

tribunal and labour court during the last three years;

(e) the number of vacancies of the presiding officers occurring each labour court and tribunal, date of the vacancy and the date on which they were filled in during this period;

(f) whether any review has been conducted regarding institution and disposal of industrial disputes and applications in the past;

(g) if so, the steps taken thereon;

(h) whether there is any proposal to double the strength of labour courts and industrial tribunals in Delhi; and

(i) if so, the steps taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) to (i) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

FAREWELL TO SHRI SUDARSHAN AGARWAL ON HIS RETIREMENT AS SECRETARY-GENERAL AND WELCOME TO SHRIMATI V. S. RAMA DEVI, NEW SECRETARY-GENERAL, RAJYA SABHA

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, I have to inform the House that Shri Sudarshan Agarwal has retired from the office of Secretary-General of the Rajya Sabha with effect from the afternoon of 30th of June, 1993.

He began his career in the State Judicial Service and held several assignments as Civil Judge, Magistrate, Settlement Commissioner in the Department of Rehabilitation, as Law Officer in the Law Commission, Government of India, for various terms before he was promoted District and Sessions Judge in April 1971.

Shri Agarwal joined the Rajya Sabha Secretariat in 1971 and served in different capacities for 22 years. He assumed the office of Secretary-General of the Rajya Sabha in April, 1981 and served in this capacity for more than 12 years.

As Secretary-General, Shri Agarwal performed his duties with dedication and discipline and helped in ensuring the smooth functioning of the machinery for the parliamentary system. He maintained cordial relations with the Members of the House and has always been accessible and helpful to them.

He has accompanied several parliamentary delegations abroad and attended many Presiding Officers' Conferences and Conferences of Secretaries of the various State Legislatures, of which he was the Chairman. He also actively participated in the 37th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference and the 89th Inter-Parliamentary Union Conference held in New Delhi. He has also been associated with numerous welfare activities.

Shri Agarwal has had the distinction of serving six Chairmen of the Rajya Sabha. As for myself, I found his advice on matters of procedure and parliamentary practice of great value.

On behalf of the House and on my own behalf I want to express appreciation for the service he has rendered and wish him good health and happiness.

I have also to inform the House that I have appointed Shrimati V. S. Rama Devi as Secretary-General of the Rajya Sabha.

Shrimati Rama Devi started her career as an Officer of the Indian Legal Service in the Legislative Department and was appointed as Special Secretary in the Legislative Department in September 1985. She became Member Secretary, Law Commission and Secretary to the Government of India. Later she was appointed as Secretary in the Legislative Department of the Ministry of Law and Justice in January 1989 and held the post till January 1992.

She had also officiated as the Chief Election Commissioner for a short period in 1990.

She was honorary Advisor to the National Commission for Women.

She is the first Asian to have been elected as the President of the Commonwealth Association of Legislative Counsel, to which she was re-elected at the 10th Commonwealth Law Conference.

I welcome Shrimati Rama Devi to her new assignment.

Do any Members wish to say anything as it is sometimes customary?

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): Sir, she likes to begin. After her I would say a few words.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are talking on her behalf?

SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT: A good neighbourly relation Sir.

DR. SHRIMATI NAJMA HEPTULLA (DEPUTY CHAIRMAN): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I sit next to him and he is the Leader of the Opposition. So, he tries to be nice to me. When I go to the Chair, he can take advantage of it. Sir, I would like to put on record that I have been a Member of this House for the last thirteen years and in the Chair for quite many years and in both the capacities I had opportunities to work with the then Secretary-General, Mr. Sudarshan Agarwal. I found him to be a good officer knowing the subject specially the parliamentary procedures and etiquettes very well. After the Question Hour is over, when generally you do not need the services of the Secretary-General and the staff at the Table—fortunately not today—I desperately need the help of the Secretary-General. I found every time Mr. Sudarshan Agarwal was ready to help me with all the information that I needed.

Apart from his experience and knowledge of the procedures and legal background, I must say that he has a great

sense of humour. I have collected many notes which he used to pass on to me at various times. It was to his credit that we have produced two books on "Humour in Parliament" because in the moments of tension, if nothing helps us, it is the sense of humour which I think is inborn in all of us which comes to our rescue to maintain peace and harmony in the House.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA (Bihar): Secretary-General can't laugh in the House.

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA HEPTULLA (DEPUTY CHAIRMAN): That is the beauty of the sense of humour. Even without a smile and ripple he could make others laugh. That was the quality which Mr. Agarwal was having.

Many a time I had travelled with him abroad and with great pride I found that he behaved well in all the international conferences and he performed his duties as the Secretary-General of this august House very well and we were very proud of him.

Sir, I wish him all the best in his future and hope that he will have many more opportunities to do good work in his life for the good cause he would take up as he was doing quite a lot otherwise also when he was Secretary-General.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome our new Secretary-General. Mrs. Rama Devi, Generally we don't talk about what happens in the Chairman's Chamber. But I think in this case we can make an exception. I think it was Mathur Sahib or somebody who said that we have got two women— one sitting there and another sitting down... (Interruptions) ...One there and many more.

SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR (Uttar Pradesh): Madam, may I correct you? I only said one woman on the right and the other on the left. Now she is adding "up and down". I don't mind it.

DR. SHRIMATI NAJMA HEPTULLA (DEPUTY CHAIRMAN): Mathur Sahib you referred to it in the Chairman's Chamber... (Interruptions)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is a lot of talk.

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA HEPTULLA (DEPUTY CHAIRMAN): Mr. Chairman, you know that in your Chamber when you preside over a meeting, my seat is usually on the opposite side and the Secretary-General's seat on the other side. There, of course, we sit on your left and right sides. But here we are sitting up and down. I hope that there would be many, many more women in this House both in the Secretariat and among the Members in this House also. Sir, we need a gender balance in the Rajya Sabha very much. I welcome Mrs. Rama Devi. She has had a very good career in the past. We hope that we will all give her cooperation and support. We hope that she will also reciprocate. We also hope that she will have a very good career. We thank you for taking up this issue of gender balance also in your decision. Thank you very much.

श्री सिकन्दर बख्त : सदर साहब एक नफीस शख्सियत से खुदा हाफिज कहने का मौका है और एक और नफीस शख्सियत का इस्तकबाल करने का मौका है। मैं अकसर सुनता रहा हूँ जब परिवार की बात होती है तो इस सदन के सदस्यों को परिवार का हिस्सा समझा गया है। मैं समझता हूँ कि राज्य सभा का सेक्रेटेरिएट और उस सेक्रेटेरिएट में हिस्सा लेने वाले सभी हजरात, इसी तरीके से चेयरमैन साहब का सेक्रेटेरिएट और सब हजरात, राज्य सभा के परिवार का हिस्सा हैं। इस परिवार में लोगों का आना-जाना रहता है, पर मियादी होती है। हर दो साल में कुछ लोगों को खुदा हाफिज कहना होता है और कुछ लोगों का स्वागत करना होता है। बाज लोग ऐसे होते हैं कि वे एक ही सांभ में आते भी हैं और जाते भी हैं। मैं उनका साहब।

श्री सिकन्दर बख्त : مدعيہ پرورش: صدر صاحب ایک نفیس شخصیت سے خدا حافظ کہنے کا موقع ہے اور ایک نفیس شخصیت کا استقبال کرنے کا موقع ہے میں اکثر سنتا رہا ہوں جب پرلوار کی بات ہوتی ہے تو اس سदन सदسیوں کو پرلوار کا حصہ سمجھا گیا ہے میں سمجھتا ہوں کہ راجیہ سبھا کا سیکریٹریٹ اور اس سیکریٹریٹ میں حصہ لیسے والے سبھی حضرات اس طریقے سے جیمز مین صاحب کا سیکریٹریٹ اور سب حضرات راجیہ سبھا کے پرلوار کا حصہ ہیں۔ اس پرلوار میں لوگوں کا آنا جانا رہتا ہے پر مبعادی ہوتی ہے۔ ہر دو سال میں کچھ لوگوں کو خدا حافظ کہنا ہوتا ہے اور کچھ لوگوں کا سواگت کرنا ہوتا ہے بعض لوگ ایسے ہوتے ہیں کہ وہ ایک ہی سانس میں آتے بھی جاتے بھی ہیں۔ میں حتم کروں صاحب۔

MR. CHAIRMAN: Non, no. You go ahead. There are a number of people who have asked me for time. But you go ahead now.

श्री सिकन्दर बख्त : तो मैं अर्ज कर रहा था कि बज हजरात जो यहां से जाते हैं, वे एक ही सांस में आते भी हैं और जाते भी हैं, लेकिन सेक्रेटेरिएट से दिन लोगों का जाना होता है वह बेमियाद होता है। उम्र के एक

खास हिस्से को पहुंचते हैं, पुख्तगी को पहुंचते हैं, पक्केमन को पहुंचते हैं। तो जिनदगी का रूब कुछ बदलना होता है। सुदर्शन साहब से हम लोगों का वास्ता रहा। सुदर्शन साहब का जिन लोगों से वास्ता पड़ा अलग-अलग सिधासो जमाधतों से तालुक रखने वालों का इनकरादो तौर पर हर इंडिविजुअल से वास्ता पड़ा हर फई का मिजाज अलाहिदा है। लेकिन सुदर्शन साहब को खूबी यह थी कि उन्होंने हर किस्म के मिजाज के लोगों के साथ मिल कर बात चलाई और बहुत अगुओ याद छोड़ कर यहां से जा रहे हैं। मैं सुदर्शन साहब से खुश हाफिज कहता हूँ और दुआ करता हूँ कि जहां रहे, बुरा रह। जिनदगी के साथ मुस्कराते रहें। रमा देवी जो फा तो कइना हो का है। उनका तो नाम ही ऐसा है कि दिल झुक जाता है। मैं उम्मीद करता हूँ (व्यवधान) तो मैं उम्मीद करता हूँ कि रमा देवी जी यकीनन इस मूलक संस्कारों को, परम्पराओं को बढ़ावा दगी। इस सदन के हर मेंबर को उन का तावुन मिलेगा, खूबभूरती निभावना

