

Title: Reference made to the passing away of Shri G.M.C. Balayogi, the Speaker of Lok Sabha and Member of 10th, 12th and 13th Lok Sabha in a tragic air accident on 03.03.02. References also made to the passing away of Shri K.S. Raju, Additional Private Secretary to the Speaker and Shri G.V. Menon, Pilot, who lost their lives in the same air accident.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Hon. Members, it is with a very heavy heart that I rise today to inform the House that Shri G.M.C. Balayogi, our Hon. Speaker, is no longer amongst us. The cruel hands of death have snatched him away from amongst us at about 7.45 a.m. on 3rd March, 2002 at Kaikalur in Krishna District of Andhra Pradesh.

Shri Balayogi was born in Yedurlanka, District East Godavari, Andhra Pradesh, on the 1st October in 1951. He had his higher education in the Andhra University and took his Masters in Arts and Bachelors degree in Law.

A steady and dedicated political worker, he came to hold the position of Chairman, *Zilla Praja Parishad*, District East Godavari, from 1987 to 1991. In 1991, he was elected to the 10th Lok Sabha from Amalapuram constituency. Later, he became a Member of the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly and was Minister for Higher Education in the State from 1996 to 1998. He was elected to the 12th Lok Sabha in 1998 and was also unanimously elected as Speaker of the House. He was re-elected to the present 13th Lok Sabha in 1999 and was again elected as Speaker for the second term.

He was immensely popular in his constituency. His mass support is reflected in his success in election to the 13th Lok Sabha with a poll percentage of over 75.

A very self effacing and humble person of enormous dignity and charm, access to the high office of the Speaker of the Lok Sabha made him humbler still.

His functional style in the management of the business of the House was moulded by common sense approach, demonstrable fairness, equality of treatment of all parties within and outside the House and an unfailing and bold urge to uphold not merely the letter but the spirit of our Constitution. He obsessively refused to be distracted by fractious and competitive politics[R1].

He was immensely sensitive to the need for maintaining the dignity of the House. He took the initiative of establishing a Code of Conduct for the parliamentarians and legislators which even provides for automatic punitive action for infraction of the Code. In this effort, he galvanised all India support from all concerned including the Presiding Officers of the State Legislative bodies as well as Heads of Government.

He was a staunch advocate too of probity and standards amongst the holders of public offices and took steps for activating the Ethics Committee.

Right through his political career, he concentrated on issues of human development such as provision of safe drinking water, delivery of health and educational services and employment to the people. He believed in the multiplier effect of provision of rural infrastructure. His dream was to construct two major bridges at Yanam and Kotipalli over the vast chasm of the Godavari river so as to bring succour to thousands of rural folk and improve their economy.

Even in the midst of his high level interactions as part of the process of parliamentary diplomacy, he remembered the problems of the weak and the downtrodden and intervened on their behalf. In 1988, when he visited Iraq, in his one-to-one interaction with President Saddam Hussain, by his personal intervention, he got the release of two fishermen from Kerala and working in Kuwait who had been detained by the Government of Iraq for inadvertently straying into the territorial waters of that country.

The untimely demise of Shri Balayogi is a deep bereavement not merely for his family but for the people of Amalapuram of Andhra Pradesh and the entire people of the country. Shri Balayogi is survived by three daughters and a son.

The tragic accident has also claimed other lives namely, those of Shri K.S. Raju, Additional Private Secretary to the Speaker, and Shri G.V. Menon, pilot of the ill-fated helicopter.

We deeply mourn the loss of this esteemed friend and colleague of ours and the two other persons who lost their lives in the accident.

As decided at the Leaders' Meeting held today, this reference made from the Chair is also on behalf of Leaders of all Parties and Groups and the whole House. The House may now join me in conveying our heart-felt condolences to the bereaved families.

The House may now stand in silence for a short while as a mark of respect to the memory of the departed souls.

11.08 hrs. (The Members then stood in silence for a short while.)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned to meet on Thursday, the 7th March, 2002 at 11.00 a.m.

11.10 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock

on Thursday, March 7, 2002/Phalguna 16, 1923 (Saka).

[R1]Cd. By 'b'