

VALEDICTORY REFERENCE

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Honourable Members, the first Session of the Tenth Lok Sabha comes to a close today. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the hon. Members for their kind cooperation extended to me and my colleagues—the Deputy Speaker and the Members of the Panel of Chairpersons—in the smooth conduct of the business of the House.

The first sitting of the Lok Sabha commenced on 9th July, 1991 by observance of silence by Members standing for a while. Then the *pro tem* Speaker, Shri. Indrajit Gupta, veteran Parliamentarian welcomed the newly elected Members. As many as 417 Members made and subscribed oath of affirmation on the first day itself.

On the following day, the item regarding Speaker's election was put down on the Agenda Paper. I feel greatly honoured to have been elected unanimously by the House to the august office of the Speaker. My colleague, Shri. S. Mallikarjunaiah was elected Deputy Speaker later on the 13th August, 1991.

On 11th July, 1991 when the House met after President's Address to Members of both the Houses of Parliament, rich tributes were paid to former Prime Minister of India, Shri Rajiv Gandhi, and a condolence resolution was unanimously passed by the House.

During this eventful session, we have held 49 sittings lasting over 343 hours.

In pursuance of a Presidential directive, the Council of Ministers sought a vote of confidence from the House on the 15th of July, 1991. The motion was adopted after a debate lasting for about six hours.

837 Questions were listed as starred of which 208 Questions could be orally answered and written answers were given to

7165 Questions. Four half-an-hour discussions were also held.

This being the Budget Session, the House naturally devoted considerable time on discussion on the Railway and General Budgets. Discussion on the Railway Budget lasted for 13 hours and the Railway Budget was passed by the House on the 25th July 1991.

After the general discussion on the General Budget which lasted for 22 hours, the demands for Grants were taken up. The Demands in respect of five Ministries were discussed and voted and the rest were passed on 5 September, 1991. The debate on the Finance Bill which followed the voting of the Demands for Grants evoked very keen interest. After a marathon discussion lasting for nearly 16 hours, the Finance Bill was passed by the House on the 14th September 1991.

The House also passed the Budgets in respect of Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab.

Coming to the legislative business, as many as 22 bills were passed by the House. Among the important Bills, were the Special Protection Group (Amendment) Bill, 1991 and the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Bill 1991. Members had shown a lot of interest while participating in the discussion on these two Bills.

Two short duration discussions under Rule 193 were held. The first one was regarding escape from custody and subsequent death of an accused in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case; the second discussion was on the flood and drought situation in the country. Four motions under Rule 184 were discussed. They related to the (i) Motion of confidence in the Council of Ministers, (ii) atrocities on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections of the society, (iii) BCCI Affairs and (iv) the International situation. In addition 270 matters were raised under Rule 377.

As Members are aware, the last item on today's agenda is discussion on a Govern-

ment Motion regarding the international situation. During the debate, Members made very useful points which, I am sure, the Government has taken note of and will be followed up.

The House has also discussed today and adopted after a debate lasting for about three and a half hours, a statutory resolution seeking its approval to the continuance of President's Rule in Punjab for a further period of six months with effect from 11th November, 1991.

As usual, the Private Members continued to evince keen interest in bringing in their bills and resolutions in the House. Seventy eight Private Members' Bills were introduced during the session while four bills actually came up for discussion. A Private Member's resolution urging the Government to enact a law for maintaining status quo in respect of all religious places generated a good deal of interest. The resolution was

withdrawn after a lengthy debate lasting over 12 hours spread over five Private Members' days. Another resolution recommending to the Government to take urgent measures to tackle the growing unemployment in the country also evoked keen debate.

Before I conclude, I would like once again to thank all of you, particularly the Leader of the House, the Leader of the Opposition, Leaders of various Parties and Groups as well as the Whips of various Parties, for the unstinted cooperation and courtesy extended to me but for which my task would not have been easy. I would also like to thank profusely the officers and staff of the Secretariat who have so efficiently contributed to our functioning. The House now stands adjourned *sine die*.

19.29 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned sine die .