कमयावी की दुआ करता हूँ और इन का स्वागत करता हूँ।

तरी सुकंदरि नख्त : لا میں عرض کر رہا
 تھا کہ بعض حضرات جو یہاں سے جاتے
 ہیں۔ وہ ایک ہی سانس میں آتے بھی ہیں
 اور جاتے بھی ہیں۔ لیکن سیکرٹریٹ سے
 جن لوگوں کا جانا ہوتا ہے وہ بے یقار ہوتا۔

حکمر کے ایک خاص حصے کو سمجھتے ہیں۔
 کو سمجھتے ہیں۔ یکے کو سمجھتے ہیں تو زندگی
 کا رخ کچھ بدلنا ہوتا ہے۔ سدرشن صاحب
 سے ہم لوگوں کا واسطہ رہا۔ سدرشن صاحب
 سے جس لوگوں کا واسطہ پڑا۔ ایک ایک سیاسی
 جماعتوں سے تعلق رکھنے والوں کا اصرار
 طور پر برائے بھول سے واسطہ پڑا۔ ہر فرد
 کا راج علیحدہ ہے لیکن سدرشن صاحب
 کی تحویل یہ تھی کہ انہوں نے ہر قسم کے مسائل
 کے لوگوں کے ساتھ مل کر بات چیت اور
 بہت سی باتیں چھوڑ کر یہاں سے جا رہے
 ہیں۔ میں سدرشن صاحب کو جدا حافظ کہتا
 ہوں اور دعا کرتا ہوں کہ جہاں رہیں
 خوش رہیں۔ زندگی کے ساتھ مسکراتے
 رہیں۔ رما دیوی جی کا تو کہنا ہی کیا ہے
 ان کا تو نام ہی ایسا ہے کہ دل جھک جاتا
 ہے۔ میں امید کرتا ہوں۔ ... مداخلت ...
 تو میں امید کرتا ہوں کہ رما دیوی جی یقیناً
 اس ملک کے سنسکاروں کو۔ پریمپراؤں کو
 بڑھاوا دیں گی۔ اس سदन کے ہر ممبر کو
 ان کا تعاون ملے گا۔ خوبصورتی سے نبھائیں گی
 کامیابی کی دعا کرتا ہوں اور ان کا
 سواگت کرتا ہوں۔

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONAL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA): Mr. Chairman, Sir, on behalf of the Government, on behalf of the Members of the Congress as well as of the House and on my own behalf, I wish to place on record our appreciation of the work done by the outgoing Secretary-General, Shri Sudarshan Agrawal. We have seen him for many years in that Chair and, as the saying goes, Members came and Members went, but it seemed that Mr. Sudarshan Agrawal went on forever because we had got so used to him in the House, every part of the year and every part of the day. His quiet efficiency, his good humour and the way in which he helped each Member—the front benches and the back benches; the large groups and the small groups—I think, made him really a friend, philosopher and guide to many Members in the House. I know that we will miss his presence here. But, knowing him as we do, he has so many areas in which, I know, he will continue to contribute even outside the Rajya Sabha. We hope that he will have many years of quiet retirement and dedicated service ahead of him.

I also have great pleasure, Sir, in welcoming Smt. Rama Devi to this House as our Secretary-General. We have known her in many capacities. She is known for her experience and her very efficient functioning wherever she has been. She brings to this House a quiet dignity and charm which, I am sure, will go a long way, perhaps, in improving the atmosphere in the House itself. Sir, now you have a lady on the left of you, a lady on the right of you and a lady in front of you.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY (Andhra Pradesh): And a lady in waiting.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: And an all-pervading lady in the middle of the House.

And I am sure, as I said earlier when we met to welcome her, that with Rama Devi in the Chair, both the Opposition and the Congress will be more careful about the language they use at each other because she would be right in the middle.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: And that will have to be gentle.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Sir, I welcome her and I wish her every success and I hope she will find working with us inside the Chamber even more rewarding than she has found drafting of a legislation from outside the Chamber in the past. Thank you.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY (Andhra Pradesh): Mr. Chairman, I deem it my duty to associate myself with the views and sentiments articulated by you in regard to Shri Sudarshan Agrawalji. As Secretary-General, he was not only competent, he was also correct. I never found him incorrect either in his advice or in his conduct. He is a quintessential bureaucrat. He lasted for twelve long years and assumed such a low eye that we did not even notice that he lasted for twelve long years and this is a virtue that a bureaucrat in today's circumstances rarely possess. We will miss him very much. We will miss his ripe wisdom, rich experience. I am sure what is our loss will be the gain of the society outside.

Sir, I take this opportunity to welcome Mrs. Rama Devi. I have known her for a few years. She is from the same part of the country as I am. . . (Interruptions)... Well, I hope the performance of friends from Andhra does not reflect on her. Her legal erudition and her legislative experience will stand her in good stead as Secretary-General and they will also be of immense help to us. She not only brings erudition to the House but she also brings charm. I wish her all success. Thank you.

