

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Suraj Mandal.

[Translation]

SHRI SURAJ MANDAL (Godda): Since there has been meeting of hearts, I do not want to move the motion listed in my name.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Now, only one motion which has been moved by Shri Arjun Singh and seconded by Shri P. G. Narayanan is before the House for consideration, and I am putting this motion to the vote of the House.

The question is:

"That Shri Shivraj V. Patil, a member of this House, be chosen as the Speaker of this House."

*The motion was adopted.*

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is adopted.

I declare that Shri Shivraj V. Patil has been chosen as the Speaker of this House. I have great pleasure in inviting him to occupy the Chair.

*(Shri Shivraj V. Patil was conducted to the Chair by the Leader of the House, Shri Arjun Singh, and the Leader of the Opposition, Shri Lal K. Advani)*

15.11 hrs. [MR. SPEAKER (SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL) in the Chair]

### FELICITATIONS TO THE SPEAKER

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I have a list of Members to speak. I would request the Prime Minister to speak now.

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I congratulate you on behalf of my Party and on my own

behalf on your being unanimously elected Speaker of this House.

Responsibility of this nature you have shouldered in the past and with great distinction. We know that you were Speaker of one of largest Legislative Assemblies in India, the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly. You had shown your mettle in the past and had handled varied and difficult situations. Your experience will greatly help not only the conduct of this House, but all of us in functioning in the manner expected of us.

We are meeting at a time when the country is facing a difficult situation on various fronts. We must work with urgency, the urgency which the criticality of the situation demands, and work collectively and in a determined manner to face the challenges that the nation is confronted with. In particular, in this House the people expect us to work with devotion, work with singleminded purposefulness and also work with certain dignity. We have to place before ourselves all these expectations of the people, and I am sure, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that under your able guidance we will be able to conduct the business of this House as well as conduct ourselves as the people expect us to.

I wish you great success in your Speakership in the years to come, and great success in the conduct of the business of the House to usher in a new era of cooperation coupled with vigilance. This is what I would like to say and this is what under your guidance I am sure we will be able to do.

May I congratulate you once again, Sir.

[Translation]

SHRI LAL K. ADVANI (Gandhi Nagar): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to heartily greet you and congratulate you on behalf of my party and on my own behalf. I am glad that you have been elected to this office and I am particularly happy that

[Sh. Lal K. Advani]

you have been elected unopposed. I would have been much more happy had your election been unanimous. Till yesterday, it appeared that even unopposed election might not be possible and you would be elected after a contest. Whatever may be the method of your election but I would like to congratulate the opposition and other hon. friends that they did not press for an election and the election has been unopposed. I would also like to congratulate the ruling party which worked for an unopposed election. One of the hon. friends sarcastically remarked that since it was a meeting of two hearts, he was not moving his motion. I feel that it would have been a matter of great happiness for me, had the entire House and all the parties united, instead of these two parties only, on this issue. The Parliamentary tradition expects that all the parties should present their views forcefully and express their differences without any hesitation. If the Parliament is to progress as an institution, the election to the office of Speaker of the Lok Sabha should be unanimous, which would enhance its prestige and add to its strength as a Parliamentary institution. Similarly, I have got a complaint against the ruling party. Their thinking that it would not be possible for them to run the Government, if the Speaker did not belong to their party, in my view does not fall in line with the basic concept behind Parliamentary traditions, Parliamentary system and Parliamentary institutions. Otherwise, this tradition would never have been established in the House of Commons that "Once a Speaker always a Speaker", which implies that once a person assumes this exacted office, he does not belong to any party and he would discharge his duties rising above the party lines. On this occasion, Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to tell you that your illustrious predecessor had followed this tradition in a number of cases. So much so that when the very sensitive cases of defection were brought before him, despite different views

and opinions expressed, he gave a historic ruling, which was widely acclaimed. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the purpose behind the decision by my party not to press for the motion, is to enhance the dignity of this august House and strengthen the position of your office. Sir, on this occasion, I would like to remind you that since the days of Shri Mavalankar, discussion has been going on as to how the dignity of this office could be raised and as to how this office might be made more powerful. I would like to quote from Shri Mavalankar's speech which he had made at the time of assuming the office of Speaker. He had said that

[English]

"It is obviously not possible in the present conditions of our political and parliamentary life to remain as insular as the English Speaker so far as the political life goes. But the Indian Speaker acting as such will be absolutely a non-party man meaning thereby that he keeps aloof from party deliberations and controversies."

