

RAJYA SABHA

Wednesday, the 20th November, 2002/29 Kartika, 1924 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock,

MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

INTRODUCTION OF MINISTERS BY THE PRIME MINISTER

प्रधानमंत्री (श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी): माननीय सभापति महोदय, मैं आप की अनुमति से मंत्रि-परिषद् में शामिल किए गए अपने नए सहयोगियों का परिचय कराता हूँ :

1. श्री अनंत गंगाराम गीते, विद्युत मंत्री।
2. श्री विक्रम वर्मा, युवा मामले एवं खेल मंत्री।
3. श्री आनन्दराव विठोबा अदसुल, वित्त एवं कंपनी मामलों के मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री।

FELICITATIONS TO HON. CHAIRMAN

प्रधानमंत्री (श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी): सभापति जी, मुझे एक और सुखद कार्य पूरा करना है। सचमुच में पचास वर्ष के राजनीतिक जीवन में जिन के साथ मेरा संपर्क रहा, सहयोग रहा, स्नेह रहा, उन को पचास वर्ष के बाद राज्य सभा में सभापति के रूप में अभिनंदित करने का मुझे अवसर मिलेगा, इस की सुखद कल्पना मैंने नहीं की थी।

सभापति जी, कल्पना करिए 1952 की, आधी शताब्दी बीत गयी, आप धूल से उठकर माथे का चंदन बन गए हैं। 1952 में हम लोगों में से बहुत से न संसद में थे, न विधान सभा में थे, उस समय आप के नेतृत्व में जनसंघ का निर्माण हुआ और पहले ही संकट का सामना करना पड़ा जब स्वाधीनता के बाद जागीरदारी उन्मूलन का विधेयक आया। राजा-महाराजा, ठिकानेदार समझते थे कि उन के स्वार्थ की रक्षा के लिए कोई-न-कोई तो आवाज उठाएगा, लेकिन आप के नेतृत्व में और उपाध्याय जी के मार्गदर्शन में भारतीय जनसंघ ने फैसला किया कि जागीरदारी का उन्मूलन होना चाहिए और बिना किसी मुआवजे के होना चाहिए। उन्हें काम चलाने भर के लिए धन दिया जाये, इस का विचार होना चाहिए। यह उस समय बड़ा क्रांतिकारी कदम था। आप को छोड़कर आप के सारे साथी पलायन कर गए। आप मैदान में डटे रहे और पचास साल से डटे हैं—कभी विधान सभा में हैं, कभी राज्य सभा में भी थे, कभी मुख्य मंत्री हैं और मुख्य मंत्री पद नहीं मिला तो विरोधी दल के नेता हैं, आगे फिर कुछ मंत्री बनने के लिए रास्ता खुल गया। आप योग्य प्रशासक, किसानों के प्रतिनिधि, राजनीति कुशल ... सब को साथ लेकर चलने की आपकी अपूर्व गुणवत्ता, आज आप हमारा दिशा-निर्देश करने के लिए राज्य सभा के सभापति के रूप में उपस्थित हैं। हम उपराष्ट्रपति के रूप में आपका अभिनंदन करते हैं। आपका मुख्यमंत्रित्वकाल अंत्योदय के लिए याद किया जाएगा

कि लाइन में खड़ा हुआ जो आखिरी व्यक्ति है उसकी पहले चिंता करो और उसकी चर्चा विदेशों में भी हुई। काम के बदले अनाज देने का शुभारंभ हुआ। लोग काम पर लगें, भूख का सामना कर सकें, लेकिन भिक्षा नहीं कुछ परिश्रम हो की परिकल्पना आपके चलते हुए साकार हुई। और भी बहुत सी बातें हैं।

सभापति महोदय, आज जब मुझे कहा गया कि मुझे आपको बधाइयों का सिलसिला शुरू करना है तो मैंने सोचा कि देखें कि "हू इज़ हू" में क्या लिखा हुआ है। "हू इज़ हू" में आपका वर्णन इतने अनेक शब्दों में किया गया है, इतने विशाल ढंग से किया गया है, कि मैं तो चकित रह गया। आपका जीवन-वृत्त ऐसा ही है-कृतित्ववान, हर परिस्थिति का सामना करने के लिए तैयार, राजनैतिक आदर्शों में निष्ठा, उस निष्ठा का पालन करते हुए सब को साथ लेकर जाना। यह आपकी प्रतिभा है, यह आपका परिश्रम है, यह आपकी तपस्या है कि आज आप यहां तक पहुंचे हैं। हम आपका अभिनंदन करते हैं। हमें आपको बधाई देने का अवसर मिला, इसे हम अपने लिए सौभाग्य की बात समझते हैं।

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA HEPTULLA (Maharashtra): Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is a proud privilege for me to welcome you here. As the hon. Prime Minister said, you started your political career in 1952. I think, I was still in the school—I don't remember the class—when you started your political career. As the hon. Prime Minister said, in spite of all the constraints, you got yourself involved against the *jagirdari* movement. I can understand, coming from a State like Rajasthan, it must have been very difficult for you to get yourself actively involved in that. You worked in Rajya Sabha also. After all, Rajya Sabha is the representative body of States. During your membership in the Rajya Sabha, however short it might be, you contributed greatly with your experience of grass-root level working. You are known for Community Empowerment Programmes. Especially, I will mention three of them: *Lok Jumbish*—"jumbish" is an Urdu word which means "movement", *janmangal* and *Shiksha Karmi*. These are very important programmes for the empowerment of people that we have always been wanting to. The hon. Prime Minister has referred to the Poverty Alleviation Programme, *Antodhya*, and your *Apna Gaon and Apna Kaam*, I think, is one of the most important programmes, because today we see lack of job opportunities in their own places, in the villages, and people migrate to cities. Most of the metropolitan cities are choked with migration of people from villages ... That is the basic programme which you took up. And referring to "*Antyodhya*", which is a poverty alleviation programme,

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there is no wonder the former World Bank President, Mr. Robert McNamara, called you the second Rockefeller. We are proud of it.

A lot of people talk about empowerment of minorities. I would not say that a lot has been done for minorities, but you were the first Chief Minister in the country to create a State Wakf Authority. And apart from that you promoted Urdu,—which is my mother tongue, although I am speaking now in English,—even though it is not really the language of Rajasthan. You promoted not only Urdu language, but Arabic and Persian languages also, in your State.

As far as the family planning is concerned, you were the first person to start the implementation of the two-child norm in the elections for the local bodies. I wish we could continue the same at the national level also, then, the Prime Minister would have less problem with over population of the country.

Sir, the most important thing is—it is also concern of everybody now-a-days—your concern for women and children. Your work for the empowerment of the girl child is commendable. We just celebrated the Children's Special Session at the United Nations. And I am sure, the Prime Minister, while addressing the United Nations Assembly, must have mentioned in his speech that we should invest in our children because investment in children is investment in our future.

You conceptualised the idea of the Raj Lakshmi Scheme, which is an endowment policy for the girl child. It was later adopted by the Unit Trust of India. I was involved with the launching of this programme of the Unit Trust of India in my State, Maharashtra. It has been a very successful scheme.

Sir, I know you are a pro-active Chairman. The Prime Minister has just now mentioned that he has half- a-century's association with you. I cannot say the same about myself. I did not have even six months association with you. But, with whatever little association I have had, I can say that you are a pro-active Chairman.

In this House, many legislations will be passed, many discussions will be held; and many important policy decisions will be announced by the Government.

As far as the upliftment of women and children is concerned, we have a lot of hope in you.

In our ethos we talk about Lakshmi, Parvathi and Durga, and we think about them only when we are offering prayers to them. But when they come in the form of women, we either put them on the funeral pyre of their husbands or beat them or rape them. We could witness it from what happened in the capital city of Delhi where we all live. In broad daylight, an incident happened in *Khooni Darwaza*, and it really became a *Khooni Darwaza*. A girl, not an ordinary girl, but a fourth year student of Medical College was raped there. When these incidents are happening, how could we say that empowerment of women is there. I would like you to take action on these issues.