SHRI E. BALANANDAN (Kerala): Sir, I join with those who have appreciated the capacities of Agarwal. He was really helping us when we, Members of the

[Shri E. Balanandan]

House became naughty and haughty and when we were making a situation in the House to the extent of unmanageable proportions, the Deputy Chairperson as well as Mr. Agarwal were helping us to behave like parliamentarians with discipline. We are missing him now. I wish him better prospects and better life outside.

Now the new incumbent in the post is a lady. She is most welcome. She is efficient in her career as law-maker and in the legal profession. I hope she will be able to help the House very much. With these words, I welcome the new incumbent.

I again express my gratitude to Mr. Agarwal. Thank you.

श्री सत्य प्रकाश मालवीय (उत्तर प्रदेश)
 माननाय सभापति जी, विदाई का क्षण हमेशा दुखद होता है, लेकिन मज़ प्रसन्नता इस बात की है कि श्री सुदर्शन अग्रवाल को अब समाज और देश के अन्य क्षेत्रों में सेवा करने का मौका मिलेगा। वह न केवल एक विधिवेत्ता थे, न केवल कानून के ज्ञाता थे बल्कि भरा व्यक्तिगत अनभव है कि वह बहुत मुद्दाशी भी थे और सांसदों को जब भी कोई दिक्कत पड़ती थी तो वह हमेशा सहायता करने में तत्पर रहते थे। उन्होंने एक पत्र लिखा था कि महासचिव एक ऐसा व्यक्ति होता है कि जो सदन में तो बैठता है, लेकिन कभी अपना मुह नहीं खोलता। उस समय सुदर्शन अग्रवाल साहब शायद भूल गए कि लोकसभा का जितना भी संदेश होता है, उसको पढ़कर सदन में सुनाते समय महासचिव की अपना खोलना पड़ता है। पूर्व में कुछ उदाहरण रहे हैं कि जो महासचिव रहे हैं सदन के, उन्हें सदन से अवकाश प्राप्त करने के बाद भी सदन में सदस्य बनकर सेवा करने का कर मौका मिला है। मेरी शुभकामनाएं उनके साथ हैं। हो सकता है कि उनके मामले में इतिहास फिर दोहराया जाए।

श्रीमती बी० एस० रमा देवी से मेरा थोड़ा बहुत संपर्क है। यह बहुत ही विद्वान और विधि मामलों की ज्ञाता हैं। मुझे पूरी आशा है कि आप अपने पद का दायित्व, जो उनकी योग्यता है उसके हिसाब से, निभाएंगी।

मैं आपके प्रति भी आभार प्रकट करना चाहता हूँ कि आपने सभापति के रूप में पहली बार एक महिला को इस पद पर नियुक्त किया। धन्यवाद।

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Sir, there is a fine line between saying too much and saying too little and it reflects in the sense of duty that we repose in our responsibility. When I was a new-comer to this Parliament, Mr. Sudarshan Agarwal maintained that fine line wonderfully. He showed us the right way; he gave the correct rule, but he was dispassionate. He infused his sense of responsibility with sensitivity which is required for the Parliament today. Much has been said about his efficiency and the courtesy which he extended. But what I appreciated most was his sensitivity towards human issues which continued outside the Parliament when he was interacting perpetually with issues which affected human life. I pray that God will bestow his benevolence on the members of his family and himself and guide him, in good health and spirit, in his selfless service that has marked his career in the Parliament.

Sir, I also take this opportunity to accord a great welcome to Mrs. Rama Devi. I will not speak of her credentials because she is here for what she is. But I will say that for a lot of girl and women across the country today she will be a wonderful role model to emulate and she will go down in the history of Parliament as the first woman to hold this post. It is yet another mark and notch for us women who are striving to get the men to accept the fact that we are equal. Thank you Sir.

SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN (Tamil Nadu): Sir, as has been rightly said by Mrs. Margaret Alva, it is usual for the Secretary-General to be there to welcome the new Members and to bid farewell to the Members. That is what the Secretary-General does. But this is a very rare occasion that some of the Members bid farewell to the Secretary-General or the clerk of the House. I know Mr. Sudar-

shan Agarwal for a very long time. I am really surprised to know that he is retired now because he looks so young. He never looks 60 years, he is still young. When I say that he looks so young, I think, his spouse who is also here will very much agree with me. Both of us know each other for many years. Sir, I am reminded of a small incident which happened in Strausbourg. Very recently when we went to the European Parliament. Mr. Sudarshan Agarwal also came there as an Officer of the Parliament. We both went to a museum and in that museum they had different rates for the people to pay. At one place you have to pay ten dollars for entrance and there was another place with five dollars for entrance and yet another place with 2.5 dollars for entrance. I asked them, my wife was also with me. "What is this ten dollars?" They said, "It is for people who are below 60 years of age." When I asked about five dollars, they said, "It is for people who are above 60 years of age." As I am more than 60 years, I wanted to pay five dollars. My wife, who was standing beside me—she is always fastidious—immediately said, "Pay 10 dollars and don't ask for five dollars." Mr. Sudarshan Agarwal was also there. My wife never normally forgoes five dollars. She was very liberal at that time. She never wanted me to announce that I was above 60 years of age and that I was a senior citizen and hence to pay five dollars. That is the nature of spouses.

