

18.10 hrs.

VALEDICTORY REFERENCE

Title: Reference made on conclusion of the Thirteenth Session of the Thirteenth Lok Sabha.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, the Thirteenth Session of the Thirteenth Lok Sabha which commenced on 21st July, 2003 is coming to a close today. The House had a total of 21 sittings, spread over 113 hours.

During the Session, the Lok Sabha transacted several important items of legislative, financial and other business.

Lok Sabha gave approval to 11 Bills including the two Constitution Amendment Bills.

The House also passed Supplementary Demands for Grants (General) for the year 2003-2004 and Supplementary Demand for Grant (Railways) for the year 2003-2004.

Hon. Members, debate and discussion are the essence of parliamentary democracy. All issues have, therefore, to be resolved through discussion on the floor of the House. Sometimes, however, situations arise when it becomes difficult to transact the listed business. During this Session, unfortunately 35 hours and 36 minutes of the precious time of the House were lost due to adjournments of the House on account of Members raising slogans and rushing to the Well of the House. I am, however, glad to say that the Leaders and Members extended their full cooperation in substantially making up for the lost time by sitting late for 28 hours and 6 minutes, including beyond midnight on two occasions. Thus, on the whole, only a little over seven hours of time was lost.

Hon. Members, I have always endeavoured to resolve issues by holding discussions with Leaders instead of invoking my disciplinary powers.

As you are aware, a wide range of issues which were agitating the minds of Members and were earlier sought to be raised through various procedural devices, could *inter alia* be discussed during the debate on the No-Confidence Motion moved by the hon. Leader of the Opposition, Shrimati Sonia Gandhi. The Motion was discussed for 21 hours and 7 minutes on 18th and 19th August, 2003. The debate was telecast and broadcast live on Doordarshan and All India Radio. As many as 39 Members from both the sides participated in the discussion and placed their views before the House and the nation. The Motion was negatived on a division.

The House had fruitful debates on four important matters of urgent public importance under Rule 193 *viz.*, on: (i) Construction of Taj Heritage Corridor; (ii) Sharing of inter-State river waters between the States of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka; (iii) Working of the Investigating Agencies particularly Central Bureau of Investigation; and (iv) Atrocities on *dalits* in various parts of the country.

The House also took up another fruitful discussion on a Government Motion regarding 'the progress of implementation of Part IX and Part IX-A of the Constitution, dealing with Panchayats and Municipalities as institutions of self-government, during the last ten years'.

The House took up four matters by way of Calling Attention. The Ministers concerned made Statements thereon. Twelve other Statements were also made by Ministers on different issues of urgent public importance. One of these Statements, as the hon. Members know, was made by the Minister of Health and Family Welfare on reports in newspapers on pesticide residues in soft drinks. On a demand made by various sections of the House, the Minister of Health and Family Welfare moved a motion for appointment of a Joint Committee of both the Houses to examine the matter. The motion was adopted by the House.

As regards the Private Members' Business, the House discussed four Private Members' Bills, out of which two were withdrawn by the leave of the House, one was negatived and one remained part discussed. The House also discussed three Private Members' Resolutions; out of these, two were withdrawn by the leave of the House and one remained part discussed.

Members raised 220 matters under Rule 377 while 93 matters of public importance were raised by them during the 'Zero Hour'.

During this Session, the Departmentally-Related Standing Committees presented 16 Reports.

I am extremely grateful to the hon. Leader of the House, the hon. Leader of the Opposition, the Leaders and Deputy Leaders of Parties and Groups in the House as also to their Chief Whips and Whips and indeed to each and every Member of the House for their kind co-operation and courtesy extended to me and to my colleagues, the hon. Deputy-Speaker and Members of the Panel of Chairmen. I would also like to express my appreciation and thanks to

the officers and staff of the Lok Sabha Secretariat and allied agencies for their valuable support in running the House. I also thank the media for covering the proceedings of the House.

Hon. Members may now stand up as *Vande Mataram* would be played.

18.16 hrs.

NATIONAL SONG

(The National Song was played.)

MR. SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned *sine die*.

18. 17 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned sine die.
