

LOK SABHA

Monday, December 10, 1973/Agrahayana 19, 1895(Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, the United Nations Organisation and its Member States are today observing the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations in 1948. It is befitting, therefore, that before we start our business today we should recall this historic Declaration. It may be recalled that both on the occasion of the 10th anniversary on the 10th December, 1958 and on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the said Declaration on the 20th December 1968, references to the Declaration were made in this House.

The Declaration embodies the most cherished ideals of mankind and seeks to lay down basic principles which would ensure to each and every human being on this earth full liberty and freedom in pursuit of progress, prosperity and happiness without any discrimination or restriction based on race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other states. The Member States of the United Nations are making efforts on an individual, bilateral or multilateral basis to strive towards the realisation of the goals set

forth in the Declaration. It is a matter for deep regret and concern, however, that over two-thirds of the human population still continues to live in poverty and misery. The noble ideals of the Declaration and indeed the U.N. Charter will remain pious platitudes unless the standards of living of these millions are raised and the quality of their life improved.

It is also of equally great concern that violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms persist in many parts of the world. We were witness not very long ago to the brutal suppression of basic human freedoms in our own part of the world accompanied by unparalleled human suffering and the culmination of these great events is a matter of recent history. I refer to the birth of the Sovereign and independent Republic of Bangladesh. I also need not recall that in some countries discrimination of one kind or another is still being practised. The policy, of Apartheid, of course, constitutes the most flagrant violation of human rights. There is urgent need to eliminate Apartheid as well as all other forms of discrimination on all vestiges of colonialism through persistent and concerted efforts by the world community as a whole.

India has consistently and firmly stood by the Declaration and has exerted every effort possible in this collective effort. Our own Constitution embodies the basic principles enunciated in the Declaration.

I am sure I am voicing the feelings of every Member of the House when I say that this House re-affirms its dedication to these principles and to the noble task of ensuring their full realisation for all mankind