I know Mr. Sudarshan Agarwal not only as Secretary General of the Rajya Sabha but as a great Rotarian. He has many social activities. If I enumerate it, it will be a long list. I know this for so many years. I was a Rotary Governor and he was also a Rotary Governor. There after, he became Director of Rotary International, which, according to Rotarians, is a very big post. Sometimes I used to wonder how he was managing both the posts. Sir, he was managing both the posts very carefully and very well. I know that the Secretaries-General and Secretaries of the Houses have got a difficult role to play because these Secretaries or Clerks of the House,—as called in the Westminster—are being approached not

only by the Member, of the Treasury Benches, but also by the Members of the Opposition. They have to offer advice to those who are in the Government and to those who are in the Opposition. I know about some incidents when I was a member of the Legislative Council in Tamil Nadu. Some of the Secretaries had to face problems because Members of the Treasury Benches felt that they were offering advice against them to the Opposition Members and sometimes Opposition Members felt that they were offering advice to the Treasury Benches. Sir, we have never doubted Mr. Sudarshan Agarwal. He had always been offering his best advice to the Treasury Benches and to the Opposition Members. Before concluding I would say that we always refer to the Book of Kaul and Shakhder as our Bible for the practice and procedure in the Parliament. Kaul and Shakhder is predominantly about the procedure adopted in the Lok Sabha. Mr. Sudarshan Agarwal, according to me, will be the fittest person to bring out a book on the procedure that is being followed in Rajya Sabha, which is also unique in its own way. I hope, if he does it, it will be a unique service to the Rajya Sabha.

I also take this opportunity to offer my congratulations to our new Secretary-General. I wish her all the best. We also assure her that we will always cooperate with her. We also expect her full cooperation not only to the Members of the Treasury benches, but also to the Members of the Opposition. Thank you.

SHRI MURASOLI MARAN (Tamil Nadu): Mr. Chairman, I join my friends in paying my encomiums to Mr. Sudarshan Agarwal. He is a gentleman to the core and he is an epitome of Kaul and Shakhder. Whenever we were in doubt, he used to give us clarification. Easy accessibility and ready advice were the hallmarks of this gentleman. Therefore, I wish him well in his life. I also welcome Mrs. Rama Devi. Probably, we would have been discussing many of the Bills prepared by her. Now, she herself would witness how irrelevant the

[Shri Murasoli Maran]

House is; how we were discussing matters which had nothing to do with the Bills. I feel she will enjoy it herself. Her name itself will be more appealing because if you write her name in English and read it, it can be read as Rama Devi. So, we have found Rama in feminine form in this House. For this Rama we need not go for another temple because she herself is in the temple of democracy.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It also means harmony which is more appropriate... (Interruptions)

SHRI MURASOLI MARAN: Yes, Sir. She also brings to this House her experience and erudition. Sir, the Secretaries-General have always been the guiding lights to the Chairman. Therefore, my request to you is this: you should not always be carried away by the charms of the lady. Please give the benefit of doubt to the Opposition also. So, I say to the retiring Secretary-General 'Goodbye' and I say to the incoming Secretary-General 'Welcome'.

SHRI N. E. BALARAM (Kerala): Sir, I also associate myself with you and my colleagues on this occasion of the retirement of Shri Sudarshan Agarwal. All of us know that his service was good and he has done his job very well. Whenever the Members had any doubt he was there to help them. I have no doubt in saying that for the success of this House one of the important reasons according to me was Shri Agarwal's service. His service and his guidance were very helpful to most of the Members, especially the new ones. I wish him all success in his future life. With regard to the new-comer, I wish her all success. She may be knowing us and I would like to say only one thing and that is, we are prepared to offer all our cooperation and help that may be needed

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Mentay Padmanabham, Andhra Pradesh must have priority.

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY (Uttar Pradesh): Telugu Desam has al-

ready spoken. He is also from the Telugu Desam.

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM (Andhra Pradesh): Only one word, Sir, I join with you and my colleagues in this House in paying tributes to Shri Sudarshan Agarwal who retired recently as the Secretary-General of this House. Sir, when I became a Member of this House the first man I met was Shri Agarwal. Ever since, he has been a friend, philosopher and guide to me and to all the Members of this House particularly those Members who came fresh. His advice is always very helpful in our parliamentary work and as a man he is very, very considerate and kind-hearted, always giving out his knowledge on parliament proceedings and procedures. I once again join with all the Members of this House and also with the sentiments expressed by you and hope he will one day come back again to this House as a Member of this House and will make a great contribution to the proceedings of this House. I wish he will one day come back to this House as a full-fledged Member of this House. I welcome Smt. Rama Devi. My friend Shri Jaipal Reddy said that she comes from our State. I would go a little further. She comes from the same district from where I am coming. I need not say much about her competence. I welcome her and under her able guidance this House will be conducted in a very orderly and in a more purposeful way. I congratulate Mrs. Rama Devi and I pray to God that Mr. Sudarshan Agarwal be given all comforts in life. I am sure that he will be doing a lot of service. Thank you, Sir.

