

In the passing away of Shri E.M.S. Namboodripad, the country has lost a veteran trade union leader, an able administrator and a noted thinker.

We deeply mourn the passing away of Shrimati Vimal Punjab Deshmukh, Shri T. V. Kamalashwamy, Shri Tridib Chaudhuri, Shri Gulzarilal Nanda, Shri B. Krishna Mohan and Shri E.M.S. Namboodripad.

I request Members to rise in their places and observe silence as a mark of respect to the memory of the departed.

(Hon. Members then stood in silence for one minute)

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Secretary-General will convey to the members of the bereaved families our deep sense of sorrow and sympathy.

REFERENCE TO VICTIMS OF TORNADO IN WEST BENGAL AND ORISSA

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon'ble Members, I refer with utmost grief and sorrow to the severe tornado that swept through several villages of Midnapore and Balasore districts of West Bengal and Orissa yesterday, the 24th March, 1998. In the scale of loss and injury to human life and devastation caused, it is a catastrophe of awesome dimensions.

In this hour of tragedy, we extend our heartfelt condolences and strong sense of solidarity for the affected families. We are sure that every effort will be made to extend rescue and relief assistance and strive to restore normalcy as early as possible.

I request Hon'ble Members to rise in their places and observe silence as a mark of respect to the victims of the tragedy.

(Hon. Members then stood in silence for one minute)

RESIGNATION BY MEMBER

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have to inform hon. Members that I have received a letter from Shrimati Anandiben Jethabhai Patel, a Member representing the State of Gujarat, resigning her seat in Rajya Sabha. I have accepted the resignation with effect from 12th March, 1998.

SHRI N.K. P. SALVE: (Maharashtra) Sir, may I respectfully submit that in the Order paper under the caption "Obituary References" the first name should be Shrimati Vimlabai Punjabrao Deshmukh. But it is written as Vimal Punjab Deshmukh. That change may be made. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House stands adjourned to meet again at 2.30 P.M.

The House then adjourned at thirty minutes past twelve of the clock.

The House reassembled at thirty minutes past two of the clock.

Mr. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

INTRODUCTION OF PRIME MINISTER

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, I have great pleasure to introduce Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee, the Prime Minister of India. The Prime Minister may like to introduce his Council of Ministers.

INTRODUCTION OF MINISTERS

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI ATAL BEHARI VAJPAYEE): Sir, with your permission, I wish to introduce to you and through you to the august House, my colleagues: