

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE) : First of all, I would like to pay homage to the former Speaker of Lok Sabha Shri Balayogi. At this moment of sorrow I got a chance to visit his birth place. I was surprised to see that while conducting Business of the House efficiently and representing the country in international conferences, he worked very well for development of his parliamentary constituency. He is an example for us. I also pay homage to those security personnel who sacrificed their lives to save the Parliament and Members of Parliament. 90 days have passed since the incident of 13th December and sometimes it seems that we are forgetting that incident. The attack on Parliament was a challenge for the entire nation and sovereignty of the country. It was condemned throughout the world but the guilty persons could not be caught as yet and our efforts have continued. Voice against terrorism is being raised throughout the world and we are supporting that. We should intensify our efforts. Hon'ble President addressed the House on 25th February and on 27th February Gujarat tragedy occurred. Later on Ayodhya controversy arose, which caused resentment and anxiety throughout the country. Will the country stray from its path? Will we not be able to protect our freedom and sovereignty attained after great sacrifices. But it is a matter of satisfaction that with the internal power, the country is overcoming these challenges and making progress. No single party can be credited for that and even criticism by a party cannot reduce its importance.

Today, rehabilitation is the need of hour for Gujarat. Thousands of people are living in camps. The team of MPs which visited Gujarat has seen the situation actually. People can not go back to their houses as their houses are damaged or looted. There are not proper arrangements in camps. I have suggested to the Gujarat Government to constitute an all party Committee under the chairmanship of the Governor and proper arrangements should be made for the victims. The situation has improved to an extent but that could not be termed adequate. The lacunae should be removed. We have decided to make contribution from the Prime Minister's Relief Fund for this purpose. Gujarat also suffered the tragedy of earthquake and whole humanity came forward to help the earthquake victims in the same manner the whole country should come forward to help the victims of this tragedy in Gujarat.

We should not go in controversy as to how it happened. We all know what happened in Godhara but what happened afterwards can not be rationalised. One criminal cannot prove another criminal as an innocent

person. Counter violence cannot yield good result. I would like to say that situation of Gujarat should be monitored constantly and centre Government as well as State Government should work for relief and rehabilitation of all victims.

It is my submission that one should be cautious in selecting words while raising Gujarat issue. Some hon'ble Members have developed tendency of using such word whose meaning is known to them only and not to others. Such words cause disaster. This is a place to express sentiments and not a place to show one's intellectual.

I would like to say to the leader of opposition that use of word 'genocide' is not proper in case of Gujarat. That is a different word. This word is used when a caste or nation is destroyed. In Gujarat Hindu as well as Muslims, both have been killed. People belonging to both the Communities have been killed in police firing. One should try to understand purport of the word. This word can be used at international fora. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN) : We heard your leader with rapt attention. This is not proper. I took special care on that day. We too had many objections to many of the things that she said. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : He is not only the Prime Minister, he is also the leader of the House. This is not the way.

[Translation]

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the situation has improved now. With its inner strength, the country is overcoming the challenges and moving forward. Ayodhya controversy has been resolved. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Shiladaan has taken place. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : Do you have any objection to that?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, we learnt from the past experiences and formulated policies on that basis. We showed rigidity wherever it was necessary but at the same

time we have respected public opinion also. The Members of Parliament belonging to my party were not allowed to go to Ayodhya, rather they were arrested. I know that Members of my party are sad due to that. But it is the duty. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Shri Vinay Katiyar has left the House. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : Shri Vinay Katiyar played a very constructive role there. I myself had to bear abuses from the people. Pamphlets were distributed among the Members in Parliament House. ...*(Interruptions)* that dictatorship will not be tolerated. Who can be a dictator in a democratic set up. We abide by the constitution and made others also to follow it. Simultaneously, 'Shila Pujan' took place. When one goes to a temple to perform Puja, he makes offering to God in the form of Gold, silver, flowers, fruits etc. If someone offered 'Shilalekh', it was necessary to accept it. Accordingly arrangements will have to be made to place it at an appropriate place. ...*(Interruptions)* Paramhansji got annoyed and refused to talk to me. Later he was pacified and blessed me with a long term for my Government. ...*(Interruptions)* I do not know as to the extent to which these blessings will work but when I saw Sonia ji saying reverential salutations to Shankracharyaji, I thought there is something in his blessings and I should not deprive myself of it. The Ayodhya dispute. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (BOLPUR) : That is why she has won the last elections.

