

LOK SABHA

Monday, July 29, 2002/Sravana 7, 1924 (Saka)

(MR. SPEAKER in the Chair)

Title: The Speaker made reference to the passing away of Shri Krishan Kant, the Vice-President of India and Chairman, Rajya Sabha on 27.07.2002.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, it is with a very heavy heart that I have to inform the House of the sad demise of Shri Krishan Kant, Vice-President of India and Chairman, Rajya Sabha on 27th July, 2002 in New Delhi at the age of 75, following a massive heart-attack.

Shri Krishan Kant ably held the office of the Vice-President and Chairman of Rajya Sabha from 1997 till his death. As Chairman, Rajya Sabha, his vast experience of Parliamentary procedure, unruffled temperament and amiable disposition greatly helped him in guiding the deliberations in that House. His unique style of defusing tense moments in the House with his witty remarks and his sense of fairness and impartiality made him one of the most distinguished Presiding Officers of Parliament.

Born on 28 February, 1927 in Amritsar, Shri Krishan Kant was educated at DAV College, Lahore and Banaras Hindu University from where he got his Masters Degree in Technology. He was elected to Banaras Hindu University Students' Parliament and was also a member of its Cabinet. He was also Vice-President of Lahore Students' Congress.

Belonging to a family of freedom fighters, he actively participated in India's struggle for freedom and was arrested during the 'Quit India Movement' and was interned for two years.

He started his career as a scientist in the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, New Delhi before joining politics.

He was a Member of Rajya Sabha from 1966 to 1977 representing the State of Haryana and a Member of Sixth Lok Sabha from 1977 to 1979, representing the Chandigarh Parliamentary Constituency. He was Chairman, Joint Parliamentary Committee on the Prevention of Water Pollution Bill; Chairman, Committee on Railway Reservation and Booking from 1972 to 1976 and a Member of various other Parliamentary and Consultative Committees. As a Member of the Parliament, he made significant contributions during discussions on Foreign Affairs, Defence Policy, Land and Electoral Reforms and Freedom of Press, etc.

He adorned the office of the Governor of Andhra Pradesh from 1990 to 1997. He also held additional charge of Governor of Tamil Nadu during the year 1996-97.

There was a unique blend of scientific temper and spirituality in the personality of Shri Krishan Kant. He was a strong votary of integrating science with spirituality. He was a member of Science and Spirituality Committee of the All India *Sarva Seva Sangh*. He was also the founder Secretary of the Indian Parliamentary and Scientific Committee and the Editor of that Committee's Journal "*Science in Parliament*". He was a member of the Council of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore from 1968 to 1974 and of the Executive Committee of the Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses from 1978 to 1988[R1].

Shri Krishan Kant had an abiding faith in Gandhian values of simplicity and was a strong advocate of high ethical standards in public life. He was the founder Secretary of the People's Union for Civil Liberties and Democratic Rights in 1976, President, Indian Red Cross (Andhra Pradesh Branch) during 1990-97 and President, Servants of the People's Society since 1991. As a member of the working group on Land Reforms, Agricultural Commission, he undertook the work of surplus land distribution to the landless in Rupoli Prakhand in Purnea district of Bihar. He was the convenor of All India Lala Lajpat Rai Centenary National Integration Camp and Punjab Lala Lajpat Rai Centenary Camp. He was also the Chairman, Jury of Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding, Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar National Award for Promotion of Social Understanding, and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar International Award for Social Change. He was the Chairman of the Selection Committee for the Appointment of Chairman of the Press Council of India and Selection Committee for the appointment of the members of the Prasar Bharati Board. He was patron of the Institute of Constitutional and Parliamentary Studies, New Delhi.

Shri Krishan Kant was very fond of Urdu Poetry, a passion which he inherited from his upbringing at Lahore. He also contributed articles to prominent dailies and periodicals on issues relating to national and international politics, electoral reforms, culture and science.

Shri Krishan Kant represented the Indian Parliament at the meeting of the Inter-Parliamentary Union held at Dakar, Senegal in 1968 and visited a number of countries on goodwill missions.

In the demise of Shri Krishan Kant, we have lost a great parliamentarian and the country has lost a true Gandhian, a man of great eminence and scholarly persuasion and one of the most active and charismatic personalities in Indian public life whose absence would be greatly felt in Parliament and in the nation as a whole. We deeply mourn the loss of this friend.

As decided in the Leaders' Meeting held today, this reference made from the Chair is also on behalf of the 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 family.

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

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

MR. SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned to meet tomorrow, the 30th July, 2002 at 11 a.m.

11.08 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock

on Tuesday, July 30, 2002/Sravana 8, 1924 (Saka).