

**PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE** (Rajapur): He was not only absent-minded, but he was absent also.

**SHRI K. LAKKAPPA:** I was in the other meeting. I can understand absent-minded Professors. (*Interruptions*)

**MR. SPEAKER:** The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for the fixation on a permanent basis the prices of essential commodities."

*The motion was adopted.*

**SHRI K. LAKKAPPA:** Also to introduce the Bill.

**SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY** (Calcutta South): He has been busy outside the House.

**MR. SPEAKER:** He was busy this morning also along with you.

**SHRI K. LAKKAPPA:** I introduce the Bill.

18 hrs.

STATEMENT RE. SUCCESSFUL LANDING OF THE FIRST INDIAN SCIENTIFIC EXPEDITION TO ANTARCTICA

**THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI-MATI INDIRA GANDHI):** I have immense pleasure in informing the House of the successful landing of our first Indian scientific expedition to Antarctica at 00.30 hrs. on the 9th January, 1982. Twenty-one scientists and technicians, drawn from different disciplines, participated.

The main objectives were to study the meteorological and other conditions of Antarctica, which are believed to control the monsoons. The team also carried out observations in glaciology, geo-magnetism, geology, and physical, chemical and biological oceanography. Their observations in-

cluded measurements of temperature, pressure, wind speed, humidity, surface ozone, cloud visibility, radiation, radio wave propagation etc., on the way out to Antarctica, on the continent itself and on the return journey.

Glaciology, geology and physical, chemical and biological conditions were observed on the Antarctic land mass. Some rock samples, which appeared to be similar to rocks found in the Deccan, were also collected. However, detailed analysis will be needed to establish whether the Deccan and Antarctica were joined together at any time.

The expedition team set up an unmanned weather station to collect meteorological data in Antarctica. Power is supplied to the station by solar panels fabricated in India. The continuous record on the cassette can be retrieved at the end of the year and replaced for further recording. The site of the station has been named 'Dakshin Gangotri' and a brass plaque commemorating the expedition has been put up.

The team successfully tested the quality and performance of Indian equipment and materials such as like watches, walkie-talkie sets, cement, dehydrated food, batteries and nylon ropes in subzero temperature conditions. The team spent about 11 days on the continent. The leader is back and the rest of the team is expected to return to Goa on or around the 20th of February, 1982.

The successful landing of the expedition on Antarctica is one more proof, if such be needed, that Indian scientists and technologists have the capability to undertake the most hazardous and complex tasks. I am sure Hon'ble Members will wish me to convey their congratulations to the entire team. We also acknowledge with appreciation the valuable supporting services provided by the Indian Navy. When the data are

[Shrimati Indira Gandhi]

analysed, they should throw important light on the history of Antarctica and its effect on the climate of the Indian Ocean region. In undertaking this advanced work India has now joined a select band of countries. The significance of this expedition for, and also its impact on, our younger generation will be as important as its scientific accomplishment. I hope it will imbue our younger generation with scientific temper and encourage them to take a keener interest in the oceans and

their exploration. Let pride in achievement urge us forward to greater efforts.

MR. SPEAKER: Now the House stands adjourned and will meet at 11.00 A.M. on Tuesday the 23rd February, 1982.

18.03 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Tuesday, February 23, 1982/Phalguna 4, 1903 (Saka).*