Sir, we believe in the ethos of *Ardhanarishwara*. Parvathi has got all the attributes of Shiva. We are not asking for even half of the empowerment. This is a partnership between men and women, in general, in public life and in personal life. Mr. Prime Minister, you are there and leaders of the various political parties are there, and Dr. Manmohan Singh, who is my bench mate, is here. I would say that while you are in the Chair, we have a hope. The women and men—some of them—will be with me in saying that if you really believe in empowerment of women, you must do something for them. First, give us empowerment, which is a high point of democracy. It is remaining only as a promise, year after year, session after session, week after week. Sir, I discussed this matter in your Chamber as to when we are bringing the Women Empowerment Bill. But, instead of women empowerment, what we get is beating and rape in the streets. I have a lot of hopes in you because, on drought, you did call a meeting and took action. With this pro-activeness, you are not going to be just a person ringing the bell and letting people speak, but you would give a direction to the debate in this House, a proper debate in this House, so that we can solve some of the problems facing our country.

Thank you very much, Sir, for giving me this opportunity.

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (DR. MANMOHAN SINGH):
Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is my proud privilege, on behalf of the Congress Party and on my own behalf, to extend to you a most cordial welcome on your assumption of the august Office of Chairman of our Council.

Sir, your public life, extending over half a century, is an epitome of wisdom, knowledge and experience, which we are very proud to say, will be a very important asset for us as we deliberate in this august House. You have been the Chief Minister thrice of a very dynamic State of ours; you were responsible for many innovative programmes involving the uplift of the poorest sections of our community; your life-long commitment to the welfare of the farmers, particularly, the small and the marginal farmers, will always remind us about the ultimate purpose of politics, i.e., the service of the poor, how, by working together, we all can get rid of chronic poverty, ignorance and disease which still afflict millions and millions of people in this country of ours.

Sir, we have entered the Twenty-first Century and we face enormous challenges and opportunities. The task before us is to face those challenges boldly and seize the opportunities now on the horizon with a vision and faith in the destiny of our people. Human knowledge is now growing at a pace which was unthinkable even two decades ago. Modern science and technology have made it possible, as never before in human history, that chronic poverty, ignorance and disease do not have to be the inevitable lot of a majority of humankind. We have, therefore, to take full advantage of modern science and technology and to impart to all our social, economic and political processes what Jawaharlal Nehru used to describe "scientific temper. In international relations, what was simply unthinkable, some fifteen years ago, has become a norm in international relations. This poses not only huge challenges, but also offers new opportunities. Whether we like it or not, the process of globalisation has thrown up new challenges and new opportunities. As a nation, we can meet those challenges and seize those opportunities if we re-define the role of politics in this complex polity and society that India is.

Politics has become an instrument of being merely a ticket to power. We have to go back to its original role, as Gandhiji first defined it as an instrument of purposeful social change. We have to look upon politics as a creative means of reconciling and harmonising societal tensions, which are built into the body politic of a poor country embarked on the path of modernisation and development. For this it is very essential that we should set out sights high, a new vision about the future of our country in which those who divide our people on the basis of religion and caste have no place.

Sir, in all this, we derive enormous satisfaction and inspiration from your own life of public service extending over 50 years. As I said in the beginning, your wisdom, your knowledge and your experience are today our great assets. Therefore, Sir, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you once again as Chairman of this House. We look forward to your fullest cooperation to you to uphold the dignity and decorum of this House. Sir, thank you very much.

SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI (Kerala): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am extremely happy to felicitate you as Chairman of Rajya Sabha and Vice-President of India. Our House, Rajya Sabha, is playing an important role in the democratic polity of our country. It is a fact that the democratic polity is facing many stresses and strains. It is also a fact that despite all these stresses and strains, our democratic polity is gaining strength. We belong to different political parties. On certain issues our views are similar. On certain issues, we have different sections of the approaches. In the society also, there are different sections of the people, different classes. On certain matters their interests are similar, on certain issues there interests are not similar or confronting. Certainly, all these differences, diversities are reflected in the House. Through the democratic process, we try to evolve consensus on certain issues. It may not be possible to evolve consensus on certain other issues. Where we cannot evolve a consensus, we try to debate, we try to discuss. Sir, you are the facilitator of this democratic process in this House. You are our guide. You have very vast experience in the democratic process. You have been a political leader. You have very rich experience in administration and, above all that, you have a very lovable and pleasing personality. We are looking forward to you for your leadership and guidance. We extend you our unstinted support in upholding the democratic tradition of this House. With this, on my own behalf and on behalf of my Communist Party of India (Marxist), I once again felicitate you, Sir.

SHRI P.G. NARAYANAN (Tamil Nadu): Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is my privilege to tender my respectful felicitation to you on your election as the Vice-President of India and the Chairman of this august House. It gives me great pleasure to welcome you on behalf of myself and on behalf of my party, the All India Anna D.M.K. Hailing from farmers' family, you had experienced a lot of trials and challenges. So, yours' had been a saga of struggles. You faced and you had overcome them undauntedly, to traverse

a path from village to the Vice-President of India. You had undergone imprisonment for 19 months during emergency to uphold the democratic values. You became a Member of the Legislative Assembly of Rajasthan in 1952, which was the first election to be held in free India. You adorned the office of the Chief Minister of Rajasthan three times. During your tenure as Chief Minister, you were instrumental in eradicating completely the practice of burning of a widow in the name of *sati*. You gave the uppermost priority to the welfare and development of the downtrodden and the minorities. Sir, being a man of wide and varied experience, you can control this House effectively by your general approach. Sir, you will be able to conduct the proceedings of this House harmoniously. I wish you all the best. On behalf of my Party, I offer my fullest cooperation to you, Sir. Thank you.

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI (Tamil Nadu): Hon'ble Chairman, Sir, we feel that we are being honoured by having been given an opportunity to congratulate you on your greatness. Sir, it gives me great pleasure to congratulate you on my behalf and on behalf of DMK party. I feel great pleasure in welcoming you as the Chairman of this august House as well as the Vice-President of India. We feel that your life is more or less equivalent to and comparable with the life of this great nation. You had also faced so many odds in your life as this nation had faced. You had overcome all the difficulties in the same manner as this nation had overcome them. Sir, when you were elected as the Vice-President of this great nation, on that occasion, we, along with the leader of our Parliamentary Party, Thiru Mursoli Maran, came, met you and congratulated you. Sir, we belong to the regional parties. You know, Sir, at the present moment, the regional parties are also playing an equal role in shaping the destiny of this great nation, as is the case with the national parties. We believe in equality in all walks of life, including the gender justice. Therefore, we stand by the request made by the Deputy Chairperson regarding the representations of the other half of humanity. Sir, when the Bill comes, definitely we will support it and see that the other half also takes its place in this august House.

Sir, you belong to the agricultural community. You know the position of agriculture in this country and we all, cutting across party lines, are striving hard to see that people come up to the international levels. Sir, in this task, we hope that the entire country will stand as one man. Sir,

whenever the nation confronts problems, on any national issue, this august House always stands as one man. I remember one instance when Chavan Ji was the Home Minister. At that time, a constitutional vacuum was about to be created. Then, he called the Opposition — at that time, we were in the Opposition — he explained what the situation would be if the Resolution was not passed as it stood. Then we understood the difficulty of the Treasury Benches. We told them, "All right, we will stage a walk-out after having expressed our opinion. You just get through with the Resolution. At that time we were in the Opposition, we kept our promise and honoured our commitment and saw to it that the Resolution got through this august House. In such a manner, Sir, cooperation has been extended from all sections of the people.

Sir, our country is multi-lingual, multi-cultural and multi-national more or less as a sub-continent. Therefore, as Mr. Ramachandran Pillai has said, interests may sometimes clash when there are different classes living in a society, but we have to reconcile in such a way that democracy finally upholds its own place. Therefore, when we come to know that you had given equal opportunities to Urdu Persian languages in your State, we feel that if the Central Government is a ship, you are the lighthouse for that. We know that problems the people are facing in respect of language. Therefore, we feel, Sir, that under your guidance, this august House will further enhance its prestige by maintaining democracy. Sir, on behalf of the DMK party, the Leader of the DMK party, and also on behalf of the Leader of the Parliamentary Party, we give our assurance that we will cooperate the maximum possible with you to uphold the decorum of this august House. With these words, Sir, I conclude. Thank you very much, Sir.

WELCOME TO PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION FROM CANADA

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon'ble Members, I have an announcement to make. We have with us, seated in the special box, Members of the Parliamentary delegation from Canada, currently on a visit to our country under the distinguished leadership of his excellency, Mr. Daniel Philip Hays, Speaker of the Senate, Parliament of Canada.

On behalf of the Members of the House and on my own behalf, I take pleasure in extending a hearty welcome to the Leader and other

Members of the delegation and wish our distinguished guests an enjoyable and fruitful stay in our country. We hope that during their stay here they would be able to see and learn more about our parliamentary system, our country and our people, and that their visit to this country will further strengthen the friendly bonds that exist between India and Canada. Through them, we convey our greetings and best wishes to the Parliament and the friendly people of Canada.

FELICITATIONS TO HON. CHAIRMAN (Contd.)

प्रो. रामगोपाल गोपाल यादव (उत्तर प्रदेश) सभापति महोदय, मैं अपनी समाजवादी पार्टी और अपनी तरफ से आपका इस महान सदन के सभापति के रूप में अभिनन्दन करता हूँ, स्वागत करता हूँ और वंदन करता हूँ। श्रीमन् बहुत लंबे अर्से से जब से मैं राजनीति में आया, आपका नाम सुना करता था और जब आप राजस्थान के मुख्य मंत्री हुए, तब आपको देखने का अवसर भी मुझे प्राप्त हुआ। एक सामान्य परिवार में पैदा होने के बावजूद बिना किसी समर्थन के आप अपने बल पर राजस्थान के कई बार मुख्य मंत्री हुए। यह उन करोड़ों लोगों के लिए एक प्रेरणा का स्रोत है, जो अपने बलबूते पर सिद्धांतों के प्रति अपनी निष्ठा के साथ आगे बढ़ने की सोचते हैं और प्रयास करते हैं। क्योंकि कई बार ऐसा होता है और आप जिस राज्य से आ रहे हैं उसमें तो बड़े-बड़े राजा-महाराजाओं वाली बैक ग्राउंड रही है। जैसा प्रधानमंत्री जी ने कहा, जब जमींदारी उन्मूलन वाला मामला आया और चाहे सती-प्रथा वाला मामला आया, ऐसे में धारा के विपरीत खड़े रहने का जो साहस आपने दिखाया, वह भी लाखों लोगों के लिए एक प्रेरणा की बात है।

श्रीमन्, यह सदन राज्यों का प्रतिनिधित्व करता है और राज्यों के हितों की बात कहना इस सदन के सदस्यों के लिए आवश्यक भी होता है और उनका कर्तव्य भी होता है। आप जिस राज्य से आते हैं, उस राज्य में पिछले दिनों मुझे कई बार जाने का अवसर प्राप्त हुआ। सूखा और अन्य कारणों से जो परिस्थितियाँ वहाँ पर हैं, वे इतनी भीषण हैं, मैंने समाचारपत्रों में पढ़ा, आपने उपराष्ट्रपति बनने के बाद भी अधिकारियों को बुलाया और इस संबंध में चर्चा की। इससे भी यह सिद्ध होता है कि एक असली जननेता और मास लीडर के लक्षण यही होते हैं कि जो अपने लोगों के प्रति, अपने राज्य के प्रति, उसके हितों के प्रति सदैव चिंतित रहे। इस सदन में भी ऐसे अवसर आएंगे और आते रहे हैं, जब सदस्यों ने अपने राज्यों के हितों को लेकर मामले उठाए हैं और कई बार चेयर की अनसुनी करके भी मामले उठाए हैं। जब चेयर की अनसुनी करके मामले उठाए जाते हैं तो यह न समझा जाए कि चेयर के प्रति कोई निरादर है। अपार श्रद्धा होते हुए भी कई बार विपक्ष की और सदस्यों की मजबूरियाँ होती हैं जो वे मामले उठाते हैं। श्रीमन्, आप कई बार मुख्य मंत्री जरूर रहे लेकिन फिर भी ज्यादातर आपका जीवन विपक्ष में ही बीता है। इसलिए मुझे पूरी उम्मीद है कि विपक्ष की

समस्याओं से और उनकी मजबूरियों से आप पूरी तरह से परिचित हैं। जिस दल से आप संबंधित रहे हैं, अब आप इस पद पर पहुंच गए हैं हम पूरी तरह से यकीन कर सकते हैं जब यहां बैठेंगे तो आपके लिए सब एक जैसे होंगे। यह तो तुला है, यह न्याय की तराजू है, जहां पर आप बैठे हुए हैं, इसके ऊपर पीछे बनी हुई है, यह भी इसी तरफ इंगित करती है। मैं एक बात और कहना चाहूंगा कि आज से दस साल पहले 1992 में पहली बार जब मैं राज्य सभा में आया, डा. शंकर दयाल शर्मा उस वक्त हमारी राज्य सभा के चेयरमैन थे, कुछ दिनों बाद वे राष्ट्रपति हो गए। शंकर दयाल शर्मा साहब को हम लोग इसलिए बहुत याद करते हैं कि वे राष्ट्रपति होने के बाद भी रेग्युलरली संसद सदस्यों को अपने यहां नाश्ते पर बुलाते थे। बाद में यह प्रथा कुछ कम हो गई। वह बहुत अच्छी चीज थी, मैं इसलिए नहीं कहता हूं कि राष्ट्रपति जी नाश्ते पर बुला लेते हैं, एक इन्टरेक्शन होता है और आम तौर पर मिलते रहते हैं। मैं यह चाहूंगा और अपेक्षा करूंगा कि वह सिस्टम फिर शुरू हो और ईश्वर करे कि आज आप इस पद पर हैं, इससे भी बड़े पद पर पहुंचे, यही हमारी कामना है।

श्री लालू प्रसाद (बिहार): माननीय सभापति जी, मैं अपनी पार्टी राष्ट्रीय जनता दल की तरफ से, अपनी पार्टी के सभी सदस्यों की तरफ से आपका इस गौरवशाली पद, भारत के उपराष्ट्रपति और सबसे बड़े हाउस के सभापति के रूप में हार्दिक अभिनन्दन करता हूं, आपको बधाई देता हूं। महोदय, मेरे पूर्व के नेताओं और माननीय प्रधानमंत्री जी ने ठीक ही कहा कि इतने लंबे संघर्ष के बाद आप और प्रधानमंत्री जी, आडवाणी जी, इधर हमारे माननीय कर्ण सिंह जी भी इशारा कर रहे थे कि मैं भी इसमें हूं, यह कितना अच्छा और सुखद अवसर है कि आज हम सब आपको इतने बड़े पद पर देखकर आपका अभिनन्दन कर रहे हैं। महोदय, देश को पता है और आप भी जानते हैं कि जब आप मुख्यमंत्री थे और मैं बिहार का मुख्यमंत्री था, तब हर राज्य के जो वित्तीय पंगु हालात थे, उस संबंध में हर राज्य का मुख्यमंत्री आपके नेतृत्व में, आपको मुख्यमंत्रियों के नेता के रूप में मानकर, हम सभी आपके नेतृत्व में आगे बढ़कर केन्द्र सरकार पर दबाव डालते थे। यह जो फेडरल सिस्टम है, संघीय व्यवस्था है इसमें जबतक राज्यों की वित्तीय स्थिति को सुदृढ़ नहीं किया जाएगा तब तक हमारी यह संघीय व्यवस्था मजबूत नहीं हो पाएगी। यही कारण है कि चाहे जो भी लोग यहां रहते हों पर इस मुल्क में राज्यों के साथ भेदभाव होने की वजह से क्षेत्रीयता बढ़ी है। आप इतने बड़े पद पर आए हैं, आपको सिर्फ आपके दल, जिस दल में आप थे, उस दल से ही नहीं, बल्कि चारों तरफ से आपको वोट मिले हैं। लोगों को परेशानी में देखकर आपका कैम्पेन करने का जो तरीका है, आपकी जो कार्यकुशलता है, वह सबको हैरत में डाल देती है। इतने बड़े पद पर आने के बाद हम यह नहीं मानते कि अब आप जनसंघ, भारतीय जनता पार्टी और आर.एस.एस. के रूप में हैं। इस पद पर आने के बाद अब वह बात आपसे छूट गई है। मैं दावे के साथ कह सकता हूं कि आप चाहे जिस भी दल में रहे हों आपका निकट का संबंध लोकनायक जयप्रकाश नारायण जी के साथ रहा है। वे हम सब के मुख्य नेता थे। आपने भी उन दिनों काफी सहयोग दिया था जब हम नौजवान लड़ाई में थे, आंदोलन में थे। हमारी अपनी इच्छा होती है, कुछ लोग फार्मेलिटी में अभिनन्दन कर देते हैं और यह

मान भी लिया जाता है कि इस पद पर जो लोग आते हैं, वे जिस पार्टी से आते हैं, उस पार्टी और सरकार के प्रति वफादार नहीं होते। ठीक है, जो संवैधानिक काम है उसे करना चाहिए जो चेयर है उसे पार्टी से ऊपर उठकर, संगठन से ऊपर उठकर सबको दिशा-निर्देश देना है। हम लोग विभिन्न दलों से चुनकर आए हैं। इस देश में विभिन्न समस्याएं हैं लेकिन इस देश में सबसे बड़ा खतरा सांप्रदायिकता का है। तुलसी दास जी ने रामायण में लिखा है कि जहां कुमति है, जहां डिफरेंस आफ ओपिनियन है, जहां उपद्रव है, जहां अशांति है वहां नाना प्रकार की बीमारियों और नाना प्रकार की समस्याओं को झेलना पड़ेगा।

कोयला और खान मंत्री (सुश्री उमा भारती): कुमति का मतलब डिफरेंट ओपिनियन नहीं होता है। कुमति का मतलब भ्रष्ट बुद्धि होता है।

श्री लालू प्रसाद: आप जैसी साध्वी से हमें क्लास लेनी पड़ेगी। हम लोग साधु-संन्यासी नहीं हैं, हम आप लोगों के निर्देश से आगे बढ़ेंगे।

सुश्री उमा भारती: राजनीति में हमें आपसे क्लास लेनी होगी।

श्री लालू प्रसाद: जहां एकता है, इन्टीगरिटी है, वहां समृद्धि है। जहां कुमति है वहां विपत्ति निधाना है और जहां सुमति है वहां सम्पत्ति नाना। हमारी उमा भारती जी को कौन पढ़ाए। दूसरे साधु-संन्यासियों के संदेशों को इन्होंने सुना है। महोदय, आपको पूरा सहयोग, हाउस को चलाने में, सहयोग करने में देंगे। असली अग्रि परीक्षा आपकी है। इस अग्रि परीक्षा में आप कैसे खरे उतरते हैं उसमें हम लोग आपको सहयोग करेंगे। पूरा सहयोग देने का हम वादा करते हैं।

इस देश में जो हमारी मूलभूत समस्या है और खास करके साम्प्रदायिकता का जो खतरा बढ़ रहा है, देश टूट के कगार पर खड़ा है तो हम सभी माननीय सदस्य इन सवालों को जरूर उठाएंगे और हम लोग आशा करते हैं कि आपका पर्याप्त समर्थन और समय हम लोगों को मिलेगा ताकि देश की समस्याओं को उठा सकें।

महोदय, जिस पार्टी से हम आए हैं—आप पार्टी से ऊपर उठ गए हैं। यह कितना अच्छा संयोग है। जिस पार्टी में आप रहे हैं वह पार्टी ही देश में नहीं रहने वाली है। आप तो वहां से निकल आए हैं नाव पार हो गयी है। पार हो गए हैं। अब इनको छोड़िए और इधर देश की समस्याओं की तरफ ध्यान दीजिएगा।

पुनः आपका हम हार्दिक अभिनन्दन करते हैं और शुभकामनाएं देते हैं। धन्यवाद।

SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN (Kerala): Mr. Chairman, Sir, on behalf of the Communist Party of India as also on behalf of the members belonging to the CPI in this house, I extend to you a hearty welcome as the Chairman of this august house as also the Vice-President of our Republic.

You have become the Vice-President of our Republic and the Chairman of this august House at a time when our country is facing very serious problems. On the one side, there are security problems, and on the other, there are serious economic difficulties. The question of unemployment, poverty, etc., has become big problems which we have to face. Apart from that, various sections of the society have got their own grievances. For example, problems of women which have been referred to by the Deputy Chairperson, Shrimati Najma Heptullah. They are being ill-treated. There are problems of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. They are not being treated as human beings, who could live with honour and dignity in the society, in several parts of the country. Then, there are problems of agriculturists, agricultural workers and the workforce in the formal and informal sectors. They are the real creators of economic wealth in our country. But, unfortunately, they are not being given a proper treatment. Therefore, they have also got their own grievances. All these problems will come up for discussion in this House, especially, from the Opposition. We have to raise such problems as also other issues which may crop up on various occasions. On such occasions, I hope and believe, you will guide us in a proper way and protect the rights of the Opposition as also the individual members. You are the proper person to do it, because you had a very long experience as a politician and a social worker. You have also got a very long experience in the Legislatures. As a legislator and an administrator, you have got a long experience. You had been sitting in the Opposition, as well as, in the Treasury Benches. Therefore, you can very well understand what the rights of the Opposition are and how their rights should be protected. I hope, under your guidance, this House will be able to discharge its duties in a proper way and make creative contributions towards finding solutions to the various problems that the country is facing. I, once again, extend to you a hearty welcome. Thank you.

श्री संजय निरुपम (महाराष्ट्र): सभापति जी, सचमुच यह मेरा सौभाग्य है कि आज मुझे आपका अभिनन्दन करने का अवसर प्राप्त हुआ, क्योंकि आपका जितना बड़ा राजनैतिक कैरियर है उतनी मेरी उम्र भी नहीं है, मैं इस सदन का एक बहुत ही छोटा सा, जूनियर किस्म का सदस्य हूँ, लेकिन ऐसी स्थिति में, जब हमारे नेता श्री सतीश प्रधान जी नहीं हैं, तब मुझे यह जिम्मेदारी सौंपी गई है और इस जिम्मेदारी का आनंद उठाते हुए मैं आपका, राज्य सभा के सभापति पद पर निर्वाचित होने के लिए, अभिनंदन करता हूँ और इस देश के उप राष्ट्रपति के पद पर निर्वाचित होने के लिए आपका स्वागत करते हुए, आपका अभिनंदन करते हुए मेरी बिल्कुल ऐसी स्थिति है जैसे सूर्य को

दीपक दिखाया जा रहा हो। आप, आपके रूप में इस कुर्सी पर मध्यम वर्ग का एक बड़ा नेता विराजमान है, इस देश के किसानों का एक बड़ा नेता विराजमान है और इस देश का एक जननेता यहां पर उपस्थित हुआ है। सचमुच यह इस सदन के हम सभी सदस्यों के लिए बड़े सौभाग्य की बात है कि इस सदन में हमें आपके सभापतित्व में काम करना है। दस दिन पहले हमारे मुंबई शहर में आपका भव्य नागरिक अभिनन्दन किया। मुझे नहीं याद आ रहा है कि पिछले कई वर्षों में किसी राष्ट्रपति या उप राष्ट्रपति जी का इस भव्य तरीके से कभी नागरिक अभिनन्दन किया गया हो। मुंबई में आप तीन दिन तक थे। एक दिन, एक कार्यक्रम में मुझे भी उपस्थित रहने का मौका मिला और यह मेरा सौभाग्य है कि आपके ठीक बगल में बैठ करके मुझे भोजन करने का अवसर मिला। सभापति जी की जो महानता है मैं उसके बारे में एक छोटी सी घटना यहां पर सुना रहा हूं।

मुंबई के एक पांचतारा होटल में लंच पर इन्हें आमंत्रित किया गया था और हमें बताया गया था कि आप उप राष्ट्रपति जी के साथ लंच करें। सारा कार्यक्रम हुआ। बड़े-बड़े लोग आए थे। बड़े-बड़े संभ्रात वर्ग के लोग, जो कोट और टाई पहन करके आए थे, वहां पर सबने इनका अभिनन्दन किया। उसके बाद सभापति जी को यह घोषणा करनी थी कि चलिए अब लंच का समय हो गया, भोजन का समय हो गया। जब सभापति जी ने घोषणा की कि अब भोजन का समय हो गया है तो उस समय उन्होंने सचमुच जनता के एक दर्द की बात भी सुनाई। उन्होंने कहा कि मैं नहीं चाह रहा हूं कि इस मौके पर मैं कोई गंभीर बात कहूं, क्योंकि यह भोजन का समय है और आपको भोजन करना है, लेकिन साथ-साथ मैं आपको यह भी याद दिला दूं कि मेरे प्रदेश राजस्थान में लोग सूखे से मर रहे हैं, अकाल से मर रहे हैं और भूख से मर रहे हैं। इतनी बड़ी चिंता, ऐसे पदों पर पहुंच कर वही लोग कर सकते हैं सचमुच में जिनको जनता की नब्ज की समझ है और जनता के दर्द की समझ है। मुझे बड़ी खुशी होती है, मुंबई के अपने दौरे के दौरान, अपने अभिनन्दन कार्यक्रम के दौरान आपने ग्लोबलाइजेशन यानी अर्थव्यवस्था का जो वैश्वीकरण हो रहा है, उससे कैसे कामगारों पर कोई संकट आ सकता है, उस पर भी आपने एक बड़ी बेबाक टिप्पणी की। मैं उम्मीद करता हूं कि इस सदन में, आपके नेतृत्व में हम बहुत अच्छा काम करेंगे और देश में जो अलग-अलग संकट हैं, कामगारों पर, काश्तकारों पर, उन पर विस्तार से चर्चा करेंगे।

मैं अपने पक्ष की तरफ से, अपनी तरफ से आपका अभिनन्दन करता हूं और विशेष तौर पर मैं आपको यह वचन देता हूं, यह शब्द देता हूं कि आपको पूरा सहयोग दूंगा। मेरी आपसे सिर्फ इतनी मांग है कि इस सदन में विषय उठाने के लिए आप हमें अनुमति देते रहें। धन्यवाद।

SHRI M.P. ABDUSSAMAD SAMADANI (Kerala): Sir, I am extremely happy to join the other Members of this august House in extending a hearty welcome on your elevation as the Vice-President of the country and also as the Chairman of this House—Rajya Sabha. Sir we are extremely happy in getting you as the Chairman, especially because of your

maturity. The great quality that you have displayed in your public life is that maturity and, Sir, we hope that with your maturity, you will be able to guide this august House in attaining great heights of fame. Sir, now there is an urgent need to protect the values and the station of every institution. Today, there is an erosion of values in many of our institutions. With your maturity, we hope that you will be able to contribute to the protection of the great institutions of the country, especially our institution, Rajya Sabha. Persons are like bubbles. It is the institution that matters. Institution is the symbol of human civilization. Persons may come and go; parties may come and go, but institutions will remain as the glorious witnesses of the historical process that has always enriched human thirst for progress. Sir, there is an urgent need to commit ourselves, to devote ourselves and all our energies and resources to national unity. Under your leadership, as the Vice-President of the country, we hope that we will be able to make glorious achievements in this field also. You have come from a very humble beginning. The Deputy Chairman has already mentioned about how you are promoting Urdu. In Urdu there is a saying "पाई है कुछ गुलाब, पहाड़ों में परवरिस।" Your case is like that. From that humble beginning you have come to occupy this high office. The hon. Prime Minister has mentioned the importance of taking everybody together. प्रधानमंत्री जी, सब को साथ ले चलने की अहमियत के बारे में बोल रहे थे। I feel there is an urgent need for that kind of an approach and that kind of inclination in the present set up and present conditions. Especially, as the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, we hope that you will be able to take all of us with you. Sir, you are Shekhawat. We will always be there with *shikayats*. We will be coming to you with many complaints. Sir, as you know, in Urdu sakhawat means graciousness. We hope with your sakhawat we will be able to enrich the proceedings of this House.

[THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair]

Sir, I felicitate you and congratulate you on behalf of my party the Indian Union Muslim League. I would like to quote the great Western poet, Walt Whitman, who said, "There is a tide in the life of every individual which may lead him to fortune." We hope that this tide which has come as a blessing in your life may lead our glorious House and our great nation to great heights. Thank you.

DR. RAJA RAMANNA (Nominated): Sir, I feel honoured that I have been asked to welcome you not only on my own behalf but on behalf of the group of ten Members. We are a group of ten people here. We will be often agreeing to disagree. We do not belong to any party. But we play a rather important part in the Rajya Sabha. Some of us have been here for a very long time. My term has been a short one of only nine years. But I think that since I am nearly of the same age as the Prime Minister, I can speak with the same authority which he has used while praising you on your assumption of this high office.

I would like to bring to your attention the great respect the rest of the country has for people from Rajasthan. In South India, from where I come, if you say somebody is from Rajasthan, it automatically means he is a man of great heroism and trustworthiness. Also many good things of our history and architecture are associated with Rajasthan. Here I would like to recall a particular incident. When Rajasthan was being chosen for setting up an atomic power plant, I was with Dr. Homi J. Bhabha the great scientist. We all went to see the place that had been chosen near the Rajasthan Lake. After having seen that place, we stopped a few miles away to see the Shiva temple which was built 300 years ago. I think it was built in the time of Aurangzeb, and when Homi Bhabha saw it, he said, "Well, I have taken a decision the temple has to be near the place where the reactor is going to be". Now, I mention this because the atmosphere in Rajasthan was not considered to be very technological or scientific at that time, but since then, it has changed considerably, and some of our reactors have worked well in that area. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the people of Rajasthan for the contributions they have made to the country in a field, not necessarily agricultural and the usual things, but in an area which is very much more complicated and very useful to the country. Sir, I would like to end by saying that your presence as Chairman, here, in this House, with your experience, with your virtues, which have been already described. These will make a difference to this House. Probably, I should not really mention it now, but I cannot help saying that we have not been very cooperative with our late previous Chairman. So, I would say, this is our great chance to rise to the occasion; and it is, therefore, very pleasant to listen to all the leaders of the House here expressing their desire to cooperate with you in the work of this House. I thank you very much, Madam, for this opportunity that has been given to me.

श्री गांधी आजाद (उत्तर प्रदेश): महोदय, मैं गर्व का अनुभव कर रहा हूँ कि आज मुझे सभापति जी का अभिनंदन करने का सुअवसर प्राप्त हुआ है।

[श्री सभापति पीठासीन हुए]

सभापति महोदय, मैं अपनी ओर से, अपनी बहुजन समाज पार्टी की ओर से आपका हार्दिक स्वागत करता हूँ और अभिनंदन करता हूँ।

महोदय, आजादी के इतने वर्षों बाद भी आज देश में व्याप्त सामाजिक विषमता के कारण तथा जातिवाद और वर्णवाद के कारण अनुसूचित जाति, अनुसूचित जनजाति का समुचित विकास नहीं हो पा रहा है। आप सभापति के रूप में इस समस्या के समाधान की ओर ध्यान देते हुए सबको साथ लेकर चलेंगे एवम् सब के साथ न्याय करेंगे, इसी आशा और विश्वास के साथ मैं अपनी शुभकामना देते हुए पुनः आपका अभिनंदन करता हूँ। धन्यवाद।

SHRI R.S. GAVAI (Maharashtra): Sir, at the outset, I welcome you on my behalf and on behalf of my party. Sir, it is well-known that in your long political travel, you held important positions in your life. Here, I recall the saying of one great man, Tolstoy. He said how long you travel, is immaterial, but in what direction you travel is important. As the... In spite of the complex political situation in the country, despite various ideologies of political parties—this may vary from party to party—I should mention that your long political travel has been with direction, and not without direction. That is more material, and is in conformity with the saying of Tolstoy. What I do know about you is that while keeping up the good relationship, you believed in dignity of the man or woman and believed in dignity of the weaker sections of the society. I think this is the progress, which we need today. You believed in the agriculture democracy, the village democracy, the rural democracy, and you always stood for agriculture and agriculturists.

Sir, we are very happy that you are the Chairman of this august House which is the highest temple of Parliamentary democracy. I do feel that democracy is the medium through which we have to achieve the goal. And I do seek your guidance while conducting the proceedings of this House, in establishing democracy, political, social and economic. Actually, we have achieved political democracy, but we are far away from social and economic democracy. We will not merely have political

democracy, but we will have social and economic democracy. So, unless and until, there is economic and social democracy in our nation, there is no meaning for political democracy in the true sense. Sir, I hope and I do aspire that your long travel in political life would be useful to establish the social and economic democracy along with political democracy. Once again, I welcome you whole-heartedly and wish you best of luck in your new life.

श्री प्रफुल्ल पटेल (महाराष्ट्र): माननीय सभापति महोदय, मैं अपने आपको बहुत गौरान्वित महसूस कर रहा हूँ कि आज इस स्वागत की शृंखला में मुझे भी बोलने का अवसर मिल रहा है। मैं अपनी ओर से, अपने दल राष्ट्रवादी कांग्रेस पार्टी की ओर से हमारे दल के नेता श्री शरद पवार की ओर से आपका इस पद पर स्थापित होने की वजह से बहुत-बहुत स्वागत करता हूँ।

महोदय, काफी वर्षों से मुझे स्वयं आपका परिचय है और कई वर्षों से मुझे आपका स्नेह भी प्राप्त हो रहा है, इसलिए आज आपको इस पद पर देखकर मैं दुगुनी खुशी महसूस कर रहा हूँ। वैसे मेरे नेता श्री शरद पवार जी के साथ आपके कोई भी राजनीतिक मतभेद भले ही हों, लेकिन व्यक्तिगत तौर से संबंध बहुत मधुर रहे हैं और उनकी वजह से मुझे भी आपके स्नेह और सौहार्द का लाभ मिला है। आपके इस राजनीतिक जीवन के लम्बे अनुभव का इस सदन को और हम सब लोगों को आगे आने वाले दिनों में लाभ मिले, यही आज के दिन मैं यहां पर ईश्वर से कामना करता हूँ। ज्यादा कुछ न कहते हुए, क्योंकि अनेक वक्ताओं ने आपके स्वभाव, आपके कार्य आपके अनुभव के बारे में बहुत कुछ प्रशंसा के शब्द कहे हैं, इसलिए उस बारे में ज्यादा कुछ न कहते हुए एक बात जरूर आपसे कहना चाहूंगा।

एक भविष्यवाणी के तौर पर कि आगे आने वाले दिनों में, आज तो आपका पहला दिन है, लेकिन आगे आने वाले दिनों में इधर से भी और उधर से भी बहुत शोर होने वाला है और हम जो बीच में बैठने वाले सदस्य हैं, शायद हम लोग ही आपके ज्यादा काम आने वाले हैं, जो इधर के और उधर के शोर से कम प्रभावित होकर आपके काम में पूरी-पूरी मदद करने वाले साबित होंगे।

मैं पुनः आपको बहुत-बहुत मुबारकबाद देते हुए आपके लम्बे जीवन की कामना करता हूँ, प्रार्थना करता हूँ और आप अपने कार्य में सफल रहें, ऐसी आपको शुभकामनाएं देता हूँ।

श्री हरेन्द्र सिंह मलिक (हरियाणा): आदरणीय सभापति महोदय, आज एक किसान के बेटे को भारत के उपराष्ट्रपति के रूप में और इस सर्वोच्च सदन के सभापति के रूप में पाकर हम किसानों, गांवों और गरीबों से जुड़े हुए लोग अपने आपको गौरान्वित महसूस कर रहे हैं।

मान्यवर, हम लोगों के जन्म से लंबा आपका राजनीतिक अनुभव हमें इस बात के लिए आश्चर्य करता है कि भीड़भाड़ के आधार पर हल्ला मचाने वालों के बीच आप सदैव गरीबों और

किसानों की बातें उठाने वाले लोगों को संरक्षण प्रदान करते रहेंगे। आपका आशीर्वाद और आपका संरक्षण अब केवल राजस्थान के लोगों को नहीं बल्कि राजस्थान के सूखा प्रभावित क्षेत्रों के साथ-साथ उत्तर प्रदेश जैसे गरीब राज्य के ग़ना किसानों को भी मिलेगा। हमें उम्मीद है कि उनकी ज्वलंत समस्याओं को उठाने में आपका आशीर्वाद हमें प्राप्त होता रहेगा।

मान्यवर, हमें पूरा-पूरा विश्वास है कि गांवों और गरीबों की समस्याओं को उठाने में आपका स्नेह हमें सदैव प्राप्त होता रहेगा। मैं अपनी ओर से और अपनी पार्टी इंडियन नेशनल लोकदल की ओर से आपका हार्दिक अभिनन्दन करता हूँ और आपको बधाई देता हूँ।

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU (Andhra Pradesh): Mr. Chairman, Sir, initially, I was not inclined to speak because our parliamentary party leader, the hon. Prime Minister, as also the Leader of the House, have spoken; but I could not resist my temptation because of one particular aspect which is agitating the mind of the entire nation and also myself, as an individual. I will come to that later. First, I would like to compliment and congratulate you. You have the character, the calibre and the capacity. You have the discipline, the dynamism and the dedication in performing this responsibility; I am sure about it. Sir, when you started your political carrier, I was just born. So, I am not going to go into the past and talk of the past. But I remember, while working along with you, in the party, you always used to share the concern of others with regard to the plight of the poor people, the rural people, particularly, the farming community. There is a feeling in the rural areas of the country that there is a great urban-rural divide, and this has become very much evident in the light of the fact that even after so many years of independence, the rural people are not getting adequate projection, adequate attention, and focus, with regard to their problems, in the overall business of our legislatures. Political issues, emotional issues, and other things, are getting more importance, and these issues are not getting enough importance. That is the feeling of the people. We, as a mature democracy, should take care of this particular issue and try to address this heart-burning of the people, particularly, of the rural areas.

Secondly, Sir, the most important issue which I want to share with the other Members of the House, and on which I also seek your indulgence, is this. I had also an occasion to talk to you personally about this. There is so much concern, and the people are agitated about the decline in the standards of Parliament. This is a very serious question. It is not an

issue on which we should blame this side or that side, the ruling party or the opposition parties. All of us should really ponder over this issue and then address this problem very seriously. We are very fortunate that we have very senior people here. We have experienced people on that side as well as on this side. Fortunately, even in the Opposition also, there are people who have been in power earlier, and who have considerable experience. *(Interruptions)* Sir, I am speaking from the bottom of heart. I see Dr. Manmohan Singh, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, and other senior Members on that side, and I know the way, they have really contributed to the debates of the House and also their stand in regard to the rules. And, that gives me more inspiration. But what I want to impress upon you, Sir, is this. When I first entered this House, I was reading Shri Chakravarti Rajgopalachari's speeches. He had once remarked, "If you are not well on the facts, then go to the well of the House".

Then subsequently, I also used to read the debates of the Lok Sabha as well as of the Legislative Assemblies, because I wanted to get some experience. What is happening now? One has to seriously think about it. In this House and in the other House, we all have taken a solemn pledge which we have forgotten. In the 50th year of the Indian Republic, we had taken a solemn pledge which we have forgotten. I am not blaming any side here. This is the thing which has been agitating the minds of the people. Many former Speakers, including Late Shri G.M.C. Balayogi, as also the former Chairman, Late Krishan Kantji, had all taken this issue very seriously. They had umpteen number of meetings, and many decisions were taken. But, somehow or the other, we have not been able to implement those decisions.

Now, Sir, I have some experience of the State Legislature. I came to Delhi in the hope that things will be more matured here. But now, Sir, I can say frankly that my tenure in the State Legislature of Andhra Pradesh was comparatively better than my experience here. I am saying it with a lot of agony. I am not saying this to cast aspersions on anybody here in this House or the other House.

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY (Karnataka): You are denigrating this House.

SHRI M. VENKATASH NAIDU: That is your opinion. I do not want to get into that. What I am saying is this. My experience here is very limited.

