

[Dr. Nagen Saikia]

Advisory Committee, at its meeting held today, the 5th March, 1992.

allotted time for Government Business as follow :

Business	Time Allotted
1. General Discussion on the Railway Budget for 1992-93	12 hours
2. General Discussion on the General Budget for 1992-93	16 hours

The Committee recommended that the discussion on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address should conclude on Monday, the 9th March, 1992, and the Prime Minister will reply on Tuesday, the 10th March, 1992, after Question Hour.

The Committee also recommended that the House should sit up to 6 p.m. daily and beyond 6 p.m., as and when necessary, for the transaction of Government Legislative and other Business.

Mr. Hiphei, you can start now.

MOTION OF THANKS ON THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS—Contd.

SHRI HIPHEI : Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address to both Houses of Parliament. When I say I rise to support the Motion, I support it happily and wholeheartedly. As I see it, it is very enlightening and educative. In his Address, the President has outlined the programmes and policies of the present Government. He has also outlined many of the achievements of the present Government in a short span, in the last eight months.

I have been attentively listening to the speakers from the other side. I could sense that they were not

happy with the President's Address. They were not happy with the performance of the Government. They were not happy with the achievements we have made so far, during the last eight months. I wonder what else they are expecting from a human being. Mr. Narasimha Rao, the hon. Prime Minister of India, is not the Almighty, who says, 'There will be light' and there is light. He cannot do any magic. He cannot perform any miracle, like the Almighty. But he has done so much for the country. I will give examples, point by point.

The first point is, elections in Punjab. The President's Address starts with this. It is wisely said: 'well begun is half done.' Now, it is a good beginning.

The beginning of the President's Address is very very good. But still there are various criticism and allegations against the Government from the other side. Some said that during the elections the lives of the civilians, the lives of the candidates and the voters were not protected. Everybody knows that the Government has been trying its best to protect the lives of the civilians. But, Punjab, as we know, is a terrorist-violence State. Terrorists nobody can prevent sometimes. It is difficult to prevent terrorism. So, there might have been some untoward incidents during all the polling days.

But we must have some gratefulness to the Government that democracy has come back to the State of Punjab, democracy has returned. That should be welcomed. I don't say that normalcy has returned to the State of Punjab. But the situation has improved. Every right-thinking man and woman in this country has to welcome the election held in the State of Punjab. Sir, I don't say that our present Government is a perfect Government, I don't say that it is an ideal Government because in this world nothing is perfect, nothing is ideal. Even my chosen wife, selected out of many, may not be a perfect wife. So, we cannot expect perfection from any Government.

But, we have to compare. Let us compare the present Government with previous Governments, let us say, from 1989 to 1991 June or May. We have to compare and see which has done better, whether the present Government or the previous Governments have done better. If this present Government has done better, let us say it has done better. Then comes the best. If no other Government is better than the present one, then, we are going to claim that ours is the best Government. We cannot say that ours is perfect Government. So, everyone of us must welcome the election, the return of democracy to the State of Punjab.

The President has rightly said in his Address that the brave people of Punjab deserved to be congratulated. The percentage of the votes polled may not be up to the mark, may not be satisfactory. But they have shown their bravery in casting their votes in spite of the threats, in spite of the dangers inside the State. So, the President has rightly congratulated the voters in Punjab. We must share with the President his view if we are right-thinking citizens of India. Today the situation is improving. I hope

and pray that normalcy would soon return to the State of Punjab. Now they have got their own elected Government. They can mould and shape their beautiful land, their beautiful State, which is one of the most progressive States in India, according to their sweet will. Now, they can do that. It is no more controlled from Delhi. So, we must welcome these achievements. We must thank the President and the Prime Minister for this good achievement.

Now I come to Jammu and Kashmir. I came down to Parliament on July 15, 1990. In that very year on the Independence day 15th August, what happened in the State of Jammu and Kashmir? On that day the Indian National Flag was burnt into ashes at the full right of the security forces of India. What a shame it was! The Government had appointed three VIPs' whose view and ideas were quite different from one another. One was looking towards the South, one towards the North and one towards the East. They could not come to any concrete conclusion. They could not have any determined idea. They could not have firm hands to deal with the situation. That is why even the Indian currency was not allowed to be used in the market there. Foreign currency was used there at that time. Today what do we see? That period has gone. Now the President in his Address has rightly said :

The recent efforts by terrorists to make massive intrusion across the Line of Control created a serious threat to peace in that area. Action, though belated, on the ground by Pakistan and diplomatic moves by the Government succeeded in meeting this grave threat."

What a welcome sentence and noting it is! Pakistan was trying to have those militants to cross the Line of Control. The Prime Minister of Pakistan had made a declaration in this regard, but he did not

[Shri Hiphei]

know what to do when we could convince the world and even the European Community in one voice could blame the Pakistan Government. Pakistan ultimately withdrew from its stand. It is a very successful diplomatic gain that we achieved. Are we not happy with that? Now, the situation has improved. I don't say normalcy has returned to the valley. It has not. But I hope and pray that sooner or later the problem will be solved because it has been dealt with with a firm and determined hand. We are going to reach that. We have to tell the people that Jammu and Kashmir will remain with India till the Sun and the Moon are there. That has to be told to them. That is going to be true.