[Translation]

This means he may not be non-political but he would definitely be a non-party man

[English]

He cannot be non-political. In Britain, the Speaker is virtually non-political.

[Translation]

He used the word insular and said that this might not be possible in the Indian context. It will not be possible till we set for ourselves certain conventions. A new convention has been set by the House and this convention relates to your office i.e. Speakership and to Deputy Speaker's office and I am of the view that it would be better if it is continued in future also. I would like to submit to the hon. Prime Minister that it would be better if we sit together and decide on the conventions regarding Speakership and Deputy Speakership.

He has taken an initiative in this matter and I would urge him to help this initiative continue in future also.

I would like to submit one thing more in this regard. A Conference of the Presiding officers was held in 1968. I happened to be the Chairman of Delhi Metropolitan Council at that time and in that capacity I had the opportunity to participate in the Conference. A high level committee was set up under the Chairmanship of the then Speaker of Maharashtra Legislative Council, Shri Paghe. The Committee came to be known as Paghe Committee. The Committee had given many suggestions in this regard and I would not like to go into the details here as it would not be proper to do so at the present juncture. All the parties in the House should be invited by the hon. Prime Minister to consider the recommendations of Paghe Committee in this regard at an All Party Meeting so that we could lay down healthy conventions and traditions in this regard.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I once again congratulate you. You conducted the proceedings of the House, as Deputy Speaker have and earlier as Speaker of Maharashtra Legislative Assembly with great dignity and impartiality. I wish you all success.

**SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH (Fatehpur):** Mr. Speaker, Sir, a reference was just now made to meeting of hearts and parties. You are above all parties now but not off from our hearts. I mean to say that you are in our hearts. With your assuming office all controversies have been set at rest. We have seen you as Deputy Speaker in the House and are witness to your competence and impartiality. We are also aware that behind your suave and polite persona- lity lies firmness of your conviction.

Sir, rules are there for regulation of business in the House but practically speaking, conduct of business of the House depends on the discretion of and judicious application of rules by the Presiding officers and we had a glimpse of it when you were Deputy

Speaker. That is why with your assumption of this office a new confidence has been created in us. So far as extending co-operation is concerned, we are in the opposition. We can neither promise to keep our mouths shut, nor assure that there would be no uproar in the House, but we would not resort to it so as to enact a drama. I may mention here that if there is an uproar, it won't be just our voice but the voice of crores of people who keenly watch and see the proceedings of the House. Each one of your decisions has a bearing on the lives of the poor living in *Jhuggis* and the workers. I would like to submit here that if a voice is raised from any corner of the House demanding your attention to their plight, you must listen to it. Our existence in the House can be justified and tested on that anvil alone.

Sir, people assume and demit offices. But we are confident that you will leave behind a mark of your own. Shri Advani was just now making a reference to traditions and conventions. I think all of us believe that we would create new traditions under your guidance.

[English]

**SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur):** Sir, on behalf of my Party and myself, I extend our most cordial felicitations to you, Mr. Speaker, on your assumption of one of the highest public offices of our Republic.

We have seen you function in this House as a Minister, and then as panel Chairman and then as Deputy Speaker and we have always been impressed and we appreciated your suavity and fairness and commitment to the maintenance of parilamentary traditions and to Parliament's supremacy.

We have no doubt that you, as the custodian of the rights and privileges of the Members of this House and of the House itself, will uphold the highest traditions of the Chair you have come to occupy today.

[Sh. Somnath Chatterjee]

Today, you are the Speaker of the House. You are no longer a candidate of any political party or combination of political parties and, with the composition of the House as it is today, we feel that so far as you are concerned, you will mete out even-handed justice to all sections of the House so that the Members here can give expression to the urges and aspirations of the teeming millions of this country and when specially greater and greater problems are being faced by the ordinary people, it is expected that will find reflection of that on the floor of this House for which, I am sure, you will afford adequate opportunity to the Members.

On our behalf, we offer you our full cooperation in the discharge of your responsibilities and onerous duties as the Speaker of this House.

I do not wish to go into any matter of controversy. But the fact that we had decided to put up a candidate at one time does not mean that after your candidature was announced there was any reflection so far as you are concerned and your ability as Speaker of this House is concerned. We have full faith in you and in your sense of Justice.

As the Prime Minister himself has said, we are facing many problems of serious magnitude and it will require this House to address itself to the solution of these problems. Of course, I do not know what would be the attitude of the Government—this is not the occasion strictly for that—in the matter of resolving these problems, realising their present position so far as the composition of the House is concerned.

