political life for well over half a century. In this long public career he had successively occupied several positions of trust and responsibility. He was a Minister in his home province of Madras and later at the Centre, he was thrice Governorof Uttar Pradesh, Kerala and Karnataka. He became Vice-President of India, before he was elected to the highest office in the land. In recognition of his servies to the country, Shri Giri was decorated in 1975 with Bharat Ratna, the highest honour which the nation could bestow.

Shri Giri's contribution to the labour movement, which had been the passion of his throughout, is only too well-known. He was one of the founders of the All India Trade Union Congress, of which he was twice President, Everyone is aware of his active involvement in the building up of the All India Railwaymen's Federation of which he was the General Secretary for seven years and later its President for an

equal number of years. He represented the AITUC at the ILO Conference in Geneva in 1927 and was the representative of the workers at the Second Round Table Conference in London in 1931. Shri Giri's name will ever remain inscribed in the annals of the Trade Union Movement in India

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Shri Giri was a parliamentarian of standing. He was a Member of the old Central Legislative Assembly and later of the Madras Legislative Assembly for a number of years before he came to Parliament in 1952. He was a Member of the Lok Sabha and later, as Chairman of Rajya Sabha, he presided over the other House with distinction.

Shri Giri's genial informality and zestful approach earned him the affection and esteem of those around him and wen for him friends everywhere.

Shri Giri's death removes from our midst one more of the last few left of the leaders of the freedam struggle. We deeply mourn this loss and I am sure the Houuse will join me in conveying our condolences to the members of the bereaved family.

THE MINISTER of RAILWAYS (SHRI KAMALAPATI TRIPATHI): Mr. Speaker, Sir, with a heavy heart, I rise to associate myself with the sentiments expressed by you about late Shri V. V. Giri.

Shri V. V. Giri was born in August. 1894 at Ganjam. now in After his Secondary Education, he studied Law at King's Inn in Ireland He later formed in 1914 the Dublin Indian Society. A nationalist from his early childhood he came in contact with Gandhiji during the first World War. On return from

Ireland, he started practice at Berhampur.

In 1921, he took part in the non-cooperation movement started by Gandhiji and was imprisoned for three months. On release he organised the BNR Worker's Strike in 1927. This was followed by a lock-out. He became soon after that, the President of Madras and Southern Maharatta Railways Union. He was a trade union leader ever since that.

In 1930, he refused an invitation for the Round Table Conference in London as a spokesman of Labour. He was later elected as a Congress Member to the Central Assembly in 1934. In 1937, he was elected to the Madras Legislative Assembly and was appointed Minister of Labour in Madras. During 'Quit India Movement' he was again imprisoned.

After Independence, he was appointed Indian High Commissioner in Ceylon. He was elected to Parliament in 1952 and was made Minister of Labour. Later he resigned from the Cabinet but continued as a Member till 1957. In June 1957, he was appointed Governor of U.P. From 1960 to 1965 he was Governor of Kerala. In 1967, he became Vice-President of India and during May—July 1969, acted as President following Dr. Zakir Hussain's death. He was elected President later on August 20, 1969. He continued as President of India till 1974.

Four years after his retirement he founded the Labour Party of India.

I offer my heartfelt condolences and request you kindly to convey them to the bereaved family.

भी चरण सिंह (बागपत): अध्यक्ष महादेय, बड़ी विडम्बना यह है कि श्री गिरि ने श्री संजय गांधी के सम्बन्ध में अपना संदोश भेजा, अपना दुःख प्रकट करते हुए और स्वयं ही कुछ घंटे के बाद वह मौत के शिकार हो गये। आपने और मेरे मित्र श्री तिपाठी जी

ने जो इस सिलसिले में कहा है, उसके बाद कुछ कहने की आवश्यकता नहीं रह गई है। केवल एक, दो छोटी बातों का में जिक करना चाहता हूं। शायद ही अपने देश के सार्वजनिक जीवन में कोई एक ऐसा व्यक्ति रहा है जिसने जितने भी सम्मान के पद हो सकते थे, सबको औं कुपाई किया हो, स्शोभित किया हो। स्टेट गवर्न-मेन्ट के मिनिस्टर, सैंट्रल गवर्नमेंट के मिनिस्टर, हाई किमश्नर, इंटरनेशनल लेबर कान्फर्स के चेयरमैन, वाइस प्रैसी-इंट, प्रजीड ट आदि सभी पदों को स्शोभित किया और लोगों के सम्मान के अधिकारी वह हुए।