I would only say that everybody should put forward his point of view effectively, argue effectively, and then leave it to the House, to the Government and so on. But if you go beyond a point, it becomes unmanageable. I do not know what is going to happen. Somebody has already cautioned that it is going to be an *agni pariksha*. I think Laluji said that there was going to be an *agni pariksha*. Then, our friend, Shri Prafulbhai, also mentioned that these things are going to happen. But then, in Parliament, what is the way out? One should debate, discuss and argue one's case. Either you should discuss and talk it out, or if you don't feel like talking it out, you should walk out. But what is happening is that we have frequent break-outs. This is what is really agitating the minds of the people. I hope you will give a serious thought to it and also hold consultations with all the senior functionaries of the Parliament here, particularly, in the Rajya Sabha, and see to it that the standards are raised and the traditions that were set by our seniors are maintained. Today, Sir, there are many problems facing the country—the problem of poverty, the problem of unemployment, the problem of rural and urban divide, the problem of communalism and pseudo-secularism—which are agitating the minds of the people. These problems have to be addressed, and adequate attention has to be paid to rural India. This is my wish. I, once again convey my best wishes to you.

श्री बलवन्त सिंह रामूवालिआ (उत्तर प्रदेश): सर, हिन्दू धर्म में ऐसे तीर्थ स्थानों का जिक्र आता है जहां कुछ काले रंग के जानवर स्नान करते थे और हंस बन जाते थे। लेकिन इस हाउस में आते ही हंस हैं। हंस बुद्ध लोग आते हैं। हंस बुद्ध लोगों के इस महा पवित्र हाउस के अध्यक्ष होना महा हंस बुद्ध और महा भाग्यशाली यह आपके हिस्से में आया है। मैं अनुभव करता हूँ कि आने वाले पांच वर्षों में आप इस देश की मान मर्यादा और राजनीतिक वर्गों को जो इज्जत प्रदान होनी चाहिए, जो इज्जत प्राप्त करनी चाहिए उसको आगे बढ़ाने में पथप्रदर्शक बनेंगे। हम कितनी बातें करें, एक साथ चाहें, लेकिन आम जनता में दिन पर दिन सभी राजनीतिक दलों के लोगों के प्रति कंटेम्प्ट बढ़ती जा रही है। उसके इलाज के लिए आपकी योग्य अगुआई मिलेगी। एक और जो बड़ी बात सामने आई है वह है मूल्यों की राजनीति और नैतिकता, उस पर भी ध्यान दिया जाए। देश में लाचार, सिफारिशहीन, कमजोर और जिनके पास राजनीतिक संरक्षण नहीं है उन लोगों की आवाज कहीं कोई सुनाई नहीं देती। ऐसा भी कोई प्रबंध किया जाए सिस्टम में तब्दीली का। मान्यवर, मैंने शुरू में कहा कि यह हंस बुद्ध व्यक्ति हैं उसको हम बदल सकें। मेरा छोटा सा अनुभव है कि देश के कुछ वर्ग जो ब्यूरोक्रेसी में हैं या कर्मचारियों में हैं उनमें कुछ वर्ग का कुछ प्रतिशत चाहे थोड़ा हो या अति थोड़ा हो, बहुत कम हो उनको यह शौक है कि मेंबर ऑफ पार्लियामेंट को थोड़ा सा अपमानित करना। चाहे

कार्यालय में हो, चाहे डिस्क्रीशन कम हो या ज्यादा मैं ऐसा चाहूंगा कि एम.पीज की और देश के चुने हुए लोगों की इज्जत पूरी तरह से बहाल हो और उनको पूरी तरह से इज्जत मिले। मैं आपको बुद्धिमत्ता और आपके ज्ञान और आपकी जो क्षमता है उसको मान्यता देते हुए अर्ज करता हूँ कि आपके मार्गदर्शन में देश और यह संस्थान आगे बढ़ेगा।

SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA (West Bengal): Sir, I feel it is a proud privilege for me to be present here and speak, on behalf of myself and on behalf of my party, the Revolutionary Socialist Party, to felicitate you, to place on record my congratulations on your being elected as the Vice-President of this great country, and also, I welcome you as the Chairman of this august House, the Council of States, the Rajya Sabha.

Sir, I am sure that as a very seasoned campaigner for the common people, you will also agree with me that the success of democracy cannot be simply confined within the four walls of this Parliament House or the State Assemblies, but the success, the real success of democracy lies in our attempt to reach the values of democracy, the fruits of democracy, to the poorest of the poor, whether they live in the rural areas or in the urban areas. Sir, I am sure that the real success of this august House lies, in effect, in its accomplishment in acting as a facilitator to reach the advantages, to reach the fruits of democracy to the poorest of the poor of this country.

Sir, this is not the occasion to raise some political debate or try to bring certain issues, so I shall dissuade myself from doing so, but at the same time, I am sure, Sir, that you will also appreciate that you have assumed this position, a very high position in this country, in this democratic polity, at such a time when the country is being confronted with so many serious issues. Many hon. Members who spoke before me have pointed out the issue of social imbalance, the serious issue of gender bias, the serious issue of unemployment, the serious issue of social alienation, the serious issue of the working class and the serious issue of the ominous fall-out of the present economic and social policies being hotly pursued by the Government of India. Sir, I am sure that you will kindly take the initiative of guarding this House, in the right earnest, so that the country can bravely confront the very complex situation, the very delicate situation, the internal threats, the roots of those; I am sure, you also will guide us to overcome the situation, in different times.

Sir, I shall not go for a very long speech because it is not the occasion to give a long speech, but I shall certainly expect that you, as the Chairman of this august House, will kindly look at the back benches, which I occupy or many of us occupy. Sir, I also extend my unstinted support and cooperation to you for conducting the House in the disciplined manner, in the right manner, keeping in mind the cause for which we are here, the cause of serving the common people, the poor people, the majority of people, the marginalised people, the people whose democratic right is only confined to voting, if possible. It is not always possible; it is once in five years or once in four years. Those people are to be empowered; you must act as a facilitator towards that. I am sure, Sir, you will provide opportunities to all of us to work in that direction.

I once again felicitate you. I wish you a very sound and healthy life, both mental and physical. With these words, I conclude. Thank you.

श्री बशिष्ठ नारायण सिंह (बिहार): सभापति महोदय, मैं सदन के अन्य माननीय सदस्यों की तरह अपनी ओर से और अपनी पार्टी की ओर से आपको बधाई देना चाहता हूँ। राजनीति में कुछ विरले व्यक्तित्व होते हैं जिनके पीछे पद भागते हैं और मेरी मान्यता है कि आप ऐसे कुछ विरले व्यक्तित्व में से हैं जिनके पीछे अभी तक पद भागता रहा है। महोदय, पद भागने के कुछ अर्थ होते हैं। पद उस व्यक्तित्व के पीछे भागता है जिसके अंदर कई खूबियाँ होती हैं। निष्काम कर्म सेवा की भावना जिसके अंदर होती है, उसी व्यक्ति के पीछे पद भागता है। मैं आपको बधाई देना चाहता हूँ कि आप एक बहुत बड़े पद को सुशोभित कर रहे हैं। इस सदन में बैठने के पूर्व आपके जो वक्तव्य बाहर आए हैं, उनकी तरफ मैं आपका ध्यान दिलाना चाहता हूँ। आपके एक वक्तव्य को मुझको पढ़ने का मौका मिला जिसमें आपने राज्य सभा के बहस के स्तर को और ऊँचा उठाने की बात कही थी। साथ-साथ उस वक्तव्य में यह भी आया था कि "मेरा प्रयास होगा कि राज्य सभा में सार्थक बहस हो।" मैं अपनी बात केवल इसी पर केन्द्रित करना चाहता हूँ। सभापति महोदय, पद पर जब कोई व्यक्ति बैठता है तो वह पद के दायित्व को संभालता है लेकिन कुछ ऐसे व्यक्ति भी पद पर आते हैं जो अपने कामों से पद की गरिमा को और बढ़ाने का काम करते हैं। मेरी शुभकामना होगी कि आपका यह कार्यकाल आपके द्वारा इस पद की गरिमा को और बढ़ाएगा। इस सदन में कई ऐसे अवसर आएंगे जब आपकी परीक्षा होगी लेकिन मैं आपसे यही आग्रह करना चाहता हूँ कि जब कोई विकट स्थिति इस सदन में भविष्य में उपस्थित हो तो न आप इधर देखेंगे, न उधर देखेंगे और न बीच में देखेंगे, आप केवल उधर ही देखने का काम करेंगे जहाँ से सदन की गरिमा और प्रतिष्ठा और आगे बढ़ जाए। मैं अंत में एक ही शुभकामना देकर अपनी बात समाप्त करूँगा कि जब भी कोई विकट स्थिति आपके सामने आए तो बहस को आप उधर ले जाएँ जहाँ निर्धनता की रेखा के नजदीक रहने वाले लोगों की तस्वीर आपकी आँखों के सामने आ जाए और वहीं बहस का अंत होना चाहिए। मुझे