Once again, I convey our sincere felicitations to you and, I am sure you will adorn this Chair with glory and with great satisfaction of all concerned.

SHRI B. VIJAYAKUMAR RAJU (Narasapur): Sir, I would like to congratulate the newly elected Speaker. I am congratulating you on behalf

of my party and on my own behalf. Sir, I know you very well since 1984. From 1989 onwards, as the Deputy-Speaker of this House, you performed your duties in an esteemed way. I hope and expect that in future also you will maintain the decorum and decency of this august House. I wish you every success in your endeavours. I am once again congratulating you on your being elected as Speaker of this House.

SHRI FRANK ANTHONY (Nominated-Anglo-Indian): Mr. Speaker, Sir, speaking literally as the most senior Member of this august House, I think every party that has joined hands in endorsing unanimously your election deserves credit. I want to give credit to the Prime Minister because from my very close association with him recently as the Prime Minister, I found in him certain special qualities of conciliation and accommodation especially in the present political milieu. So far as you are concerned, Mr. Speaker, you are the lynchpin of the sovereignty of this sovereign House. You are, in a sense, above the law. You do not even have to respond to a notice from the Apex Court of this country. Because of that, you epitomise the sovereignty of this sovereign House. It has well become a convention that the ruling party selects a person from itself to be the Speaker because you are the lynchpin of the ruling party also.

Sir, I have the privilege of being an elected Member of the Constituent Assembly and if I may say so it contained the cream of India's political and legal constituents and the one thing we underlined, Mr. Speaker, was that our Constitution was unlike the American Constitution. Our Constitution has a definite unitary bias unlike the American Constitution where the bias was federal. Here, hegemony is vested in the Central Government on crucial matters and ultimately those crucial matters fall from interpretation within yours. I have the privilege of seeing you actually at work. I do not want to say anything that may have some kind of personal

implications. But may I, as I have said earlier, without any personal reflections, give my personal view that one of the greatest Speakers we ever had was the late Shri Mavalankar. He was very firm but at the same time he was very fair. I have the privilege of seeing you earlier also and I was more than impressed. You have come with some special experience from Maharashtra. I was overborne by your mental and political alacrity and I found in you, Mr. Speaker, certain qualities that would combine to make you another very great Speaker.

May I, on behalf of the very senior Members of this House, welcome you. May you also uphold always your own sovereignty and the sovereignty of this august House.

**SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA** (Midnapore): Mr. Speaker, Sir, on behalf of my party, I extend to you our hearty congratulations on your elevation to this high Chair and offer you our unstinted cooperation in your very very difficult task of conducting the affairs of this House.

Even up to a few hours ago, sections of the influential press in this country were giving the people the impression that the election of the honourable Speaker might be the witness of the bitter controversy and struggle. However, now everybody can see for themselves that in the interest of co-operation and consensus, which by the way are a two-way traffic and not a one-way traffic, that the Members of this House have decided that this session of this Tenth Lok Sabha should get off to a harmonious start. And I may also say that whatever controversies or differences of opinion and so on were operating behind the scene—they were there, the last few days, no doubt—they have nothing to do with individuals or personalities. There were some political overtones, some political considerations which is not at all surprising, considering that we have just come through a titanic election battle in which sometimes feelings and passions had been very

high; there had been very sharp ideological and political conflicts. And it has been one of the most prolonged and, if I may say so, painful elections which it has been our experience ever to go through in our life—painful also because midway to it came the brutal murder of Shri Rajiv Gandhi and also painful because the process began some time in the month of April with the calling of nominations of candidates and it is not completed. Even today, the election in its entirety has not been completed. I do not think we have ever had an experience like this before. And sometimes, not only we but the people in other countries congratulate India on being the largest democracy in the world, there were times during this election struggle when apprehensions were aroused among the people as to whether the whole election process would be allowed to be completed because there was so much violence; so many people lost their lives and there were so many delays which could have been perhaps avoided. But we were always reassured by seeing on the television lines and lines of our humble folk of this country who are the voters, waiting for hours together in the summer heat, in the rains, waiting in a disciplined way to cast their votes. Unless people have got a deep commitment to democracy in their hearts, they cannot go through the ordeal like this. I think, this House should congratulate and compliment the common people of this country, first of all, the voters who have allowed us to retain that reputation of being the largest democracy in the world. Otherwise, this system was in danger of perhaps of breaking down.

