

[Shri Morarji Desai]

present and, for the rest, I shall have the privilege of doing it on Monday.

1. Shri Parkash Singh Badal.
2. Shri Sikander Bakht.
3. Dr. Protap Chandra Chunder.
4. Prof. Madhu Dandavate.
5. Shri Mohan Dharia.
6. Shri P. Ramachandran.
7. Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
8. Shri Ravindra Verma.

11.45 hrs.

OBITUARY REFERENCE

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI MORARJI DESAI): Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is my melancholy duty to move a Resolution to give expression to the Lok Sabha's grief over the demise of President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed. The late President was a staunch nationalist from his early years and was one of the finest gentlemen in our political life. Selfless, modest but firm in his loyalty to the ideals which have built up our nation, he won the affection of our people. I was privileged to know him and work with him for many years. He had a remarkable gift for maintaining his equanimity in moments of stress and crisis. Through his culture and unfailing courtesy he added new dignity to the office of the President of India.

The Lok Sabha also remembers him as a conscientious parliamentarian.

His passing away has deprived the nation of a guide and statesman of rare quality.

I request all sections of the House to join me in requesting the Speaker to convey Lok Sabha's condolences to Begum Abida Ahmed and to other members of the family.

I beg to move the following Resolution:

"That the Lok Sabha expresses its profound sorrow at the sudden death of the President of India, Shri Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, and pledges itself to promote the high ideals of patriotism, national unity, secularism and the service of humanity which he upheld."

SHRI YASHVANTRAO CHAVAN (Satara): I rise to pay our humble homage to the great son of India, the late President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed. As I said, he was a great son of India who participated in the Indian national Independence struggle. He was one of the few men to whom it was given to serve the country before the Independence and even during the post-Independence period of reconstruction of modern India. He was educated in England. As a lawyer, while he practised in Assam and in Calcutta too, he never lost his contact with Delhi. He had, if I can borrow the word of Prof. Rashudin, the simplicity of Assam, he had the ruggedness of the tribals, he had the sophistication of the Urdu culture of Delhi.

Sir, I had the privilege of knowing him personally for the last more than 15 years. He was associated with my Party from the days of 1931 and as such, when I came in contact with him he was connected with the very leading policy-making organs of our Party. If you look at him as a man, as a sportsman, as a Minister and lastly as President, what stands out is the man behind. He was religious by nature, but he was secular in his convictions and conduct. As a Minister he had held many offices and he had held them with great distinction. He had functioned in this House as a Member of this House. I think many of the old Members know him with what grace he functioned in this House.

He participated in the national struggle and suffered with millions of other

citizens of India and he was thus one of the architects of Independence of India. As a man, Sir, he was simple in his natural behaviour. His disarming smile and his graceful and gentle conduct as a President won the hearts of millions of people.

It is a great tragedy that he is no more amongst us. He was highly respected as a man and as President in whatever country he visited. Only a few days before he died he had visited Malaysia. Unfortunately he came back and he fell seriously sick and died. We consider him as a great Indian, a great Congressman and a great President. We shall always remember him as the ideal person and follow in his footsteps.

Sir, I pay my humble homage to him.

श्री ज. ज. वन राम (सासाराम) :

अध्यक्ष जी दिवंगत राष्ट्रपति श्री फखरुद्दीन अली अहमद भारतीय संस्कृति में जो कुछ सुन्दर है, उसके प्रतीक थे। वे राजनीति के मोद्धा तो थे ही साथ ही साथ उनमें मानवीय गुणों का समन्वय भी बहुत ही सुन्दर ढंग से हुआ था। भारत भिन्न-भिन्न धर्मों का देश है। सभी धर्मों का आदर होना भारतीय संस्कृति का एक अविच्छिन्न अंग है। श्री फखरुद्दीन अली अहमद इसमें विश्वास ही नहीं रखते थे बल्कि यह उनके जीवन का एक अंग भी बन गया था और इसलिए भारत के सभी लोगों के लिए वह प्रिय बन गए थे।

