

17.24 hrs.

NATIONAL HOLIDAY ON NETAJI
SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE'S
BIRTHDAY BILL

by Shri Samar Guha

SHRI SAMAR GUHA (Contai): Sir,
I beg to move:

"That the Bill to provide for observing the birthday of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose as national holiday be taken into consideration."

SHRI K. LAKKAPPA (Tumkur): Sir, I want to make one submission. My Bill is pending for a long time. Therefore, before the half an hour discussion is taken up, I may be allowed to move my Bill so that it will be included in the agenda next time.

SHRI P. K. DEO (Kalanhandi): That is not possible, because Shri Guha's Bill cannot be disposed of in two minutes.

SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Sir, I would have been only too willing to give some time to my friend, Shri Lakkappa for moving his Bill, but I am sorry the time allotted for my Bill is only two hours and I have only seven minutes at my disposal today. I cannot finish my speech today. I will take one hour myself to introduce the Bill.

It has been accepted by the people of our country, by all the impartial historians of our country, even outside also by many historians who are reading the history of the freedom struggle of India, British, American, German, Japanese and many others, it has been admitted by most of them, and almost generally by the historians of our country, that Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose should be recognised as the greatest hero of our freedom struggle. He has made an epoch in the history which would be written in golden letters. He has given inspiring inspiration and new idealism, not only to our generation, not only to the future generations of our country, but

to the future generations of many countries which have aspired to have some kind of revolutionary idealism to spread in their country for a right cause. But I want to draw your attention to the fact that there is only one birthday observed as a holiday officially, and that is the birthday of the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi. Therefore, I do not want to create an impression in the House that I want Netaji's birthday to be declared a national holiday because I want to introduce here worship or some kind of political idolatry. That is not my objective.

This Bill which I have brought appears to be simple, just wanting to declare 23rd January, the birthday of the greatest hero of our freedom struggle, as a national holiday. That is not my objective. I have to justify historically, philosophically and even politically why Netaji's birthday should be declared a national holiday. Therefore, I hope the House will bear with me on the next occasion when I will have to labour much and put forth many convincing arguments in favour or in support of my Bill.

Netaji's birthday is observed as an official holiday in West Bengal. If I am asked, I would say that the Government of West Bengal, instead of honouring Netaji, has really dishonoured him by this because they have not really appreciated the greatness and the magnitude of the greatness of Netaji. They have not been able to evaluate the importance of the personality of Netaji. Otherwise, they would not have tried to create an impression that Netaji is only a hero of Bengal and therefore the Bengalis should observe his birthday as an official holiday.

Netaji was by birth an Oriya. He was a Bengali, no doubt, but more than that he was an Indian whose whole being was consumed by, and who completely merged himself in, the concept of Indianism. I do not know who else can claim to be a true Indian. It may not be known to you that when

[Shri Samar Guha]

he was the Supreme Commander of the INA, the head of the Provisional Government of Free India, there was not a single Bengali in his personal or household staff. Every one of them naturally came from the other parts of the country because he did not divide one part from the other. India as a whole was his motherland. He never used the word "India" to mean a country; whenever he mentioned India he referred to it as motherland, *janani, janmabhumi*. Therefore, to him, India was a concept, much more than a geographical entity. It was something else to him. Whoever came from any part of the country was his brother, as any brother from Orissa or Bengal.

I particularly mention that the Bengal Government has done a wrong and an injustice by declaring 23rd January as an official holiday. They should have made a demand; they should have waited; they should have struggled; they should have made a demand; they should have tried to influence the Government of India that until and unless the Government of India declared 23rd January as a national holiday, no State, what to speak of Bengal, can separately declare 23rd January as an official holiday.

The question will naturally arise why only the birthday of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose should be observed as a national holiday. During the freedom struggle of our country, there had been many great men. India had produced many great leaders who had made immense contribution to the freedom struggle of our country. Why not the birthdays of all great men should be observed as national holidays? This is a very pertinent question, a very reasonable question. Besides a national holiday that is being observed on the birthday of the Father of the Nation, why I want that the birthday of Netaji should be observed as a national holiday. I have to justify it, as I used the word, I use

it again, historically, philosophic and politically too.

With this poser, why the birth of Netaji should be observed as national holiday, I will plead to you, Sir, next time that at least I have to take enough time to justify the reason for my pleading that birthday of our greatest hero of freedom struggle should be observed as a national holiday.

With these introductory remarks just postpone my speech to the next day.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You may continue your speech on the next day.

17.33 hrs.

BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE NINTH REPORT

SHRI SAMAR GUHA (Contd.): I wish to present the Ninth Report of Business Advisory Committee.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND PUBLIC RELATIONS (DR. P. K. KIRPAL SINHA): Mr. Chairman, about the Report which has been presented, I have to make a submission.

As agreed to in the Committee, discussion on the recent cyclone which hit the Southern parts of the country and relief measures will be taken between 5 P.M. and 7 P.M. on Tuesday, the 6th December, 1977. Consequently, the discussion on the Fars Agreement which was proposed to be put down for that day will now be taken up on the 15th December. I hope, the House will agree with consequential re-adjustment of the agenda.

17.35 hrs.

HALF-AN-HOUR DISCUSSION

DEVELOPMENT OF FORESTS

MR. CHAIRMAN: We now take up the Half-An-Hour Discussion. I have the pleasure to introduce Mr. Yuvraj.