So, Sir, you have got a very difficult task before you, no doubt. The people in their wisdom have elected again a hung Parliament. The people have elected or rather this Parliament has produced another minority Government. This makes your task all the more difficult because nobody, I think, in this House wants that this country should be plunged into another election within a two or three months time. Nobody wants that.

[Sh. Indrajit Gupta]

That pre-supposes that this House, this Parliament and you, Sir, who are presiding over it should conduct the affairs in such a way that the burning problems, the acute problems which are facing the country and the people—I need not mention them here—which have defied solution for such a long time are given adequate attention and care which is required, if this country is to survive. I am not referring only to the economic problems; they are bad enough; very serious. But there are other problems; social problems; political problems; problems of the division of this country; secessionist forces are at work. We have not been able to find any solution so long. People are tormented by unemployment, by inflation, by high prices. We have not been able to find any solution. So this House in its collective wisdom has got to work in a way which enables these problems to be tackled.

You, presiding over our discussions and debates here, have to be—as we know you are—impartial, that you are sufficiently experienced, that you will have a mastery over the rules of the procedure of this House and that you will be firm in your decisions. But your justice, I am sure, will be tempered with mercy and you will see to it that everybody here gets a fair chance to express themselves.

I don't think any Government should imagine that they cannot run a country unless they have a Speaker who belongs to their own party. I don't like this kind of statement because no Speaker is meant to run the country; the Speaker is meant to run the House. It is not the job of the Speaker to run the country. Therefore one should not drag down this high office of the Speaker to this level of which party or not he belongs to.

There were of course some differences looming in the background; some conflicts were emerging on this question; but ultimately we have decided that to begin the game at least, which is your election, we should not precipitate any kind of conflict or

differences which would make us feel bitter towards each other. We may be political adversaries; but most of us here I think have got the highest respect for each other as political beings and as personalities and we want to have a proper healthy discussion and debate which may be very sharp of course; but whose main aim is to see that the problems facing this country are solved. This may be the last chance that we will have. I don't think the people may give us another chance if we fail them again.

I don't wish to take more time. I wish you well. You are an old friend of mine and many of us. I have full trust in you. I know of your impartiality and of your dexterity. As the Speaker you will serve this House well. Once again on behalf of my party, I wish you all success and I assure you of all cooperation.

SHRI P. G. NARAYANAN (Gobichettipalayam): Mr. Speaker, Sir, on behalf of AIADMK I offer my congratulations to you on your election as the Speaker of this august House which is the highest democratic forum of this country. The long innings of your public life as a Minister and as the Deputy Speaker in the previous Lok Sabha will definitely help you in conducting the business of the House efficiently and smoothly as per the well established traditions and rules of this House.

Now you belong to the whole House and so you are the guardian of democracy and custodian of the rights and privileges of this House and its members. I hope the privileges and rights of the members will be safeguarded under your custodianship.

We have full faith and trust in you Sir. On behalf of AIADMK I pledge my support and cooperation to you in discharging your duties and to uphold the dignity and decorum of this House. I hope and trust that democratic norms and traditions will be maintained during your tenure. With these words, I congratulate you again.

SHRI NANI BHATTACHARYA (Berhampore): Mr. Speaker, Sir, at the outset I extend my heart-felt congratulations to you. The position which I have seen a few days before, actually evoked in me certain doubts about the propriety of opinion of some sections in this House. I now see that the distorted secularism of the Congress has been combined with the fundamentalist sections of this House. (*Interruptions*). This is perhaps the beginning, Sir. It makes your task quite enormous and very difficult. Even then, I know you personally and I have come to know about your ability and efficiency also. You have to see on the one hand, the minority Government which has no command over the House—absolute command, I mean to say—and on the other hand the composition of the House. The composition of the House is rather uncanny and it is an embarrassing composition. (*Interruptions*).

AN HON. MEMBER: You are one of the crutches. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI NANI BHATTACHARYA: I am one of the crutches to expose you and to expose this side of the House also.

On this solemn occasion, I have to speak out all these things because it is the House and it is a sovereign House. We, who have assembled here, are representing the people of India. The people of India should know the unholy and unethical combination and that is what I have already spelt out. I do not want to dilate on this issue any more.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have full faith in you that you will be able to discharge your duties and responsibilities thrust on you as Speaker with full impartiality and diligence as the occasion demands without fear or favour.