एक बात का और जिक्र करना चाहता हूं वह यह कि वह अपने उसूल की खातिर त्याग करने वाले एक व्यक्ति थे। उसूल तो हम सब लोग रखते हैं, लेकिन उसके लिए अपने पद को छोड़ दोना, हममें से बहुत कम कर पाते हैं। जिस समय वह मिनि-स्टर थे सीँट्रल गवर्नमेन्ट में, तो प्रधान मंत्री श्री जवाहरलाल नेहरू से उनका मतभेद हो गया किसी उसूल की बिनाह पर, जो कि लेबरर्स के हक की कोई बात थी, मैं उसकी तफसील नहीं जानता।

कई माननीय सदस्यः बैंक एवार्ड पर ।

श्री चरण सिंहः इस पर उन्होंने इस्तीफा दे दिया था। मुके यह भी सौभाग्य हासिल है कि वह यू. पी. के गवर्णर जब रहे, उस वक्त वहां पर में मिनिस्टर था। उनके निकट सम्पर्क में आने का भी मुके सौभाग्य हासिल हुआ। उनसे मिलने और बातचीत करने के बाद आदमी एसा महसूस करता था कि एक निर्मल हृदय व्यक्ति, कुर्बानी करने वाला, सीधीसादी जिन्दगी बसर करने वाला, गरीबों के लिये मन रखने वाला या भावना रखने वाला एक व्यक्ति है जिससे मिलकर हमेशा खुशी होती थी। वह बिल्कूल निश्चल किस्म और सरल हृदय के आदमी थे। वहां पर हम लोगों के साथ उनका जो बर्ताव था, मैं हमेशा उसे याद रख्ना।

इन्हीं शब्दों को साथ मैं अपने आपको, और लोकदल के दूसरे सदस्यों को, जो कुछ आपने और मेरे दोस्त त्रिपाठी जी ने कहा है, उसके साथ सम्बद्ध करता हूं और आशा करता हूं कि आप हम सब की संवे-दनाएं उनके परिवार को पहुंचायों गे।

SAMAR MUKHERJEE SHRI (Howrah): My party and myself fully associate ourselves with the sentiments expressed here. Shri V.V. Giri was one of the leading statesmen of the country, who was active in politics till even the last day of his life. During his long political career covering nearly 65 years, he developed into a many-sided personality He functioned in many capacities—not only as a politician, but also as a diplomat and Governor, and above all as a big trade union leader, First, in his student life, he was influenced by the Irish freedom movement of De Valera and his organization. He also founded an organization then to spread the ideas and philosophy of freedom struggle in the country, in the light of the Irish freedom movement. Subsequently, he joined Gandhiji's movement. Throughout his political career, he demonstrated that he was a man of independence, and of principles. He demonstrated it several times. Not only that; he resigned from Ministership in 1954 in protest against the decision of the Cabinet concerning the Bank Award, because that cabinet decision went against the interests of the employees.

While he was occupying the highest office as President, the historic Railway Strike took place. Even while remaining as the Head of the State where his functions were circumscribed by the Constitution, he expressed sympathy towards the Railway strikers; and that was an ample demonstration. So, his sympathy for the labourers remained unaffected till the last day of his life. The party which he formed was also named the Labour Party. This shows that India has lost a man who was a real friend of the Indian working class and the toiling people, and a veteran statesman and freedom fighter.

Sir, I request you to convey our condolences to the bereaved family.