लगता है कि जिस दृग से दश चुनौतियों का सामना कर रहा है, निर्धनता की रेखा के अंदर रहने वाले लोगों के लिए यहां बहस को प्राथमिकता मिल जाए, यही मैं अपनी तरफ से आपको शुभकामना दे रहा हूँ कि आपके नेतृत्व में बहस उस सीमा के अंदर, उस निर्धनता की रेखा के नीचे रहने वाले लोगों के बीच चली जाए, और अपनी इसी शुभकामना के साथ ही मैं अपनी बात समाप्त करता हूँ।

SHRI DINESH TRIVEDI (West Bengal): Hon. Mr. Chairman, Sir, it gives me great honour, pleasure and joy to welcome you as the hon. Chairman of this august House and as the Vice-President of this great democracy. On behalf of the All India Trinamool Congress, it is this proud privilege which I am exercising. Speakers after speakers, initiated by the hon. Prime Minister, mentioned that they did never expect that a day would come when this occasion would be there where they would be welcoming you. They also mentioned about their 50 years plus experience of this great democracy. Sir, this is what is great about this country. This goes to prove that the democracy in India in spite of all hurdles has withstood the test of time and this is where the concept of first amongst the equals comes. We also had the privilege and the honour of welcoming our hon. President of this country who also represents the common man today. I realise, Sir, I have just been given two minutes and as always I do not wish to extend the allotted time given to me. I was very happy to note in your various interviews you mentioned that you are in public life to win friends and that exactly what you have done across the party line. During this situation, when the country is going through such a charged environment whether it be caste, creed, colour or poverty, we need people like you, hon. Sir, who can give direction to us. I was particularly happy when it was mentioned that you always remember the last man in the queue. We, the backbenchers in this House, represent that segment of the last man in the queue. This is my privilege to be in the second term and I did mention that nothing much has changed here. People in the last bench always suffer what the backward class of this country has been suffering. There are no takers. I see the light of the day in your being the Chairman of this august House and I am sure the backbenchers will get an equal opportunity. Lastly, the tradition of inviting Members of this House for an informal chat at your residence, I fully support that. Hon. Dr. Shanker Daya! Sharma had started this. He took this tradition all the way up to Raisina Hills. I have no doubt one day we will have the privilege of meeting you at Raisina Hills also on tea. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. the Leader of the House, hon. the Leader of the Opposition, hon. the Deputy Chairman, hon. Leaders of political parties and the hon. Members. I am greatly moved by the sentiments that the hon. Prime Minister and you have expressed. No response from me can adequately express my gratitude for your generosity. Your goodwill is my asset; I treasure it. I bow my head in humility to the people of India and to their elected representatives in Parliament for bestowing on me this great honour and electing me to this high office. It is a tribute to our democracy that a poor and an ordinary farmer's son, born and brought up in a village, can rise to the position of the Vice-President of our great country. I have worked, nearly, for half-a-century, for the common man, in the public life of Rajasthan. I have very closely observed and intimately felt the poverty and sufferings of our farmers, weavers, artisans and daily wage workers. It is in working with them, and for them, that the philosophy of 'Antyodaya' *i.e.*, focus on the poorest of the poor, became my mission as well as my earnest commitment.

I was privileged to be a member of this House during the period 1974—1977 and had a unique opportunity to sit on both the sides of the House. That is additionally why it is a matter of great honour for me once again to get associated with this House. Now I sit in the 'centre'. However, now from the 'centre', I will always look straight; for in the discharge of my duties and there is no bias, no colour, no ideology or no leanings. Before starting this new journey, I pay a tribute to the earlier Chairmen—Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, Dr. Zakir Hussain, Shri V. V. Giri, Shri G. Pathak, Shri B. D. Jatti, Shri M. Hidayatullah, Shri R. Venkataraman, Dr. Shanker Dayal Sharma, Shri K. R. Narayanan and Shri Krishan Kant. The great traditions set up by them will always be an inspiration and a source of guidance to me.

We are proud of our democracy. Outlining the core functioning of democracy, Mahatma Gandhi had said, "True democracy is what promotes welfare of the people". We in this Parliament have been entrusted with the historic responsibility of directing our efforts to solve the problems of the people. The success of democracy is, therefore, to be gauged by the extent of welfare it promotes for the people.

In my view, public perception of the functioning of democracy is not only based on the quality of governance provided by the Executive but

also on how far the proceedings in the House are relevant to its welfare. I urge you to do a serious introspection and find out as to what in reality is the prevailing public perception.

Parliamentary institutions are the temples of democracy; they are the moral fulcrum of our country and have to set standards for others to follow. We are watched and observed as role-models by State Legislatures, Zila Parishads and other elected local bodies. We should ask ourselves whether we are setting right standards for them to follow. Are we giving adequate time and attention to issues such as national security, or, issues of poverty, unemployment and population control, or, problems of farmers and the labour, or, issues of planning, development and growth, or, the issue of corruption in public life and other such issues impacting on public governance? Let us consider what corrective measures we need to take on our part. Did we not make several pious and noble Resolutions while celebrating the Fifty years of our Independence and again while celebrating the Fifty Years of our Republic? Have we acted on these Resolutions in good faith? What examples are we setting if we ourselves do not honour or follow up on our Resolutions?

The citizens of India certainly expect the House of Elders to take a lead in reaffirming the core values of the Republic and set up the highest traditions of parliamentary democracy worth emulation by others. The *The Bhagwad Gita* also says, "What the elder person does is followed by others; what He demonstrates by action, that people follow".

I suggest that henceforth we should evaluate, at the end of every session, as to how relevant and effective the proceedings have been from the view-point of their contribution towards improving public governance and public welfare. Then alone, we will be fulfilling our duty to strengthen democracy and improve the welfare of the people we are meant to serve.

Today, our country is faced with formidable challenges of economic growth and public governance. This House of Elders should be acting as a watchdog on the affairs of the nation and also as a guide to the Union as also the States, making constructive suggestions and recommendations for appropriate Legislative and Executive actions towards achieving the objective of growth of economy, public governance and public welfare.

Let me touch upon one more important issue. Today, there is a serious threat to the bonds of national integration as also the secular fabric of our Republic. The State has to observe *sarva-dharma-sambhav* and be guided by its *raj-dharma*. However, manifestations of social and religious disharmony have sadly been on the increase. We now need a proactive effort towards weaving a stronger secular fabric. Also, it is only in an environment of peace and social harmony that progress is possible. The enemies of our nation are using terrorism as a weapon to stall our development. To fully combat terrorism, we have to remain united and share the vision of resurgent India, strong in its purpose and steadfast in its will to forge ahead.

Problems and challenges before us are many. My intention is only to highlight the need to ponder over them. A sharp focus on these issues is Central to the maintenance of democratic ethos and the future of India. Through free and frank but serious discussion and constructive debate, we can evolve a shared approach of action on each of them.

I assure you that on my part it would be my sincere effort to make functioning of this house more efficient, more productive and more effective. Towards this endeavour, I renew my solemn assurance of equal and respectful treatment to all of you.

I extend to you my very warm greetings. I look forward to working with all of you in an environment of understanding, faith and trust.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Rehabilitation Camps in Gujarat

*21. DR. ABRAR AHMED:
SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether all the families living in various rehabilitation camps in Gujarat after Godhra incident have since gone back to their native homes; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) and (b) All the families living in various rehabilitation camps run with the assistance of the State Government have left except 406 inmates at Quresh Jamat Hall in Ahmedabad city.