

Title: References made on the conclusion of the Seventh Session of the Thirteenth Lok Sabha, commenced on 23rd July, 2001.

13.03 hrs.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, today, we come to the end of the seventh Session of the Thirteenth Lok Sabha which commenced on 23rd July, 2001. The House had a total of 29 sittings, spread over 174 hours.

During the session, the Lok Sabha transacted several items of important financial, legislative and other business. The Supplementary Demands for Grants (General) for the year 2001-2002 and Budget in respect of the State of Manipur were passed with full co-operation of the House.

Lok Sabha gave approval to 35 Bills which is a record in itself. Some of the important Bills passed are the Inter-State Water Disputes (Amendment) Bill, 2001; Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Bill, 2000, as reported by the Joint Committee; the Indian Council for World Affairs, 2001 to replace Ordinance No. 1 of 2001; the Constitution (Ninety-First Amendment) Bill, 2000, which *inter-alia* provides for a freeze on undertaking a fresh delimitation of constituencies up to 2026 and to re-fix number of seats reserved for SCs/STs in the House of People and Legislative Assemblies on the basis of population ascertained in 1991 census; the Salary, Allowances and Pension of Members of Parliament (Amendment) Bill, 2001; and the Salaries and Allowances of Ministers (Amendment) Bill, 2001.

The House had fruitful debates on six important matters of public importance under Rule 193. These are: (i) on the statement made by the Prime Minister regarding the recent summit level talks held between India and Pakistan in Agra; (ii) loss of lives and property due to floods, drought and other natural calamities in various parts of the country; (iii) saffronisation of education; (iv) Disinvestment of public sector undertakings; (v) New Telecom Policy, 1999 and its effect on the licences and revenue generation of Government of India in general, and limited mobility issue in particular; and (vi) acute problems being faced by the poor in rural and urban areas in various parts of the country due to non-availability of foodgrains.

The issue of mismanagement of US-64 funds by Unit Trust of India and the failure of the Government to take timely action to prevent it, was raised by way of Adjournment Motion which was negatived by the House after a seven-hour long discussion. Thereafter, in a meeting of leaders of parties convened by me on 3rd August, 2001, it was decided that all issues relating to UTI, including the issues discussed in the House, would be considered by the existing Joint Parliamentary Committee on Stock Markets Scam.

Two important matters were raised by Members by way of Calling Attention and the concerned Ministers made statements thereon. These were: (i) on the situation arising out of the recent killings of members of a minority community in Doda, Jammu and Kashmir, and steps taken by the Government in regard thereto; and (ii) on the situation arising out of the difficulties being faced by jute-growers and jute industry in the country, and steps taken by the Government in regard thereto. Fourteen statements were made by Ministers on different issues of urgent public importance.

As regards the Question Hour, out of the 580 Starred Questions listed 87 were orally answered in the House. Replies to the remaining 493 Starred Questions and 6,081 Unstarred Questions were laid on the. Four half-an-hour discussions on different subjects were also held.

As regards the Private Members' Business, 60 Bills were introduced during the Session. The Bill seeking to amend the Constitution of India with a view to providing that a No Confidence Motion in the Council of Ministers of the Union, or of a State, shall also be accompanied by a composite motion proposing the alternative Government, was further discussed during the Session and withdrawn by leave of the House. Another Bill seeking to provide for reservation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in establishments under the State and also in private sector, remained part discussed.

As regards Private Members' Resolutions, the discussion on a Resolution urging upon the Government to formulate a programme with allocation of adequate funds for time-bound completion of all projects which have been pending for the last several years and to ensure that new schemes are launched only after arrangements for adequate funds have been made so as to enable their completion within a stipulated period, received wholehearted support from all sections of the House before it was withdrawn by leave of the House. Another Resolution moved regarding review of the decision to withdraw quantitative restrictions, remained part discussed.

Members raised 277 matters under Rule 377 while more than 300 matters of public importance were raised by Members during 'Zero Hour'. In this Session, the Departmentally-related Standing Committees presented fifteen reports.