[*Translation*]

SHRI MORESHWAR SAVE (Aurangabad): Honourable Speaker, Sir, I on my behalf and on behalf of my party, extend my heartiest congratulations to my close friend Shri Shivraj

Patil on this historic day of his election as the Speaker of Lok Sabha.

Shri Patil hails from that sacred land of Marathwada in my state Maharashtra which has illuminated and enlightened the entire country with its gift of knowledge. Since I belong to Marathwada, I am proud of the fact that the lineage of saints like Sant Gyaneshwar, Samarth Eknath owes its origin to this place. I am confident that my friend, Shri Shivraj Patil will function in an impartial manner as Speaker of this important House, which functions as the Legislature of this country, keeping in view the enlightened traditions set by Lord Rama and Chhatrapati Shivaji. I hope that he would conduct the proceedings of the House in an ideal manner. In addition to his soft-spokenness, Shri Patil is capable of taking clear decisions. Thus we are assured that there won't be any partiality towards any Member or any party. Smaller parties will also get sufficient opportunity to put forth their views, because I believe that though the number of smaller parties is less but their ideology and line of approach have a mass appeal in their respective areas.

It can be said about Shri Shivraj V. Patil that he, as Speaker of the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly and as Deputy Speaker of Lok Sabha, fearlessly and impartially upheld high traditions of these offices. As the Speaker of Lok Sabha, he will set such high standards which will be a cherished part of the future history of Parliament. I wish him success in the new role assigned to him.

[*English*]

SHRI CHITTA BASU (Barasat): Sir, I deem it a great and unique pleasure for me to join the Prime Minister and other distinguished colleagues of this honourable House to extend warm felicitations to you on behalf of my party and myself on your being elected Speaker of this great House.

As you know, this House represents the sovereignty of the people. You, as the Speaker of the House, ought to

[Sh. Chitta Basu]

remain as a vigilant guard to the sovereignty of the people. And I hope you are conscious of the responsibility that has been cast upon you.

It has been once again proved that India is a vibrant and a great democracy. It has been further proved that India is a resilient democracy. This has been proved by the ordeals through which the people have had to go before electing this tenth Lok Sabha. This House as such is the epitome of the essence of parliamentary democracy. And on you rests the responsibility of maintaining the dignity and decorum of this House and ultimate victory of the parliamentary democracy in the changing world in this great country of ours.

You are the custodian of the rights and privileges of the Members of this House. You are the custodian of preserving the conventions and the rich traditions of this House. We are in a hung Parliament. The very nature and composition of the House have cast great responsibilities on us particularly those who are committed to democracy and secularism. We in the Opposition, who are in the Left, have got a great responsibility to discharge. In this situation, you have also a very very crucial role to play. This Parliament, through its debates, through its arguments and various reasonings, can give a lead to the country and direction to the economy, and find out solution of the multidimensional crisis that the nation faces today. That can be done fully under your able and wise guidance. And I take it that you shall not fail this House at this critical juncture of our country.

Sir, I on behalf of my party, being conscious of the responsibility as the people's representative in the House, being conscious of the responsibility as one who upholds the principles and commitments of our Left forces and secular forces in the country, would appeal to you that you would also extend your cooperation to us in order to discharge our responsibility. I extend my fullfledged cooperation on be-

half of my party for the successful conduct of this House and for the discharge of the responsibilities the House is called upon.

SHRI EBRAHIM SULAIMAN SAIT (Ponnani): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to offer my most cordial and sincere felicitations to you on behalf of my party and myself. 'My party' means the Indian Union Muslim League. My party also congratulates you on your being elected unanimously as the Speaker of this august House. You have been elevated to the highest position of this august House, in the Parliament of a country which is the greatest democratic country indeed. I know fully well, Sir that you are armed with vast experience of having been the Speaker of the Maharashtra Assembly in the past and also the Deputy Speaker of the Ninth Lok Sabha. I am sure that you will prove to be a great success as the Speaker of this House which is going to be a hung Parliament, as all of us have been mentioning.

Sir, I must tell you, as the Prime Minister has said, that we are passing through a great crisis. There are so many complex problems wanting solutions. And in this context, it has been said that there should be union of hearts.

[Translation]

He has said that there should be union of hearts, but we have to create an atmosphere for such a union. Considerate approach and a sense of love and belonging is essential for union of hearts and if such qualities pervade there will be union of hearts and problems can be solved.