“वह एक खिलाड़ी थे। वह राजनीति में भी खेल खेला करते थे और जब कभी मौका आता था इस बात को बतला देते थे कि हार और जीत में प्रसन्न रहना एक खिलाड़ी का अच्छा काम होता है। मन्त्रिमण्डल में भी वह रहे और जिन लोगों को उनके साथ काम करने का अवसर मिला उन्होंने यह देखा कि कार्य की सफलता के साथ-साथ उनके मातहत काम करने वालों में विश्वास पैदा करना, उनका

प्रेम लेना यह भी उनका एक गुण था। उनके चले जाने से भारत का एक महान पुरुष चला गया है और उन के स्थान क्री पूति होना सम्भव नहीं है। जिन लोगों को उनके साथ राजनीति में काम करने का अवसर मिला उन्होंने वह भी देखा कि राजनीति के अन्दर भी वह उदारता बरता करते थे और उदारता इस बात से चलती थी कि भारतीय संस्कृति में उनका अटूट विश्वास था। वह मानते थे कि भारतीय संस्कृति एक मिश्रित संस्कृति है और सभी लोगों की मिली जुली संस्कृति है। उनके गुणों को हम स्मरण रखें तो हमारा राष्ट्रीय जीवन सम्पन्न बन सकता है।

उनके प्रति हम जितनी भी संवेदना प्रकट करें थोड़ी होगी। इन शब्दों के साथ मैं उनके प्रति श्रद्धांजलि अर्पित करता हूँ और उनके परिवार वालों के प्रति संवेदना प्रकट करना चाहता हूँ।

SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE (Howrah): Mr. Speaker, Sir, on behalf of my Party, I fully associate myself with the sentiments expressed here in offering our condolences and homage to the departed President. I was not so thick with him, though I had the privilege of coming in contact with him. The quality in him which attracted me was that he was above communalism and he carried forward the tradition of nationalist Muslims. The country was not prepared for this news of his sudden death; there was some confusion when the news of his sudden death came. No doubt, his death and absence at a critical time has been felt throughout the country.

On behalf of our Party, I request you to convey our condolences to the bereaved family.

SHRI K. MAYATHEVAR (Dindigul): Mr. Speaker, Sir, on behalf of the All-India Anna D.M.K., I convey my sorrowful condolences on the death of the President to the members of his bereaved family and request you to convey the same to them.

[Shri K. Mayathevar]

As we are all aware, the former President not only served as great politician; he proved to be a very good administrator while he held the high office of Minister many times in the country. He was an honest politician and great statesman, who was very faithful to the country. When he was President, he was a protector of this nation. He proved to be very good philosopher. He also served as an educationist. In all aspects, he set up new precedents as President of India.

In terms of the Resolution, I would again request you to convey our sorrowful condolences to the members of the bereaved family.

श्री जी० एस० वनातत्राला (पोनानी) :
जनाब स्पीकर साहब, हम सदर जम्हूरिया, श्री फखरुद्दीन अली अहमद साहब के अचानक इन्तकाल पर अपने रंज, गम और अफसोस का इजहार कर रहे हैं। मरहूम के बारे में जिन जज्बात का इजहार किया गया है मैं अपने और मुस्लिम लीग की जानब से इस रंज और दुख में शिरकत का इजहार करता हूँ।

यकीनन मरहूम एक दिलकश शख्सियत और शानदार रेकार्ड के मालिक थे, मुल्क की शानदार खिदमत का सेहरा उनके सर पर रहा है। उनका अचानक इन्तकाल कर जाना मुल्क के लिये एक बहुत बड़ा नुकसान है। हम मरहूम को अपना खिराजे अक्कीदत पेश करते हैं और साथ-साथ अल्लाहताला से दुवा करते हैं कि मरहूम को जवारे रहमत में जगह अता फ़रमाये, और पसमान्दगान को सब्जे जमील अता करे। मरहूम आज हमारे बीच में नहीं हैं, लेकिन उनकी याद हमेशा ताजा रहेगी इस बारे में कोई शक और शुबहा नहीं हो सकता है।

इन अल्फाज के साथ मैं दोबरा उन नेक जज्बात में शरीक हो रहा हूँ जो इस ऐवाम में मरहूम के लिये कहे गये।