PROF MADHU DANDAVATE (Rajapur): While paying tribute to Shri V. V. Giri, it appears to me that he was born to occupy an eminent position in every field that he touched. When he joined the trade union movement, he occupied the position of the President of the All India Railway's which was Federation, a position occupied by top-ranking men like Jayaprakash Narayan. When he was in the midst of the struggle for freedom, he occupied a very important position. In State politics, he was a member of the Cabinet. When he came to the Centre, again he occupied the position of Cabinet Membership, and in days where people do everything possible to preserve their position, here was a man who was prepared to give up power for the sake of principles on the question of Bank Award. My friends may not be knowing, even when he was Governor, because he was dedicated to Gandhian ideals and values, every Sunday, he used to take up the work of the cleaning of city, and that encouraged a number of Gandhian workers to undertake that type of constructive work and that was really the genius of Shri Giri.

I remember that—I hope that I am not revealing any secret-in 1974 when workers went to strike in the railways. Shri V. V. Giri tried his best to see that there was a negotiated settlement between the government and the organisation of railway men, and his sympathy always went for the working class and the down-trodden. We have lost such a great personalty with many_splendoured life I associate myself and my party with the sentiments that you and others have expressed in this House; and I will request you to convey our condolences to the members of the bereaved family.

SHRI C. T. DHANDAPANI (Pollachi): It is very sad that we have lost a verteran leader and a trade-unionist Shri V. V. Giri has left valuable history behind him to follow for others in this country. He was so simple in his life and at the same time he was

[Shri C. T. Dhandapani]

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so sincere in his service to humanity. Shri V. V. Giri was an orator, an administrator, a writer and a diplomat as well as a freedom fighter. He was the President of India. First time he was supported by progressive forces when he was fielded as a candiate. In 1969, when he offered himself as a candidate for Presidentship, it was the DMK Party first which came out with a statement openely supporing his candidature. Of course, our party took a decision to support the Central Government. Then all the left forces, for example, Shri Ajoy Mukherjee, Shri Jyoti Bosu and other Ministers supported his candidature. The simple reason was that he was with forces. Shri V. V. the progressive Giri wanted to be a trade-unionist for all his life time. That is why, after his retirement, he formed a party called 'National Labour Party.' For that, he was working till his death. Prof. Dandavate referred here to his sincerity in social service. After his retirement from Presidentship, he personally organised a camp in Madras City. He used to visit every street in the morning at six O'clock along with sweepers and he himself was supervising the cleaning of the city. That way, he was taking keen interest in public life. Such a great man is no more with us. It is a great loss to this country. I associate myself with the sentiments express by other members of the House and you Mr. Speaker, Sir. I request you to convey our condolences on behalf of my party to the bereaved family.

भी ततीश अग्रवाल (जयपुर): अध्यक्ष महोदय, भारत के भूतपूर्व राष्ट्रपित श्री वराह गिरि वैंकट गिरि के आक स्मिक निधन पर आप ने एवं सदन के सम्माननीय नेताओं ने जो विचार प्रकट किये हों, में अपने आप को उसमें शामिल करता हूं। स्वाधीनता संग्राम के सेनानी, मदास विधान सभा के सदस्य, लोक सभा के सदस्य, राज्य के मंत्री, केन्द्र के मंत्री, श्रीलंका में उच्चायुक्त, उत्तर प्रदेश, कर्नाटक और करल में राज्यपाल और अन्ततोगत्वा भारत के उप-राष्ट्रपित जीर राष्ट्रपित पूर्वों पर कार्य करने वाले

व्यक्ति, जो आज हमारे बीच में नहीं रहे, उन् की सम्बन्ध में जो शोक-समवेदना और श्रद्धांजिल यहां पर प्रकट की गई है, मैं अपने आप को उसमें शामिल करता हूं।

ईश्वर से प्रार्थना है कि दिवंगत आत्मा को शान्ति दे और शोक-संतप्त परिवार को इस असीम दुख को सहन करने की शक्ति दे।

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA (Basirhat): Mr. Speaker, the man whose passing away we are mourning today was truly an illustrious son of our country with probably an unparallelled record of public service in every sense of the word. He was truly Bharat Ratna. I do not wish to take the time of the House repeating all that has been said here about his various activities and achievements. But there is no doubt that his name will be remembered in history principally as a man who identified himself with the cause of the working people and the working classes. We who have been associated with the All India Trade Union Congress all our life feel as if we have lost one of our founding fathers who was present at the first Congress of the AITUC which was held 60 years ago in Bombay. In the company of other giants like Lala Lajpat Rai and Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das, V. V. Giri was one of the pioneers of labour movements in our country.