A poet has said:

"Khuloose dil na ho to dosti se  
kutchh nahin hota,  
mujhe inaaloom hai meri khushi se  
kutchh nahin hota."

If we say that there should be union of hearts and if we feel pleased that won't do, there should be reciprocal love and affection for the union of hearts.

[English]

We must all try to create such a situation and atmosphere for the hearts to come closer. It is really a matter of great anguish that the cult of violence is growing in the political field. You find the cult of violence everywhere and this cult of violence had culminated in the great brutal assassination of Shri Rajiv Gandhi, the great son of India. This cult of violence has to be crushed and all parties should come together and must have a sense and spirit of coordination and co-operation and that alone will be able to solve the problems facing our country.

Now Sir, I have to congratulate you on your elevation to the highest office and I express my hope that you will be completely impartial. I hope you will uphold the dignity of the House and particularly smaller groups like that of ours will have to be given particular attention. There should be no discrimination against us. This is what I hope and this is the assurance which I want from you.

Then Sir, I wish you all success. It is a hung Parliament in which, I hope, you will be able to carry on the deliberations with complete honesty and impartiality. I wish you all success and long life and also wish the hung Parliament a full term, i.e., five years. Sir, what I have to say regarding carrying on the deliberations of this House is

“Hayat Lekar chalo, Kaynat lekar, chalo,  
Chalo to sare Zamane ko Sath lekar chalo.”

I hope this will be the attitude followed by a Speaker like you in the future deliberations which are to be conducted in the House. Thank you.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRIMATI DIL KUMARI BHANDARI (Sikkim): Sir, I congratulate you on my own behalf, on behalf of my party and the people of Sikkim. I say ‘people of Sikkim’ because I am the lone Member from the State of Sikkim. I congratulate you on your

unanimous election to the post of Speaker of this august House. Sir, there is no doubt that this is a well deserved post by you and I am sure that you are more than able to discharge your responsibilities, which you have just undertaken a little while ago, in the years to come. Though I am the lone Member from my own State and my party, I would like to extend my full support for the successful conduct of the business of the House and I wish you a successful tenure. I once again wish you the best on my own behalf and on behalf of my State. Thank you.

16.00 hrs.

[Translation]

SHRI SHIBU SOREN (Dumka): Sir, I congratulate you on the honour bestowed upon you through your unanimous election to the office of the Speaker.

I personally and my party, the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, hope that our party will be treated on equal footing with the larger parties. Since you as the Deputy-Speaker of this House during the last Lok Sabha discharged your responsibilities in a distinguished manner, I am confident that you will do justice to one and all. I once again congratulate you.

[English]

DR. JAYANTA RONGPI (Autonomous District): Mr. Speaker Sir, I, on behalf of my party, viz. the Autonomous State Demand Committee and also on behalf of the people of the Hill Region of Assam, congratulate you on being elected to the glorious post of Speaker of the greatest democracy in the world.

On this occasion, I would like to make a request on only one point. Mr. Speaker Sir, as you know, I belong to a part of the country where a big section of the population for many reasons, seems to be gradually losing faith in the established political and democratic process of the country. There may be so many reasons. But one of the reasons is

[Dr. Jayanta Rongpi]

that this highest law-making body of the country sometimes does not deliberate deeply and does not give enough time to the problems faced by the people of North East India, specially the tribal people of North East India. I feel people's patience should not be tested any more. Rather I hope that the problems faced by the tribals in the North East India will be seriously deliberated here. The number of the representatives from the North Eastern Region may be less. But still, Mr. Speaker Sir, I hope you will give us enough support so that our problems will be thoroughly deliberated upon and we will get a democratic solution to our problems.

With these words, I congratulate you again and offer you my sincere cooperation in upholding the dignity of this House.

**SHRI MUHI RAM SAIKIA** (Now-gong): Sir, on my behalf, on behalf of my party and on behalf of the people of Assam, I offer my heartiest congratulations on your being elected as the Speaker of this august House. Sir, I hope you will conduct this House in an impartial manner and will serve as a cementing force of this House in the larger interests of this country.

With these words, I once again congratulate you.

**SHRI K. P. UNNIKRISHNAN** (Badagara): Sir, it is my proud privilege today to join the hon. Prime Minister, the leader of the Opposition and many of my esteemed colleagues in complimenting you and congratulating you on your unanimous election as the Speaker of this great House, one of the greatest parliamentary institutions that history has on its record.