Hon. Members, it has always been our combined endeavour to see that the proceedings of the House are conducted in an orderly manner. Unfortunately, precious time of the House is sometimes lost due to disorderly conduct by some Members in the Well of the House. This happened in the present Session as well. I am beholden to the Leaders of parties who have expressed the unanimous view that entering the Well of the House has to be stopped forthwith. They have assured me that they would make all efforts to ensure that their Members do not resort to disorderly conduct in the Well of the House. I need hardly emphasise that we not only enhance our own dignity but also that of the institution of Parliament when we conduct the proceedings of the House in a disciplined and orderly manner.

Debate and discussion being essence of Parliamentary form of democracy, let us respect the other Member's right to have his say as also to express our disagreement with him on the floor of this august House within the parameters of the Rules of Procedure.

It may interest you to know that while 29 hours and 31 minutes were lost due to disturbances in this Session, the House sat for additional 42 hours and 52 minutes having extended sittings by sitting late in the night or during lunch-hour and thereby, compensated for the lost time. This was made possible due to the wholehearted support and willing cooperation that I received from all sections of the House.

I am extremely grateful to the hon. Leader of the house, the hon. Leader of the Opposition, the Leaders and Deputy Leaders of various parties and Groups in the House as also their Chief Whips and Whips and indeed to each and every Member of the House for their kind cooperation 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 our 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 people for the cooperation extended by them.

SHRIMATI SONIA GANDHI (AMETHI): Mr. Speaker, Sir, we convened at the start of this Session with many matters agitating our minds, namely, the Agra Summit, the UTI Crisis, several unfolding scams, the unresolved Ayodhya issue, the increasing impact of the WTO on farmers and on small industrialists, the disinvestment process and Saffronization of the Education System.

Through your efforts, Sir, and the efforts of the Members here, some of these issues were discussed. Perhaps, there was no agreement between the opposition and the Treasury Benches. But every major view-point was heard by the House and the nation. This is the essence of democracy.

Yet despite the two extra weeks which were added on to this Session, several of the important issues could not be discussed. In this context, Sir, the Congress Party welcomes your initiative to impose greater discipline. My Party and I have full faith in you, in your ability to control unnecessary and trivial interruptions, in an impartial manner without, in any way, curtailing the inherent right of the Members to express their views or to take up issues.

In addition to the Agenda we carried at the start of the Session, several emergent issues overtook us during its course. The poorest in all parts of the country have been facing the prospect of starvation even as our granaries are overflowing. A number of regions are already reeling under drought. The earthquake relief in Gujarat remained incomplete. To add to all this, Kerala, Orissa and Bihar fell to the onslaught of floods during the Session.

Violence in Jammu & Kashmir reached a peak. The NSCN Agreement, later modified had erupted in massive unrest in Manipur and elsewhere. Disaffection is still very much present amongst the people of the North-East; and we do hope, Sir, that we have not prepared a new recipe for prolonged unrest and suffering in the North-Eastern Region.

More recently the truth exposed by Tehelka came under threat of being lost sight of due to the controversy over the means adopted by reporters.

Sir, some important legislative businesses have been transacted. However, the important legislation regarding women's reservation, unfortunately, is still languishing. We are still awaiting the outcome of the Prime Minister's promise to us when he had said that he would try and bring about a consensus on this most important issue for all of us women.

Also important are the various policies and programmes of the Government that affected the welfare of the poorest people in our country. We are extremely keen to discuss the population policy and the agriculture policy. We are also very eager to discuss the Kargil Report and the national security system. We view with gravity, the slow down in poverty alleviation schemes and the decline in the rate of growth in total employment. We are also keen to discuss the Approach Paper for the Tenth Plan.

On all these issues, Sir, we have a lot to say; and we do hope that through you, the Government will grant us an

opportunity to discuss all of them.