SHRIMATI PARVATHI KRISHNAN (Coimbatore): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the CPI, I should like to associate myself with the tributes that have been paid to the late President, Shri Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed. To us he stood as a symbol of protection for the minorities and for the weaker sections. In his stewardship we looked forward to further progress of those particular sections. He carried with him the best traditions of the national movement and the spirit of national integration overcoming various fissiparous tendencies and linguistic and regional differences. He was always there in order to smooth out the differences that existed and to bring about a tranquil situation where there was disturbance. His loss is a loss not only to his family but to the country as a whole. On behalf of the CPI, I request you to convey our deepest condolences to his family and to assure them that the people of this country will always be there to help them through whatever trials and tribulations they may have to go through as a result of the loss of someone who was the head of their family and who was also the head of the country and their family is also part of the larger family of the country as a whole.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA (Contai): Mr. Speaker, Sir, when we heard the news of the sudden death of our late President it was a shock not only to us but to the whole country. It was a personal shock to me for one particular reason, that I had developed a certain kind of special spiritual relationship with our late President. It is not known to many newcomers here that the standard of Indian nationalism that Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed Saheb was carrying was handed over to him by his political initiator and ideological preceptor, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose. In 1938 after Netaji was elected as President of Haripura Congress, you will remember what happened. Assam was then under Saadullah Ministry of the Muslim League. Permission was not

granted by the Congress High Command to form coalition government with any other party, but just after his election as President, Netaji went to Shillong and he reached the house of Fakhruddin Saheb. It was his personality that initiated Fakhruddin Saheb into the heart of national liberation movement in India and the main current of our national struggle.

12 hrs.

He stayed at the house of Fakhruddin Saheb and asked Shri Bardoloi and Fakhruddin Saheb to move a non-confidence-motion against the Saadullah Ministry. Saadullah Ministry fell and it was Netaji who was sitting there at that time, with the help of Fakhruddin Saheb requested Bardoloi to set up a Congress Ministry in Assam, although at that time the Congress High Command did not permit it. But as you know Netaji was daring and dashing; he did not wait for any permission from the Congress High Command. But with the help of Fakhruddin Saheb, the first Congress Ministry was set up in Assam and thus with the help of Fakhruddin Saheb, Assam was saved from a catastrophe, the catastrophe of becoming the victim of partition. Fakhruddin Saheb when he became the President, in his Radio and TV broadcast, mentioned in an expression of deep feeling that he was initiated into Indian national politics by Netaji.

I have had many occasions to meet him as a Minister as also as President and even when I went to see him in connection with some official work, he would introduce each and every time some of the ideals and feelings which he derived from Netaji. On 25th June, 1975, at about 6 p.m. I had a half-an-hour discussion with Fakhruddin Saheb. At a very crucial and critical moment how sensitive his mind was was witnessed by me during the discussion. I do not want to convey the controversial content of that discussion now. And then the very night I was arrested under MISA. When I was released, I had

occasion to meet him and he was so sensitive and so compassionate towards me that he immediately asked his personal doctor, Dr. Caroli, to take care of my health. Sir, I want to say that Fakhruddin Saheb was not only above communalism but he was much more than that, he was a true Indian and he carried the spirit of Indian nationalism. I do not want to use the word in a negative sense; not only was he a true Indian, a true Indian nationalist, but he carried the great heritage of Indian culture. He was a man of high dignity and a man of fine sensitivity and human feeling and that was the characteristic of a man of high dignity and cultural complexion with a deep commitment to Indian nationalism. Sir, when we pay homage to him, we should remember his dedication to the spirit of Indian nationalism.

SHRI P. K. DEO (Kalahandi):
Mr. Speaker, Sir, I associate myself with the sentiments of sorrow that have been expressed in this House by various friends on the sad demise of our dear President, Shri Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed.