Sir, you have a distinguished career both in the Maharashtra Legislature as well as here in this House—both as a Minister and also as a presiding officer. We know you. And our familiarity does not add to our discomfiture. But on the contrary, it enhances

our respect, our affection and our good will for you.

Sir, whatever may have been the circumstances of this election, most of the members who know you hold you in the greatest personal esteem and respect and that I can say shall be the greatest guarantee of your success as the Presiding Officer of what probably may be a very turbulent House.

Sir, we are almost at the crossroads of history. You have a historic responsibility when we are at the threshold of major challenges as well as historically, I would repeat, at the crossroads of history. One of the few surviving members of the Constituent Assembly Mr. Frank Anthony, who is fortunately with us in this House today, referred to the character of Indian Constitution. I would also like to underline and say that the character of Indian Constitution has been preserved in its entirety, that includes also the Preamble which we added later.

The basic and fundamental task of this House lies in our commitment to social goals and in a more fundamental sense our commitment to national unity and secularism. Secularism is not pseudo as some people seem to think. Secularism is now sought to be degraded and down-graded by some people who think that they can use certain base emotions and try to devalue the Republic itself. These are the tendencies which will have to be fought and it shall be fought in this House. I have no doubt that secularism shall prevail and those who stand by the basic features of the Constitution shall win.

Sir, one of your tasks is to defend the rights of the Members, which I have no doubt you will, particularly of the minority, particularly of those who want to dissent because the right to dissent is the most valuable and vital role that we have and that is the essence of freedom. Your task is also to defend the rights of religious and

linguistic minorities of this country. We are essentially not in a sense a country which can not be built up on the basis of uniformity of language, race, caste, creed or religion. When stifled voices are sought to be expressed here, this House will have to be a mirror of hopes and aspirations of all these fragmented and desparate elements who want to create or are going to create this greate nation call-ed India.

Sir, I wish you well in this task. I have no doubt that with your rare and distinguished background you will succeed in this task and I also hope that you will add a new chapter to the glorius history of Indian Parliamen-t.

**SHRI YAIMA SINGH YUMNAM** (Inner Manipur): Sir, on my behalf and on behalf of the Manipur Peoples' Party I rise to extend my felicitations to you. My State is in the Eastern corner of the country. Sir, though you have been elected Speaker of this august House, your name has been known to us since you were the Speaker of the Maharashtra Assembly.

I have one grievance and that is that I cannot speak in my own language. Other Members of this august House can speak in their own language. If I could have the chance of speaking in my own language I would have expressed myself fluently and in a more befitting manner. I hope that now, since you are occupying the Chair, our grievance would be redressed. I again congratulate you on your being elected as the Speaker of this august House.

[*Translation*]

**SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR** (Ballia): Sir, I extend my heartiest congratulations to you on your election as Speaker. With your election the Parliament has added a bright chapter to its glorious history of its traditions. It has also proved that you would be unbiased and fearless.

The Hon. Prime Minister said that the country was passing through a difficult phase. The problems confronting us are complex. To solve these problems, Sir, we need the knowledge of 'Gyaneshwari' and the strength of 'Bhawani'. But this knowledge and strength will be useful only if we are able to awaken the will-power of the crores of people of this country. It is the responsibility of Parliament to awaken this will-power and the onerous responsibility of conducting the proceedings of Parliament has fallen on your shoulders.

All of us are familiar with you. You possess the qualities of humbleness, self-discipline and wisdom. You are gentle, yet firm. You have the capability for guiding people. So I believe that you are best suited to fulfil this responsibility. As the new Speaker of this august House, you shall not only fulfil your responsibilities but also be a guiding light for the Parliament which has to complete the tasks before it. There is a lot of scope for conflict of ideas but the need of the hour is a joint effort towards finding new solutions to the long-standing problems of our country.

I am sure that your qualities of harmony, cooperation, discretion will provide us strength and the inspiration in achieving our goal and you will be bestowed with the energy to discharge your future responsibilities.

My best wishes to you.

[*English*]

**MR. SPEAKER:** Hon. Members, first of all, let me have the pleasure of extending a very warm welcome, to all the hon. Members, in this House, on the second day of the first Session of the Tenth Lok Sabha, as the first servant of this august House, and as the first duty performed by me, as the Speaker.

This House and the precincts of this House are part of our history.

most magnificent and most memorable.

They should continue to be like that and also more effective, magnificent and memorable, equal to all such places in the world and in certain respects more effective and more attractive.

