

LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Monday, August 16, 2004/Sravana 25, 1926 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock

(MR. SPEAKER in the Chair)

OBITUARY REFERENCES

Title: References made to the passing away of Shri M.R. Krishna (Member of 1st to 4th Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha from 1972 to 1982) on 12.5.2004; Dr. K. Venkatagiri Gowda (Member 10th Lok Sabha) on 5.7.2004; Shri Abdul Ghafoor (Member of 8th, 10th and 12th Lok Sabha) and Member, Rajya Sabha, 1984-89; 1991-1996; 1988-99, on 10.7.2004 and Shri Hirendra Nath Mukherjee (Member of 1st to 5th Lok Sabha) on 30.7.2004, respectively. Also references made by the terrorist attacks during the Independence Day celebrations in Assam and Jammu and Kashmir causing death and injuries to children and many others.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, I have to inform the House of the sad demise of four of our former colleagues, namely, Shri M.R. Krishna, Dr. K. Venkatagiri Gowda, Shri Abdul Ghafoor and Shri Hirendra Nath Mukerjee.

Shri M.R. Krishna was a Member of the First to Fourth Lok Sabhas from 1952 to 1970, representing the Karimnagar Parliamentary Constituency of Andhra Pradesh in the First and Second Lok Sabhas; and the Peddapalli Parliamentary Constituency of the same State in the Third and Fourth Lok Sabhas.

Shri Krishna was also a Member of Rajya Sabha from 1972 to 1982.

A well-known freedom fighter, Shri Krishna participated in the Quit India Movement in 1942.

His administrative capabilities came to the fore when he served as the Union Deputy Minister, Defence, from November, 1967 to June, 1970 and as Deputy Minister, Industrial Development and Internal Trade, from June, 1970 to March, 1971. Earlier, he also served as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Education in 1962. An active parliamentarian, Shri Krishna was a Member of the Estimates Committee and the Public Accounts Committee.

A devoted social worker, he was associated with various social welfare organisations. He established Jai Jawahar Colony and the Gandhi Memorial Multipurpose Higher Secondary School at Alwal, Secunderabad. He actively worked for the betterment of the lot of the poor and the underprivileged. He was the General Secretary of the All India States Scheduled Castes Federation; the Hyderabad State Scheduled Castes Federation; and the All India Depressed Classes League.

A sports enthusiast, he was Chairman, National Institute of Sports; and Member, All India Council of Sports.

Shri M.R. Krishna passed away on 12th May, 2004 at Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh, at the age of about 80, after a brief illness.

Dr. K. Venkatagiri Gowda was a Member of the Tenth Lok Sabha from 1991 to 1996, representing the Bangalore South Parliamentary Constituency of Karnataka.

An able parliamentarian, Dr. Gowda served as a Member of the Committee on Environment and Forests during 1991-92 and the Committee on Human Resource Development from 1993 to 1996.

Dr. Gowda who had pursued his higher education at Mysore and London Universities was an erudite scholar and teacher of repute. He authored many books which include '*Perestroika and Glasnost for India*', '*Fiscal Revolution in India*', '*Euro-Dollar Flows and International Monetary Stability*' and '*Inflation-Appreciation of the Indian Rupee*'.

In his demise, we have lost a learned Parliamentarian and renowned economist.

Dr. K. Venkatagiri Gowda passed away on 5th July, 2004 at Bangalore at the age of 81 after a brief illness.

Shri Abdul Ghafoor was a Member of the Eighth, Tenth and Twelfth Lok Sabhas from 1984 to 1989, 1991 to 1996 and 1998 to 1999. He represented the Siwan Parliamentary Constituency of Bihar during the Eighth Lok Sabha and the Gopalganj Constituency of the same State in the Tenth and Twelfth Lok Sabhas.

He participated in the freedom struggle and suffered imprisonment during the 'Quit India Movement' in 1942.

An able administrator, he served as the Union Cabinet Minister of Works and Housing from 1984 to 1985 and Minister of Urban Development from 1985 to 1986.

Earlier, Shri Ghafoor was a Member of the Bihar Legislative Assembly from 1952 to 1967 and from 1973 to 1984. He was a Member of the Bihar Legislative Council from 1968 to 1973 and he also held the office of its Chairman during 1972-73. He served as Deputy Minister in the State Government and held different portfolios. He rose to become the Chief Minister of Bihar, which office he held from 1973 to 1975.