He did not content himself only with the expression of sympathy or support for the workers, he took his place in the ranks of active fighters for trade union and working class During 20s and Giri was at the head of several struggles and strikes of the workers, particularly railwaymen. The Union which he founded, Bengal Nagpur Labour Union as it was called in those days is still going strong under the Southeastern Railwaymen's name of Union. Many of his supporters who worked with him at that time are now of course old in years but still inspired by his example are working in that

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Union with which a had also the privilege of being associated for about ten years. Reference has been made here to the way in which he promptly resigned his high office of minister because he felt that the government had done something wrong in modifying the award of the labour appellate tribunal which was in favour of bank employees. That was something in principle which he could not stomach because it was the principle for which he was fighting all his life and therefore without a moment's hesitation he gave up his office of minister which, as other friends have said, very few people are prepared to do. We respect him and honour him for that.

He was the first Rashtrapati elected in this country who was not an official candidate of the ruling party. He was elected by a combination of force who considered him to be a symbol of everything that was progressive and radical in our public life. He tinguished himself in the high office of I had occasion to President also. meet him once or twice when he was Rashtrapati and I used to ask him: how are you feeling, Sir, because he was an old man. He used to thump, his chest and say: still going strong, never say: die. He was full of life and full of vitality even in his old years.

He died of course a peaceful death in his sleep at a ripe old age. We cannot wish him anything better and therefore, while our hearts are full of sorrow today, that sorrow is outshadowed by the pride we feel and the respect we feel for the great life that he has led.

I would request you on behalf of our party to convey our sincere condolences to his family.

SHRI YESHWANTRAO CHAVAN (Satara): In the death of Shri V. V. Giri we have lost perhaps one of the last links with Gandhiji's era, a generation which participated in the Movement of 1920. I think he lived a long and a great life—a life of fulfilment. He seems to be one of the rare persons after whom the positions and officers of power ran, not that he had to run after them. It is a very rare thing that happens because when we see the long list of offices that he held, we get the correct feeling of it. The most important thing about Dr. Giri is that he has pioneered the organised labour movement in India along with Shri N. M. Joshi of Bombay and many other labour leaders in the country. He started a new political force, force in the economic life of the country and he lived long to see that it has become one of the greatest organised forces.

As a Vice President he sat in the other House. We had many occasions to see him functioning there. Later on, he because the President. Even during his Presidentship I found him many times a restless human being. He was, naturally, bound by the limitations of the functions under the Constitution. So, he used to write what Nation should do, what labour should do, what young people should He had written thesis on em-He was more interested ployment. in the problem of employment. He has published his thesis and circulated A restless man-though he was holding an office, he wanted something to be done. Even in the last few days he has made an appeal to the country. He was active mentally to the last minute.

I had an occasion to deal with him as Home Minister when he was Governor there also I found how restless he was as Governor, what he wanted to do with the Cabinet, what he expected of his Cabinet to do. That was very evident on many occasions and such a person, particularly when he held office of President of country, on a very unique occasion he held that position, we all feel that not only a leader has been lost but as if one of the members of the family has been lost.

There is one satisfaction that he has lived a full life—a life or fulfilment. But at the same time death is always

[Shri Yeshwantrao Chavan]

a sad thing. On our behalf and on behalf of our party please convey our feelings to the members of his family.

SHRI HARIKESH BAHADUR (Gorakhpur): My party and myself fully associate with the sentiments expressed by you and other Members of the House. The former President of India Dr. Giri was a great freedom fighter, distinguished trade union leader, able administrator and an outstanding statesman. His life was a life of devotion and dedication. We lost a very courageous leader in him. I offer heart felt condolences and request you on behalf of my party to convey the same to the bereaved family.