To this House, great statesmen in the country and great souls have been elected. They have functioned here, with dedication, vision, honesty and love for the people, for the country and for the world, and the great causes, philosophies and ideas. They have left great traditions, conventions and imprints in the annals of the functioning of the Parliamentary Democracy.

It would certainly be wise to remember them and their contributions with gratitude in our hearts and follow the broad outlines and directions given by them. At the same time, it would be necessary to use our ingenuities to invent and follow new methods and directions to cope up with new and unforeseen circumstances and situations. The Parliamentary adroitness lies in the judicious mix of the two. And the present Members in the House should show themselves as the Parliamentarians, capable of rising to the occasion and doing the needful.

The difficulties faced by the people and the nation have been discussed and solutions to overcome them have been found out. Continuously, without inhibition of any kind, matters of public weal and interest have been analysed and understood through discussions. The results of the efforts have been, by and large, beneficial and satisfactory to the people in the country. They have reflected the differing views held by the people and the Parties and also their demand for more satisfactory solutions. They have provided strength and the shock absorbing mechanism to the democracy in the country and earned credibility and good name for the same in the world.

the ecstasy and agony of making new policies, plans and programmes facing the difficulties and problems thrown up by new situations in the country, the world and new approaches to the life, new thinking and philosophies. The tasks we have to perform are going to be challenging, intricate and onerous. All the same, we would all certainly rise to the occasion and prove that, with our conventions and convictions, with the realisation of the need to adjust and compromise and understand, on matters of public interest and weal, the good of the country and the world, and the exigencies of time and cope up with new situations and new problems. All of us sitting in the House are friends of one another, holding different views and ideas and not opponents and enemies. The friendship between the Honourable Members, and the Presiding Officers and the officers should and would prevail and help to understand and cooperate with one another. The officers of the House have been doing that. They are trained for the same. It is engrained in their outlook towards life. The Honourable Members are all interested in the good of the country and in strengthening the democracy. So, we are all, I think and pray for the same, going to understand one another and cooperate in the best possible manner. The Presiding Officers have a duty to understand the Members, their aspirations, to work effectively in the House, to be helpful and cooperative with them, impartial to all members and just and affectionate to one and all. We would hope and pray that we would function in these and the best possible manner.

The House reflects in the hearts of the people and the democracy. What happens here should reach the people and all parts of the country. The media and instruments which are responsible for the same have to play a very important role. They would be facilitated to do the same. The people in all parts of the country would be kept in touch with the functioning of the House through conventional and new and modern methods. The House should remain in touch with

all sorts of the institutions in the country and in an appropriate manner with the institutions in other countries and international organisations. The House and its precincts should look good, do good and do justice to all matters which fall in its jurisdiction.

You, the Honourable Members, have done a great honour to me. This House has elevated me to the important position of the Speaker. I express my deep and heartfelt gratitude to all the Honourable Members and specially to the Honourable Prime Minister, to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition and the Honourable Leaders of all other Parties. I would like to thank the speakers for using very warm expressions while speaking about me and giving me an assurance that cooperation will be forthcoming from them. It is only with your affection and with your cooperation the

House can work successfully. I pray the Almighty for the strength to do my duty in the best possible manner.

16.20½ hrs.

### INTRODUCTION OF PRIME MINISTER AND LEADER OF THE HOUSE

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I have great pleasure in introducing to this House the Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri P. V. Narasimha Rao. He is known to all of us. We extend to him our good wishes and godspeed in his task.

Also, I have pleasure in introducing to this House Shri Arjun Singh as the Leader of the House.

Hon. Prime Minister may now introduce his Council of Ministers.

16.21 hrs.

### INTRODUCTION OF MINISTERS

[English]

The PRIME MINISTER (SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO): Sir, Shri Arjun Singh is the Minister of Human Resource Development.

After Arjun Singh ji, I introduce the other Cabinet Ministers:

Shri B. Shankaranand . . . . .	Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas
Shri Madhavsingh Solanki . . . . .	Minister of External Affairs
Shri Manmohan Singh . . . . .	Minister of Finance
Shri S.B. Chavan . . . . .	Minister of Home Affairs
Shri Sharad Pawar . . . . .	Minister of Defence
Shri Balram Jakhar . . . . .	Minister of Agriculture
Shri C.K. Jaffer Sharief . . . . .	Minister of Railways
Shri Madhav Rao Scindia . . . . .	Minister of Civil Aviation and Tourism
Shri Ghulam Nabi Azad . . . . .	Minister of Parliamentary Affairs