An active parliamentarian, Shri Ghafoor was a Member of the Committee on Home Affairs and the Consultative Committee, Ministry of Communications during 1998-99. He was also Member, Joint Parliamentary Committee on the functioning of Wakf Boards in 1999.

Shri Abdul Ghafoor passed away on 10th July, 2004 at Patna, Bihar, at the age of 86.

Shri Hirendra Nath Mukerjee was a Member of the First to Fifth Lok Sabhas. He represented the Calcutta North-East Parliamentary Constituency of West Bengal in the First, Fourth and Fifth Lok Sabhas from 1952 to 1957 and again from 1967 to 1977; and the Calcutta Central Parliamentary Constituency in the Second and Third Lok Sabhas from 1957 to 1967. He was the Deputy Leader of the Communist Party of India in Lok Sabha from 1952 to 1964 and 1967 to 1971 and was its Leader from 1964 to 1967.

Shri Mukerjee was educated at the Presidency College, Calcutta and St. Chatherine's, Oxford University and Lincoln's Inn, London from where he became a Barrister. He had a uniformly outstanding record as a student. He stood first in the Intermediate Arts Examination, stood First Class First in B.A. History Honours, in his M.A. Examination he stood First Class First from Calcutta University.

He was the winner of Duff, Ishan, Gwalior, Burdwan and many other scholarships, medals and prizes. He was the Government of Bengal Scholar at St. Catherine's Oxford. Prof. Mukerjee was a Lecturer of History and Political Philosophy at Andhra University during 1934-35 and later at the University at Calcutta from 1940 to 1944. He was Head of the Department of History at Surendranath College, Calcutta from 1936 to 1962. He joined the Calcutta High Court as a Barrister but did not continue there long. While in England, he was drawn to Communism and joined the Communist Party of India in 1936. Following the 'popular front' policy of the party, he was elected member of All-India Congress Committee in 1938-1939. He was an elected Member of the National Council of the Communist Party of India in 1958. He was arrested twice for political reasons in 1940 and 1941 and again detained without trial in 1948 and 1949.

A versatile genius, Shri Mukerjee belonged to a genre of people who revered parliamentary democracy. One of the most distinguished parliamentarians of India, Shri Mukerjee was highly respected in parliamentary circles for his enlightening contributions to the deliberations of the House. He was known for his respect for and mastery over the rules of procedure and also for his vast knowledge, brilliant and spellbinding speeches, incisive and logical arguments and legendary oratorical skills. The gamut of issues raised by Shri Mukerjee within and outside the House had a holistic perspective. Through his speeches, he unfailingly articulated a national vision.

During his long parliamentary career, he served on various parliamentary committees. He guided the deliberations of the Public Accounts Committee, as its Chairman, during 1976-77.

He also served with distinction as the First Honorary Advisor to the Bureau of Parliamentary Studies and Training of the Lok Sabha Secretariat.

His indefatigable zeal for public service led him also to serve causes other than political. An ardent social activist and educationist, he was associated with various organisations in different capacities. He served as President, Bengal Provincial Students' Conference; All-India Students' Conference, Nagpur; and Bengal Motion Pictures Employees' Union; and as Vice-President, Bengal Provincial Trade Union Congress. He was the Founder Member of the All-India

Progressive Writers' Association and of Friends of Soviet Union.

He was also a member of the Central Advisory Board of Archaeology from 1952 to 1955; 1957 to 1960 and 1972 to 1975. He was member, Education Panel, Planning Commission; National Integration Council, 1962; and Central Advisory Board of Education from 1972 to 1975. He served as a member of the Senate of Calcutta University from 1953 to 1961; and Samsad (Court) of the Visva Bharati from 1972 to 1975. He was Executive Member of the National Committee for Gandhi Centenary; he was a Trustee, Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Trust and Lal Bahadur Shastri Memorial Trust. He took keen interest in sports and was the member of All India Council of Sports from 1953 to 1971.