Let us come to Assam. Some Members have said that the Assam agitation had started due to the ill-treatment by the Central Government. I do not like to use that very word "ill-treatment" because no parent would like to give ill-treatment to their children. They may not be able to give better treatment. So Assam might have not received better treatment from the Central Government. But the point that I would like to raise here is that Assam is not the most backward State in the North-Eastern region of India. There are many other States who are more backward than the State of Assam. The reason cannot be due to the ill-treatment by the Central Government, I don't believe that.

Somebody said that we gave insufficient power to the State Government of Assam and that is why the people of that State are unhappy, so, more powers are required by them. I have said once here in the House that giving more autonomy to the State is not a solution for solving the present problems. I have cited one example. In India the State of Jammu and Kashmir enjoys the best provisions

of the Constitution of India. Yet are they happy today? Are they content with the special provisions? No. It is obvious. By giving more powers, the disturbances in Assam cannot be solved. The agitation, the trouble was started because they felt that non-Assamese population was increasing and they are to get assimilated by the non-Assamese. That was the reason of the agitation. Those student leaders joined the politics and formed a regional party, AGP. They have organised those agitations, those protestations, yet they could form a Government in Assam. They ran the Government for five years. What have they done? What peace they have brought to the State of Assam? Nothing was done. Today let us see what is happening in Assam. The ULFA have shown their willingness for negotiations and many of them have surrendered their arms. The hypocrites should know that the normalcy has come and this is the correct way of finding a solution. The Central Government and the State Government have jointly fought with firm hands and a firm determination. Now the situation has improved much. We must also say 'thank you' to the President for his Address, for telling us all those stories. We must say 'thank you' to the Prime Minister also. But many speakers from the other side have opposed the Motion. I cannot understand. Some of the speakers have not only opposed the Motion but they have also criticised the Government and the Prime Minister. My esteemed elder colleague Mr. Gurupadaswamy has likened our present Prime Minister to a Spanish farmer who was sitting in the wrong train and was going in the wrong direction to a wrong destination. Can anybody believe that? Is the Prime Minister of India today sitting in a wrong train? Can a Prime Minister sitting in the wrong train and going in the wrong direction achieve all these good things? Can he

achieve things and can he conduct elections in the State of Punjab? I do not think so. No Prime Minister, nobody who is sitting in a wrong train and going in the wrong direction to the wrong destination will be able to do as the present Prime Minister is doing. We must ...*(Interruptions)*.

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI (Tamil Nadu): Can we take it that you feel that the migration of non-Assamese into Assam is the only cause for trouble in Assam and the powers vested in the States are enough? Or are you seeking more powers for States?

SHRI HIPHEI: I do not get you.

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: From the arguments you put forth so far, can I infer that according to you, the main cause for the trouble in Assam is the migration of non-Assamese into Assam? Is that the only cause or is it one of the causes? Another aspect is this. Do you feel that the powers vested with the States now are enough? Or, do you want more powers for them? What is your stand?

SHRI HIPHEI: I do not object to giving more autonomy. But this cannot be the reason for disintegration. This cannot be the reason for the feeling of alienation it absolutely can not be to me *(Interruption)*.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (DR. NAGEN SAIKIA): Please do not interrupt. Are you yielding, Mr. Hiphei?

SHRI HIPHEI: One sentence only. Let me answer him, Sir. I do not object to giving more autonomy to the States. But today, the time is not correct. If you give more autonomy to the States, more disintegration will be there.

That is my feeling, strong feeling. So I objected last time also. *(Interruptions)*.

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: Strength is equated with the concentration of more power with the Centre.. *(Interruptions)*.

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: We never objected...*(Interruption)*.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (DR. NAGEN SAIKIA): Mr. Ahluwalia, I can handle. You need not comment. Please do not interrupt, Mr. Virumbi.

SHRI HIPHEI: Then I come to the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid issue. When I joined this Parliament, it was a burning issue at that time. But today, the situation has calmed down. It is heartening to hear that no untoward incident is taking place in Ayodhya. It is nice to hear it. Is it not really a good news? But nobody from the other side has said, oh, this is a great achievement! What is that? I fear that some of them would like to say, oh, this sugar is bitter only because it is not manufactured by them!

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (DR. NAGEN SAIKIA): Mr. Hiphei, it is 6 o'clock. Hon. Members, I want to know whether we shall sit beyond 6 o'clock.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (DR. NAGEN SAIKIA): Mr. Hiphei will continue tomorrow.

The House stands adjourned till 11.00 A.M. tomorrow.

The House then adjourned at one minute past six of the clock till eleven of the clock on Friday, the 6th March, 1992.