[Translation]

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Ayodhya dispute has to be resolved. Efforts have to be made for a speedy hearing and early settlement of this dispute. This problem should be solved at the national as well social levels outside the court precincts because it is posing a great challenge to the communal harmony in the country. Such a matter can become an election issue but by that nobody loses or gains in the elections. Now people are understanding the things. It is not appropriate that this pernicious matter should linger on this. The matter should be solved at an appropriate time before it becomes a sinus. We want success of the efforts being made to resolve the dispute. We are ready to make our contribution to it. A controversy has also arisen regarding the role of the Attorney General. That will be discussed in the evening,

that's why I am not mentioning it. Several other issues were also included in the discussion.

President's Address was a critical evaluation of the situation prevailing in the country and the policies of the Government. The Members have expressed their views on several issues. I would like to make a mention of a few of them. The Leader of the Opposition made a mention of our relations with Pakistan and has raised certain important question also.

Indo-Pak relations are still tense. There has been no let up in the flow of infiltration to our country from across the borders. We have to see what will be the situation when snow starts melting congenial atmosphere for a meaningful dialogue can only be created. If infiltration stopped completely at the line of control and at the international border.

Shrimati Gandhi had asked about the progress made in the demand made to Pakistan to hand over the 20 terrorists wanted by India. Our efforts in this regard are on but no progress has been achieved in this regard. It is a test whether Pakistan is actually willing to fight terrorism or not. We want to make it clear to the people of the world who urge us time and again to take initiative for holding a dialogue, that we do not have any objection in holding a dialogue rather we believe in holding a dialogue but what is the use of holding dialogues when objectionable activities continue to take place. On this point we get international support and those who urge us to hold a dialogue agree that terrorist activities should stop.

We treat Pakistan as a member of the SAARC. Recently Shrimati Sushma Swaraj attended the conference of Information Ministers. In her visit to Pakistan, she successfully presented India's stand point for which she should be commended. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : We have appreciated her.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : Dada, sometimes you do a good job.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : You should always do a right thing, doing it some times causes trouble.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : Pakistani rulers work in a specific style. First we saw in Kathmandu and then in Islamabad. He makes a surprise announcement at the right moment. This time also he did the same thing. He

[Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee]

said they were ready to resume flights between the two countries and sought her views in that regard. Shrimati Swaraj said that she belongs to a democratic country. Where there is no military rule. She has to consult others also. She abide by the principle of collective responsibility. If there is a concrete proposal, we will definitely consider it. They want to win in the war of propaganda. Now we have also become clever.

There will be a SAARC Ministerial Conference on poverty. This process will be going on and we hope that impediments coming in the way of healthy Indo-Pak relations will soon be removed in near future. In this connection, I would like to make a mention of Sri Lanka where a radical political change has taken place. That change has been welcomed. We hope peace could be restored in Sri Lanka by that. We wish them good luck. Sri Lanka is our nearest neighbour. We have cultural and religious relations with them. We have helped Sri Lanka at the times of crisis. We put the life of our soldier in danger just to save the integrity of that country. We made full efforts in this regard. We want Sri Lanka to be able to solve its problem and pave way for the country's progress by providing equal opportunities to people speaking different languages while protecting the country's integrity. It should prove further on the path of development.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, certain financial matters were also raised during this discussion. Though the Budget will be presented in coming days and the House would get an opportunity to discuss the economic situation, but I would like to mention one thing here. Shri Somnath Chatterjee raised a question very emphatically as he always does. It was mentioned in Shrimati Sonia Gandhi's speech also as to why profit making public sector undertakings are being closed down. It is but natural that such a question would be raised. It is a misconception that profit making undertakings are being closed down because the Finance Minister heads funds to abridge the deficit. There is a logic behind this move. If only loss making undertakings will be sold then who will purchase them.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : Do modernization!