A prolific writer, Shri Mukherjee was the author of many books in English and Bengali. He has written extensively on historical, literary and political themes. He edited an anthology of modern Bengali poetry and was the author of "*History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks)*" and some of his works in English are: "*An Introduction to Socialism*"; "*India Struggles for Freedom*"; "*India and Parliament*"; "*The Gentle Colossus : A Study of Jawaharlal Nehru*" and "*Portrait of Parliament*". He was the author of studies of Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, Jawaharlal Nehru, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Swami Vivekananda and Raja Rammohan Roy. His books in Bengali include "*National Movement in India*"; "*A History of India*" in two volumes, and "*Modern Bengali Poetry*".

He was the Editor of "*Indo-Soviet Journal*", Calcutta, from 1941 to 1945; and Joint Editor, "*Calcutta Weekly Notes*", a law journal, from 1945 to 1952.

Shri Mukherjee was conferred many honours in recognition of his exceptional erudition and achievements. He was awarded honorary doctorates by the Universities of Calcutta, Andhra, North Bengal, Rabindra Bharati, Kalyani and Vidyasagar. He was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 1990 and Padma Vibhushan in 1991 for his contribution to public life. He received the "Vidyasagar Award" in 1992 and "Nazrul Award" in 2000 for his literary work from the Government of West Bengal.

He received the 'Soviet Award' for his book on the Second World War and 'Dimitrov Memorial Award' from Bulgaria in the 1980s. He was also conferred 'Maulana Azad Award' by the Muslim Cultural Association in 1994 and the 'Muzaffir Ahmed Award' by the CPI (M) in 2000. He also received the "Soviet Land Nehru Award" in 1977.

Since its formation in 1987, Shri Mukherjee had been the Honorary Chairman of the Mass Media Centre of the Government of West Bengal and was also the Honorary Advisor to the Bureau of Parliamentary Studies of the West Bengal Legislative Assembly till his death.

A widely travelled person, Shri Mukherjee was a member of the Indian Delegation to Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference held in Canberra, Australia in 1959 and the Indian Parliamentary Delegation which visited the erstwhile USSR and Hungary in 1968. He also attended the Inter-Parliamentary Union Meeting at Yaounde, Cameroon in 1972 and the 60th Inter-Parliamentary Conference at Paris, France in 1972.

His humility endeared him to all those who came into his contact. However, beneath his gentle demeanour lay a steely determination to optimally utilize the forum of Parliament for redressal of grievances of the people. His contributions to the Indian Parliamentary System were exemplary and would serve as a guiding light for legislators.

Shri Mukherjee's life was dedicated to the cause of the downtrodden, the deprived and the exploited sections of the people. He steadfastly fought for a society where there will be no discrimination between person and person and for a classless society where the people irrespective of differences of caste, creed, language, religion etc. will have equal rights and for a society where there will be no exploitation of men by men. Till the last breath of his life, Shri Mukherjee fought for the working class, the common people and for the establishment of a society free from hunger and privation and for a strong, progressive and resurgent India.

In his passing away, the country has lost an outstanding Parliamentarian, a leader of the masses and champion of the down-trodden and of the working class and a multifaceted personality.

Shri Hirendra Nath Mukherjee passed away on 30th July, 2004 at Kolkata, West Bengal, at the age of 97, after a brief illness.

We deeply mourn the loss of these friends and I am sure the House would join me in conveying our condolences to the bereaved families.

As the hon. Members are aware, on 15th August, 2004, terrorist attacks in Assam and Jammu and Kashmir marred the Independence Day celebrations. In a tragic incident in Assam, a bomb was exploded near the children who were participating in the Independence Day celebrations in the college ground at Dhemaji town which resulted in gruesome death of and critical injuries to children, women and other persons. There were two other bomb explosions in Assam on this occasion. Lamentably, children were targeted by the terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir too when a grenade was hurled into a school in Baramulla District resulting in injuries to children.

The House strongly condemns these dastardly attacks by terrorists and expresses its deep anguish over the death of and injuries to innocent people particularly children at the hands of anti-national elements whose sole purpose is to destabilise the unity and integrity of the country.

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

11.13 hrs.

The Members then stood in silence for a short while.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, we are now beginning the second phase of the Budget Session and I am sure we shall be able to discuss many important issues during this phase. I seek cooperation and help from all sections of the House and I wish you all very fruitful discussions inside the House.