SHRI PIUS TIRKEY (Alipurduar): Shri V. V. Giri, the fourth President of India, very much known as a trade union leader aspired all along his life for the welfare of the working class. He joined the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1932 called by Mahatma Gandhi. He was associated with the Indian Workers Delegation to International Labour Conference Geneva in 1927. He was the workers' representative to the Second Round Table Conference in 1931 and of the working class and worked with late Shri N. M. Joshi and became the President of the Trade Union Congress in 1926 and 1942.

He was a member of the Labour Sub-committee of the Congress Working Committee in 1932 and one of the principal founders of the All India Railwaymen's Federation. He could not succeed in his mission because of the predominance of the capitalist in the Congress and the system of capitalist society in India.

In his death, the nation, especially the working class, has lost a warrior and a dedicated nationalist. My party, R.S.P. joins with others to pay homage to the departed soul and extend our deep sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

श्री प्रयास सिंह कश्यप (आंवला): अध्यक्ष महादेय, माननीय वी. वी. गिरि साहब के निधन पर मैं और मेरा दल उसी प्रकार से दुसी हैं, जिस प्रकार से पुरा राष्ट्र और यहां के हमारे माननीय सदन के तमाम सदस्य दुखी हैं। माननीय गिरि जी व्यक्तित्व इस तरह का व्यक्तित्व था, जो धरती के धरातल से उठ कर भारत के सर्वी-च्च एद पर पहुंचा। अपने पैरों पर खड़े हो कर उन्होने पूरा जीवन संघर्ष किया। अगर उनको इस देश की मजदारी का मसीहा कहा जाय, तो इस में कुछ भी गलत नहीं होगा। यहां के मजदूर अन्दोलन को, यहां के पिछड़े वर्ग को उन्होंने जो प्रेरणा दी, अपने जीवन से जो आदर्श दिया, जो त्याग और तपस्या का जीवन उन्होंने बिताया--उसे कभी भुलाया नहीं जा सकता। एक राष्ट्रपति के रूप में, बल्कि एक सजग राष्ट्रपति के रूप में उन्होंने जिस तरह से प्रशासन को चलाया यहां के गरीबों के अन्दोलन के लिए उन्होंने जो त्याग और करबानी की, उन्नी से उन्नी क सी को भी यदि मजद रों के हितों के लिये आवश्यकता पडी तो उन्होंने ठकरा दिया-एसा त्यागी और तपस्वी परुष् आज हमारो बीच नहीं रहा।

में अपनी तरफ से, अपने दल की तरफ से, माननीय अध्यक्ष महादय से अनुरोध करता हूं कि हमारे दुख और समबेदना को उन के परिवार तक पहुंचाया जाय।

SHRI EBRAHIM SULAIMAN SAIT (Manjeri): Mr. Speaker, Sir, we mourn today the sad demise of a great and illustrious son of India. I associate myself and my party with the sentiments expressed by you at the passing away of this great son of India.

As far as Shri V. V. Giri is concerned, he was a veteran fighter. He was a great patriot. He was a fine administrator and an acknowledged trade unionist. He served our country in various fields. He was also a Minister in the State Govvernment in Tamil Nadu. He was a Minister. He served Central States-Kerala, Governor in three Karnataka and U.P. He was Vice-President and later President of this

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country. Sir, I am reminded here that when he offered himself for the Presidentship of this country doubt all the progressive forces and radical forces rallied around him Together with this, it has to be remembered that our organisation, the Muslim League, also came forward to support the candidature of Shri V. V. Giri for the Presidentship of country. I must tell here and place on record that he held all his offices with great distinction. Our country has become poorer by the passing away of such a great statesman and freedom fighter. veteran nothing more to add. I am reminded here of an Urdu couplet of the great poet, Dr Igbal:

हजारों साल नरिगस अपनी बेनूरों पे रोती है बड़ी मुश्किल से होता है चमन में दीदावर पैदा ।

He was such a deedavar and such people are not born always. I convey my condolences to the breaved family, his sons and daughters and I request you to convey the same to the breaved family.

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN (Cooch Behar): Mr. Speaker, Sir, again we are in the midst of sorrow.