SHRI KARMA TOPDEN (Sikkim): Thank you, Sir. I wish to associate myself with the sentiments very kindly expressed about Mr. Agarwal. He is a nice person and I was very much carried away by his humility and gentleness. I will miss his presence in this House. I wish him and all the members of his family good luck. I welcome the new Secretary-General, Mrs. Rama

*Agarwal on his retirement
as Secretary-General and*

*Devi, New Secretary-
General Rajya Sabha*

Devi, I am a great admirer of the Deputy Chairperson. Now that you have given us another lady in front to admire, I shall attend Parliament more regularly.

SHRI M. M. JACOB (Kerala): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is a rare occasion for me to speak a few words on the eve of Mr. Sudarshan Agarwal, our good friend, going out and another friend, Mrs. Rama Devi, coming in. Sir, I had the occasion to work with Mr. Sudarshan Agarwal for quite some time in various capacities. When I was the Deputy Chairman, I had the opportunity of interacting with him every day. When I was handling Parliamentary Affairs, then also it was almost a daily business either for him to come to me or for me to go to him to discuss matters relating to the House. Even when our Party was in the Opposition, I had many things to do with him in my official capacity. From this what I want to derive is that Mr. Sudarshan Agarwal is a man who is completely neutral in his approach. Even in the formation of Committees of Parliament, he would advise people in the correct manner about how the various parties would have to be represented. He had no prejudiced views against anybody and he appreciated the views of everybody. I had seen him giving correct advice to the Members. The new Members would usually go to him for any information. He is such a fine gentleman. I also had an opportunity to go abroad with him to International Parliamentary Conferences where he used to play a key role keeping all his responsibilities intact. He was always an asset. I had also seen his interaction with the Secretaries-General of Parliaments of other countries. He had a very deep sense of understanding and fellowship with those friends in other countries. Now, my good friend has retired. But I don't think that he can ever retire because he has a lot of opportunities outside, where he used to play a key role even when he was in Parliament as Secretary-General. I take a cue from the suggestion of one of the

hon. Member that Sudarshan Agarwal could write a book on the Rajya Sabha. Mr. Sudarshan Agarwal used to tell me that the Rajya Sabha has some special role which the Lok Sabha does not have because if the Lok Sabha has to introduce a Bill on a matter restraining the powers of a State or increasing the powers of a State, it will have to take the permission of the Rajya Sabha, the Rajya Sabha being the Council of States. So, he can write a book on the special role and significance of the Rajya Sabha. And Mr. Sudarshan Agarwal is the proper person to give us a dimension on the role of the Rajya Sabha in Indian Parliamentary history. He has got a very talented and efficient wife. They will be missing us and we will be missing them. But I am sure that we will keep in touch with Mr. Sudarshan Agarwal even outside Parliament. And, Mrs. Rama Devi, as you know, is also an asset to our institution.

She is going to prove it by her own performance. I don't want to add any words at this moment about Mrs. Rama Devi because of her excellent performance during the previous years. I congratulate Mrs. Rama Devi for joining us and wish her well in the House. I assure her that we will not make any unparliamentary or uncharitable remarks. As Shrimati Renuka Choudhury has correctly stated, she will be really pondering over the performance and record of the House and she will see that all of us co-operate very well in the future in Rajya Sabha. I once again congratulate Mr. Sudarshan Agarwal on my behalf—I cannot represent everybody here—and on behalf of my friends for his excellent performance as the Secretary-General of this House which all of us will cherish for ever.

Thank you, Sir.

SHRI JAGMOHAN (Nominated): Sir, on my own behalf and on behalf of the nominated Members, I express my deep appreciation for the co-operation, guidance and help which Mr. Agarwal has always extended to us.

[Shri Jag Mohan]

In this connection, I am reminded of an event. There was a Secretary of the Ministry of Works and Housing. He was retiring from service and his subordinate brought the paper for signing the 'relinquishing charge'. It was written there as 'charge'. It was 'relieved officer'. Mr. Mathew, who was the Secretary at that time, added 'very much' before the words 'relieved officer'. I hope Mr. Agarwal who say all these stresses and strains of his office and kept his composure, did not do what Mr. Mathew did.

I know Mr. Agarwal well. He served the representatives of the people and I know he has a great capacity to directly serve the people. When I was the Lt. Governor of Delhi, he used to come to me for various humanitarian projects. Now, I am quite sure he will have more time at his disposal to serve the poor, the sick and the dying for whose cause he has always been striving.

There is no retirement in actual life. You only retire from one activity to another. I am sure Mr. Agarwal will have a still brighter future. He can jot down all his experiences, not about the technicalities of the procedures but about the larger dimensions of life in India which he saw through his chair. It is the reflection of the underlying currents which are the ethos of our country and which really make us speak what we are speaking now. I wish him all luck, all success. I welcome the new Secretary-General. I am quite sure she will do still better because there is always scope for improvement. I am sure her presence will improve the atmosphere as somebody has said that he will attend the House from now onwards regularly. I hope she will be both gentle and kind. With these words, I again wish him good luck and welcome her and wish her all the best.