Finally, I thank you, Sir, for your ability, your dexterity and patience with which you have been conducting the Session. I also extend my good wishes to all my colleagues here.

प्रधानमंत्री (श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी): अध्यक्ष महोदय, पावस का सत्र अपनी समाप्ति पर है। आज ओणम का त्यौहार है। मैं इस अवसर पर सभी देशवासियों और सदन के सदस्यों का अभिनन्दन करना चाहता हूँ। कल गणपति विसर्जन है। गणपति बुद्धि के देवता हैं। हमें उनसे भी कुछ लेने की आवश्यकता है।

अध्यक्ष महोदय, आपने सत्र की उपलब्धियों का उल्लेख किया - सचमुच कई मामलों में सदन के काम उल्लेखनीय रहे हैं। अगर दिन में काम नहीं हुआ, तो हम रात में बैठे, देर तक बैठे। काम खत्म करने की दृष्टि से तो यह ठीक है लेकिन दिनचर्या के हिसाब से अच्छी बात नहीं है। आपने बड़े महत्वपूर्ण कदम उठाये हैं। सदन में अनुशासन रहना चाहिये। जब हम प्रतिपक्ष में थे, तब से हम अनुशासन की बात कर रहे हैं। जो नये-नये प्रतिपक्ष में आये हैं, उनके सहयोग की आवश्यकता है।

यहां अलग-अलग विचारधाराएं हैं। उन विचारधाराओं को सदन में रखने का अवसर मिलता है। मैं सरकार की उपलब्धियां नहीं गिनाता, लेकिन जब विश्व में आर्थिक दृष्टि से एक मंदी आई हुई है, तब हम अपनी अर्थव्यवस्था को सम्भाल कर आगे बढ़ने में सफल हो रहे हैं। यह बात उल्लेखनीय है और इसका सबको स्वागत करना चाहिए। मैं आंकड़ों में नहीं जाता कि किस क्षेत्र में हमने कितनी उपलब्धि की है, मैं इसका भी विस्तार से उल्लेख नहीं करूंगा, क्योंकि यह अवसर उसके लिए नहीं है, आज हम इस बात पर प्रसन्नता प्रकट कर रहे हैं कि अच्छे वातावरण में सत्र की समाप्ति हो रही है। यह वातावरण केवल समाप्ति के समय नहीं रहना चाहिए। ऐसा वातावरण प्रारम्भ में भी रहना चाहिए और मध्य में भी रहना चाहिए।

चर्चा के लिए समय मिल सकता है, सरकार कभी चर्चा करने से कतराई नहीं है। हम अपने विचार स्पष्टता के साथ रखते हैं। आरोप लगाये जाते हैं उनका खंडन करते हैं। लेकिन आरोपों-प्रत्यारोपों की भी एक सीमा होनी चाहिए। लोकतंत्र बिना मर्यादा के नहीं चल सकता और अगर मर्यादा स्वेच्छा से हो, स्वतः स्फूर्त हो, सभी दलों के सदस्य मिलकर आपस में बैठकर फ़ैसले कर लें, तो मैं समझता हूँ कि एक अच्छे वातावरण की सृष्टि होगी।

सत्र आज समाप्त हो रहा है। इस सत्र की उपलब्धियां हम गिना रहे हैं। लेकिन जनमानस में सदन की जो तस्वीर उभरती है, वह ऐसी नहीं है जिस पर भारतीय लोकतंत्र, जो संसार का सबसे बड़ा लोकतंत्र है, वह गर्व कर सके। इसमें सबके सहयोग से स्थिति सुधारी जा सकती है। मैं आपका अभिनन्दन करता हूँ, आपने बड़ी कुशलता के साथ सदन का संचालन किया है और सभी सदस्यों का भी मैं इस अवसर पर अभिनन्दन करता हूँ। बहुत-बहुत धन्यवाद।

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Members may now stand up as 'Vande Madaram' will be played.

(The National Song was played.)

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

1324 hours

The Lok Sabha then adjourned sine die.