अन्तवन्त इमे देहा

Everybody who is born has to die some day. But he was snatched away from the public life while he was in office by the cruel hands of Death. The public life of this country has become poorer by the absence of this great Indian. Sir, he was the embodiment of humility and humanity and I have had great regard for him. I had the privilege of working in this House with him for several years and I simply admired him. While in office, after returning from his strenuous journey from Malaysia, he succumbed to death. I express my sorrow and I pay my homage and tribute to him and offer my condolences to the members of the bereaved family.

SHRI SKARIAH THOMAS (Kottayam): Sir, the sad demise of the late President, Shri Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, is a great loss to the

[Shri Skariah Thomas]

nation. He was a freedom fighter, an able administrator and a protector of the minorities. We, the members of the Kerala Congress Parliamentary group, offer our condolences to the bereaved members of his family.

त्रौषरी बलबीर सिंह (होशियारपुर) :

अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं स्वर्गीय श्री फ़ख़रुद्दीन अली अहमद की मौत पर उन को श्रद्धांजलि भेंट करने के लिए खड़ा हुआ हूँ। इस देश के करोड़ों लोगों में ऐसी धारणा बनी है कि उन की मौत कुदरती हालात में नहीं हुई और इस बारे में उनमें बहुत असन्तोष है। इसलिए मैं सरकार और श्री मोरारजी देसाई से कहूंगा कि वह इस बारे में एनक्वायरी करायें कि किन हालात में उन की मौत हुई, ताकि लोगों को पता चले कि वह कुदरती मौत मरे हैं या नहीं।

श्री फ़ख़रुद्दीन अली अहमद एक बहुत बड़े इन्सान थे।

फ़रिश्तों से बेहतर है इन्सान होना, मगर इसमें होती है मेहनत ज्यादा। वह इन्सानियत के पुजारी थे। मैं फिर कहूंगा कि सरकार इस बात की एनक्वायरी करायें कि उनकी मौत किन हालात में हुई।

PROF. P. G. MAVALANKAR (Gandhinagar): Sir, I rise to pay my respectful homage to our late President, Shri Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed. His sudden death has left us all deeply shocked and distressed. He was a gentle and sensitive soul. His two qualities, among many, which attracted all towards him always were his simplicity and charm. His sincerity of purpose and sportsmanship were also qualities which lent a special flavour and a special meaning to the public and political life of our democratic Republic. President

Ahmed was a sportsman not only in the sense that he played tennis, golf, hockey, cricket and other games but he also played well by observing the rules of the game in politics and in public life, as a true sportsman. He took his victories and defeats in the manner in which a true sportsman would take his victories and defeats. One can hardly see a better and nobler example of secularism—

“सर्व धर्म समभाव,” “सर्व धर्म समभाव”

that was very beautifully symbolised in our late President. His humility and qualities of head and heart will be an example for all to follow in this great Republic of ours. I join this honourable House in requesting you, Sir, to convey our sincere condolences to Begum Abida Ahmed and other members of the bereaved family.

MR. SPEAKER: With a heavy heart laden with grief and sorrow, I join the House in paying my humble tribute to our revered President, the late Shri Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed. I fully associate myself with the sentiments expressed here by the Prime Minister, Leader of the Opposition, Leaders of Opposition Groups and other Members on the passing away of Shri Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed. He was an illustrious statesman who symbolised the best traditions of India's composite culture. During his long association with Parliament, he had endeared himself to all sections of the House by his parliamentary skill and amiable nature. We deeply mourn the loss of this great son of India. We convey our heart-felt condolences to Begum Abida Ahmed and other members of the bereaved family.

I would now request hon. Members to rise in their places to show their approval of the Resolution moved by the Prime Minister and to observe a minute's silence as a mark of respect to the memory of the late President.

The members then stood in silence for a short while.

SHRI P. K. DEO (Kalahandi): Sir, under Rule 277.....

MR. SPEAKER: I am on my legs.

MR. SPEAKER: The Resolution is adopted. As a mark of respect to the memory of the late Shri Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, the House stands.

adjourned to meet again on Monday, the 28th March, 1977 half-an-hour after the Address by the Vice-President acting as President.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till half-an-hour after the address by the Vice-President acting as President, on Monday, March 29, 1977/ Chaitra 7, 1899 (Saka).