On behalf of our party, the Forward Bloc, we pay our respect and homage to the memory of the former President of India. We lost a good friend of the working class and a pioneer of the trade union movement. Not only that, we lost a pioneer of the planned economy also. In Haripura Congress in 1938. Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose was elected as President of the Indian National Congress. At that time, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose thought of a planned economy for future India. He constituted a Planning Committee headed by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and other members of the Committee included Dr. Meghnath Saha and Dr. V. V. Giri.

Just a shortwhile ago, I was reading in the Library the Presidential

Address of Dr. Giri to the All India Trade Union Congress in Madras in 1926, where he said:

"Friends: do not forget trade union is an education. If the workers take the lesson properly, it would help them to be better men socially and economically."

I think this is true even today.

Please convey our sorrow and sympathy to the bereaved family of Dr. Giri.

SHRI GHULAM RASOOL KOCHAK (Anatnag): Sir, death has, once again, snatched away from us one of our patriots, Dr V. V. Giri, who lived in peace and died in peace, unruffled by the trials and tribulations he had to face in life. He was a freedom fighter, who fought with dedication. He had certain basic objectives. for which he fought throughout his life.

He joined as an administrator and contributed to the welfare of the nation. He was a pillar of the labour movement. He fought for the cause of the workers and earned name and fame in the labour movement of our country. Then he rose to the highest office of the President of India and contributed his experience, maturity, and objectives while performing the duties of the President.

At this time, we are meeting to pay tributes to a personality, who was one of the galaxies of the freedom movement. He was one of the builders of our nation. He contributed everything, even his life, selflessly for the noble cause of the country.

On my own behalf and on behalf of my party, the All Jammu & Kashmir National Conference, I pay tributes to this great personality of India. I hope that the feelings I share with the whole House will be communicated to the bereaved family.

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N. SOUNDARARAJAN SHRI (Sivakasi): Mr. Speaker, Sir. it has become such a painful duty to mourn the death of the national leader and former President, Shri V. V. Giri, immediately after the demise of our dear Sanjay Gandhi, Shri V. V. Giri held a series of offices in the Government of India before he became the President of India. His election as the President of India showed his pre-eminence in national politics even though he filed his nomination as an Independent candidate. contribution to the growth of trade union movement in the country is unparallelled. His name is synonylabour welfare. In the mous with interest of labour he clashed not words but swords with Pandit Nehru as his colleague in the Cabinet. Though he had died a natural death unlike Shri Sanjay Gandhi, yet his loss to the nation is equally irreparable.

With these words, I join you on my behalf, on behalf of my party, AIADMK and on behalf of my leader Thalaivar, in the Thiru Puratchi sentiments expressed and request you to kindly convey our grief to the bereaved family.

SHRI A K. ROY (Dhanbad): Mr. Speaker Sir, we are in the midst of obituaries sadly reminding us like life death is also a continuous process.

Sir, there are occasions when the use of adjectives cataloguing qualities of a person only diminishes his stature. This is also such an occasion. I would like to point out one feature which impressed me regarding Shri V. V. Giri. Once Winston Churchill called himself a young man of 75. I consider Shri V. V. Giri not as an old man, but a young man of 85. V. V. Giri has set an example of

how a man can remain active till the last moment of his life and then die even without growing old.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, V. V. Giri's election set in motion certain forces of polarisation in the country which created history. It was the beginning and after a decade we are feeling that we are at the end of that chapter.

Many have praised him as a great leader. He did forget labour even while he was President. I remember one thing. It was not only that he did not forget the other great labour leaders, but he did not forget even his old comrades. one of whom was a fitter with me in the Sindri factory. I have seen personally V. V. Giri's letter to him when he was President addressing him as "Comrade".

With this I should say that he has set an example. Let us follow it. He used to present himself as one of the rare species in Indian politics and let the nation follow his example.

With this I pay my humble tribute to his memory.

MR. SPEAKER: The House now stand in silence for a short while as a mark of respect to the memory of the deceased.

The Members then stood in silence for a short while.

MR SPEAKER: As a mark of respect to the deceased, the House stands adjourned to meet again at 11 A.M. tomorrow.

11.45 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Thursdau. June 26, 1980/Asadha 5, 1902 (Saka),