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I would like to join all the Members who have expressed their sentiments about Mr. Sudarshan Agarwal. I just want to add one or two

words about him. To me, the outstanding quality of Mr. Agarwal was his outstanding human quality. As a person he was extremely sensitive and every new Member who entered this House knew immediately that we could go to him for advice not just on sensitive constitutional conundrums or the problems of legal issues, but on the smallest of things. His doors were always open; any Member could walk in and for his advice on any issue, from the smallest to the largest. So, when I had the occasion also to sit in the Chair and serve as Vice-Chairman, as Mr. Jaipal Reddy has said his advice was also the proper thing, what the right thing to do was and not just procedurally what the right thing to do was, but also what was fundamentally the decent thing to do. I think it was an outstanding quality of Mr. Sudarshan Agarwal that he was always functioning in the most decent, in the most proper and in the most correct fashion and that was the kind of advice he always gave to us.

Another important feature of his personality was his boundless enthusiasm for everything. He was never cynical or tired or dismissive and he never gave up on anything. He was also having the childlike enthusiasm for every thing. He gave a lot of encouragement to the new Members to face what the House was to offer.

I would like to wish him all the best for the future and to tell him that we will miss him a great deal.

I would like to welcome Shrimati Rama Devi. Everyone has said how nice it is to have a woman sitting in the chair here and I endorse that. But I would like to add that for me it is even more important that he is not here because she is a woman, but she is here because of what she has achieved and that despite the fact that she is a woman. Her outstanding background will stand her in good stead and help her in serving with distinction from her chair and I hope the House also will extend its co-operation to her in carrying on with the House. Thank you, Sir.

SHRI VISHVJIT P. SINGH (Maharashtra): Thank you very much, Sir, for giving me this opportunity.

Sir, the Secretary-General, as has been said before, does not speak in the House and yet he has a pivotal role to play. The fact is that it is on the advice of the Secretary-General that the House is run.

Shri Sudarshan Agarwal has brought to his office many wonderful qualities, as has been pointed out by a Nominated Member here. The most prominent among them was his sense of humility. There was never an occasion in all the years that I have known him, in all the years that I saw him, when he was not humble in his approach to life, humble in his approach to the House and humble in his approach to individual Members. No matter now new a Member, no matter whether was a back-bencher or a Minister, he was equally humble towards all of us and he treated everybody with the same amount of humility. Coupled with this humility and his sense of humour, which everybody has spoken about the most important quality was, to use the Latin word, the sense of *gravitas* which he brought to the office that he held. He was totally conscious of the importance of the chair that he held and not once during the period did he ever do or say anything which militated against the dignity of the Chair and the office that he has held.

Coupled with that was his efficiency. I do not think I have seen a more efficient officer in this Parliament. He brought to his office a tremendous amount of efficiency, no matter what the issue was or what the subject or what the conference was and in the organisation and running of the office, he brought a certain personal attention to us. I remember, on various occasions, when the Bills were coming up, when a large number of Bills were coming up during the Budget session, he would be sitting here till midnight making sure that each of the papers was in order. He could not have achieved all this without his legal acumen. He brought a certain acumen, as has been said by everybody. He was having a certain legal acumen which he brought to his

office by which he saw to it that he gave the correct legal advice.

Much has been said by my friends about his extra curricular activities, his other interests. He was a very important functionary in the Rotary movement and it was brought to my knowledge when we travelled abroad. Till then I did not know that he was a very high officer. I did not know till then how important he was till we were travelling in South America and even in the remotest parts of the country, people were walking up to him to talk to him. I knew that he had something to do with the Rotary Club. But I did not know till then how important he was. I do not follow the terminology of the Rotary and I thought he was some sort of a senior Officer there. They would approach him and he was a person of great importance for them. And I will miss him. I will personally miss him. He is a friend of both mine and my wife's. He is known to us for a long time. And as far as I am concerned, he is always welcome in our House. And I personally owe a debt of gratitude to him.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN (Maharashtra): Which house?

SHRI VISHVJIT P. SINGH: My personal house, where I am living. I am giving my personal tribute. I am not speaking on behalf of my Party. I am speaking from the heart.

As far as the new Secretary-General is concerned...

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY (Tamil Nadu): Sir, it is very fortunate that no heat is generated on the first day during the Zero Hour.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am all in favour of prolonging this happy hour.

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI (Uttar Pradesh): It is more of unhappiness also.

SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN: Sir, one special feature is that Mr. Sudarshan Agarwal cannot reply to this felicitation.

SHRI VISHVJIT P. SINGH: I am quite sure he writes individual letters to all of you.

Sir, as far as the new Secretary-General is concerned, I am afraid I suffer from a great disadvantage. Everybody who has spoken here, they all speak of previous acquaintance with her. They say that they know her for many years. Somebody comes from her State, and there is even one gentleman who claims that he comes from her district. I am sure there will be somebody who comes from her village. But I am afraid I have no acquaintance with her. I have not known her. As far as I am concerned, I am starting on a clean slate. And I have only one request to make of her that when I make a request to the hon. Chairman either in the House or in the Chamber, I request the new Secretary-General, I kindly agree with what I say. Thank you, Sir.