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : Funds are required for modernization and disinvestment is being done for collecting funds. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : It is not being done.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : Please look into this matter.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : All of you are aware that I raised the matter in Moscow even for the revival of the Iron & Steel company. We neither want closure of this company nor do we want to put labourers in any problem but we are concerned about economy also.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Please do it.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : You think of labourers many a time but I think of the entire society. However, we also want to make the labourers understand the situation for which the cooperation of the august House is required.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : Please show us by action. Please agree to it.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Please make an announcement to this effect today.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : There should be a consensus on this issue. Economic reforms were not initiated by us rather we have inherited them from the previous regime. Today, Shri Ram Naik has made some announcement regarding gas but so far as I have been told opposition did not welcome that step. ...*(Interruptions)* Opposition only wants to topple the Government. The Congress Party is facing the same problems in West Bengal which we are facing here.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : You have more powers.

15.00 hrs.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : We seldom want economic reforms by inviting impopularity. But we know that what seems wrong or unpopular today will be right and popular tomorrow. Today people are feeling difficulties but later on they will understand it. The march should not halt because of difficulties.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : Will the Indian Iron and Steel company get the money?

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : Mr. Deputy Speaker, so far as the bill regarding women reservation is concerned, we are ready to bring it again on the consensus of all political parties. Earlier when the bill was brought, a suggestion was made to evolve consensus by making the quota of reservation less than 33%. There was some delay in presenting it before Sonia ji. I am going to revive that proposal and will again present the bill on women reservation before the House, but not for publicity.

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : If any different percentage is suggested by some, let them bring an amendment. The House will decide. You cannot have it outside the House.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : I entirely agree with you.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : Please bring it before the House. Let us see which amendment, which percentage is passed.

[Translation]

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : I accept your advice hundred percent. Look at your left side also.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : Please ask the Members on your backside.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN : Members sitting on his back side will listen, but those sitting by your side will not listen.

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH : If a provision of reservation for women belonging to backward classes and dalits is made, we will support the Bill.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, there should be no more delay in the matter. Sometimes it appears that we are not serious about the matter and only propagating the matter but women are benefited by the reservation in Panchayats and local bodies. Women are already prepared to take the lead in Parliament and Legislative Assemblies. Awareness gained during the freedom struggle helped women to participate in politics. We want to introduce this bill and get it passed with your support.

I would like to thank Shri Vijay Kumar for moving the Motion of Thanks on President's Address. I request the august House to support it.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : A number of amendments have been moved by hon. Members to the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address. Shall I put all the amendments together to the vote of the House? Or, does any hon. Member want any particular amendment to be put separately?

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR (MAYILADUTURAI) : I want my amendment No.1054 to be put separately.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : All the other amendments can be put together except yours.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR : Sir, I moved the following amendment :

"That at the end of the motion, the following be added, namely-

"but regret that there is no mention in the Address about any proposal of Union Government's compensation to the farmers and farm labourers of the Cauvery delta where harvested and ripened crops have been severely damaged by heavy unseasonal rains in the first week of February, 2002."

Sir, the losses were suffered by the farmers in the Cauvery delta in the summer *kuruvai* season owing to the non-implementation of the Cauvery Tribunal Award. The heavy unseasonal rains have severely damaged the winter *samba* harvest. Both the harvested crop and the *samba* crop, which was ripe for harvesting, have been damaged. While the State Government has paid a meagre compensation of Rs.2500 per hectare to some farmers against an income loss of ten times that amount, the Union Government has not done anything. ...*(Interruptions)* I would just finish it. I would just make two sentences. The Union Government has done nothing to compensate the State Government. When they give it for Punjab, why can they not give it for Tamil Nadu? The Union Agriculture Minister is too preoccupied with Uttar Pradesh to visit Tamil Nadu. So, I request him to come to my constituency to see himself the position. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I shall now put the amendment number 1054 moved by Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar to the vote of the House.

The amendment no. 1054 was put and negatived.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR : You are the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Agriculture. ...*(Interruptions)* This is anti-farmers. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I shall now put together all the other amendments, which have been moved, to the vote of the House.