AN HON. MEMBER: It is a classic compliment.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have two more names. We can go up to one o'clock, probably. Mr. Upendra.

SHRI P. UPENDRA (Andhra Pradesh) Thank you, Sir, for giving opportunity to the Members to speak about the officers who remain anonymous and work with impartiality all the time.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: He probably comes from her village.

SHRI P. UPENDRA: Sir, so much has been said about the qualities of Mr. Sudarshan Agarwal, his efficiency, his thoroughness in Rules, etc. Sir, one thing is very clear. If an officer could maintain his equanimity and sense of humour, sitting in that chair for 12 years, in the midst of this din and bustle and occasional quarrels and even fisti-

coffs, no one deserves a Padma Bhushan, if not Padma Vibhushan, at least. And he maintained that equanimity and sense of humour. As the Deputy Chairman has revealed the nicest he used to pass in to us as anonymous notes, unsigned. She could dare to keep them, but I could not keep them though I was one of the recipients. They were so naughty that I was afraid of retaining them, in fact. And it is a pity that the tradition which he started in publishing the book—Humour in Rajya Sabha—has been discontinued for the last two or three years. I do not know, the House rarely witnessed such kind of wit and humour which merits mention in a book.

And we miss him very much here. He has been identified with this House for such a long time. I wish him well in his future career. I know some of his plans, and it will not be a surprise whether he writes or comes here or he continues in his social work as a Rotarian, but he will be active throughout.

About the new Secretary-General, Sir, I must congratulate you first because of the first administrative decision you have taken which has received the appreciation of all. And there is hardly any criticism about that and everybody appreciated your decision. And though Margaret provoked me, I do not want to go to the extent of saying that we come from the same village. I do not want to emphasise that because that would not help me anyway because I am aware that she is above all these things. She is least parochial. She is very thorough in her dealings with people and dealings with matters. I have known her for a long time. One thing I should mention here before I close. During the time when we were in the Government, we gave such a task to her to draft as many as 60 to 65 Bills in a record time of 2-3 months, and she did it with remarkable ability, skill and legal acumen and I feel that as Secretary-General here, she would acquit herself honourably and be of

sistance to you and to the House. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have one more speaker. Shri Hanumanthappa.

SHRI H. HANUMANTHAPPA (Karnataka): At least, I got the last chance. I think it was sometime during the Asian Games period. I dashed into Mr. Agarwal's chamber asking why this restriction for the M.P.s in getting the tickets. I thought as a Member of Parliament, I have got every power and every right to purchase any number of tickets. Sudarshanji ordered for a cup of coffee to me and coolly calmed me down and said that M.P.s have got only this much, and nothing beyond this. Then, one fine morning, he sent me a chit to say: 'Chairman wants to meet you tomorrow at 10.30'. When I went there, I found that he had given my name for the panel of Vice-Chairmen, and Mr. Venkataraman said: 'You are among the five on the panel. You are there already sitting in the House. You have to sit for some more time in the House. Be regular.'

I had an occasion with Mr. Jacob as the leader to go outside in the World Parliaments Conference. As Secretary-General, Mr. Agarwal played a pivotal role and got the panelled Vice-Chairmanship to India wherein 100 countries participated. As Secretary-General, he had his own role to play. He came and said: 'Jacob Sahib, I got a chance for India to preside over this Conference'. Being a panelled Chairman, Mr. Jacob and Mr. Agarwal made me preside over the Conference for three hours continuously in the World Conference.

As the Deputy Chairman, Najmaji said, I cannot forget the pieces of advice I used to get from Agarwal. They were really the tonic for us while conducting the House and while managing the proceedings. I also cannot forget the fact that whenever he used to come, he used to commend which was really a pat, by the words "Thank you" or 'you

have done well'. This used to give me strength while sitting in the Chair. Whenever there was a dispute or a problem, he used to send us slips and gave very valuable guidance in running the House. I personally feel that we would be missing him very much. I am his neighbour and I hope we will meet across and will have more opportunities to meet each other. Here, I join Mr. Swaminathan. It will be a very great contribution on his part if he takes up the work of compiling Rajya Sabha procedure just like the work of Kaue and Shakkher.

Of course, I have no acquaintance with our new Secretary-General. But I certainly disagree with Mr. Jagmohan when he said 'Relieved officer' or 'Very much relieved office I don't think that adds good to the new officers that come. Even if you are tired in your office, you can certainly come and sit here. The proceedings in the House will certainly give you relief. The lighter vein, the arguments, the quarrels will certainly bring you some relief from the tedious work in your office.'

I welcome the new Secretary-General and expect more guidance from her in running the House. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Now, papers to be laid on the Table of the House.

[The Deputy Chairman in the Chair]

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI (Karnataka): I had asked for permission to mention some matter during the zero hour.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Zero hour is being zeroed. Now papers to be laid.