

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI NILOTPAL BASU): We now resume the discussion on the Motion on persistence of violence in Gujarat. Shri Ekanath K. Thakur. You have three minutes, but I will give you five minutes.

MOTION ON PERSISTENCE OF VIOLENCE IN GUJARAT - (CONTD.)

SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR (Maharashtra): Sir, thank you very much for this special dispensation. Sir, whatever is happening in Gujarat today is a thing which has been deprecated and condemned by every sensible Indian who knows *Hindustan*. Sir, I am from Shiv Sena, but I want to rise above the party line and I want to speak - at the moment, when the nation is in crisis, when this happens to be one of the most momentous moments in the history of our nation. The way we handle this problem in Gujarat, is going to shape the destiny of this country, the future of our country, the future of our young generation and our progeny for years to come.

This is an occasion to ponder seriously and work here with a sense of togetherness and a sense of purpose. Sir, this moment is not a moment for one-upmanship. This moment is not a moment to exhibit one's erudition and scholarship, to reminisce the pages of history and to recite its chapter and verse. This is not a moment to cast aspersions on each other, to go into acrimony, to exhibit the basic human instinct of pugnacity. But, Sir, this is an occasion to speak and present to the nation the plain, unvarnished and undefiled truth that lies at the bottom of what is happening today in Gujarat. Sir, the debate must result--must serve our purpose--in healing the bleeding wounds of Gujarat and of the nation. The debate must result in assuaging the ruffled sentiments of the whole nation, irrespective of caste, community, creed and sex. Sir, we must be able to ensure that in future, after this debate is over, a single life is not lost in the State of Gujarat and Hindus and Muslims live in amity and in brotherhood.

Sir, this moment is described in so many words-I would say that mine are not mere words. After the Mumbai riots, I was one of the persons along with six others from the second day of the riots to the seventh day, I went with Baba Amte to the houses of every Hindu and Muslim whose life was lost. I travelled with Baba Amte to every one of those houses, though I belong to Shiv Sena, because I believe in one India, one Hindustan. I want to mention this to bring it on record. The whole world has witnessed this and this has been documented by Mumbai's newspapers at that time.

Sir, having said this, I must say that we must send the right message to both, the majority and to the minority. My friends on my right side here, have tried to send it to the majority. I am one with them in asking the majority to rethink on their strategies, to rethink on their purposes, to rethink on their means and also to rethink on the future of India.

Sir, everybody is asking ये क्या संकेत दे रहे हैं, इसकी जड़ क्या है ? People are pointing towards the Bajrang Dal, the Hindu Parivar, the Sangh Parivar and so on and so forth. I will tell you that इसकी जड़ बिल्कुल अलग है and only for that I have sought your permission. Sir, I am a cancer patient. I have undergone seven surgeries. Half of my tongue has been removed. My neck has been cut from all sides. After my second surgery, 30 years ago, I went to a place called Miraj. Miraj is in Sangli District of Maharashtra--for rest and recuperation to the place of my father-in-law. Sir, after two days, I heard crackers bursting. I asked my father-in-law what for they were bursting the crackers. It was thirty years ago. My father-in-law and mother-in-law told me, it was because the Pakistan cricket team had won a match over India. Therefore they were bursting crackers. Sir, the journey towards hatred is not ten years old, twenty years old. It is thirty years old. I experienced it, when I spent the sleepless night because of the burst of crackers the whole night. Why should Indian Muslims burst crackers when India is defeated?

Sir, I believe that Hindus and Muslims would live in amity and friendship only when we believe that we are Hindustanis. Somewhere down the line, the minority has to look at itself also. And this is the thing which I would like to say with all the sincerity at my command. There are people who have gone on record to say यह जो गोघरा में हुआ, यह संघ परिवार की साजिश थी। Tomorrow they will say that the attack on the WTC was organised by the Sangh Parivar. Tomorrow they can say that the extremists who have been arrested all over the world, hundreds of them after 11th September, are Hindus. They will also say that the image of Buddha was desecrated in Afghanistan not by Muslims but by Hindus. (*Time-bell*) Sir, this is a partisan talk which is going on in this House. I am a new Member. I am witnessing this. This is a part of the vote bank politics and this is a part of the appeasement of the Muslims. Sir, we have to assure every Muslim in this country that he is a citizen in his own right. We have to ensure him every *surkshya* and security. We have to ensure him all brotherhood from the Hindus. We have to live together. But, at the same time, the Muslims must introspect and ask themselves whether they will continue to create scenes

such as the one which I have mentioned. I can mention a litany of things, I can mention a plethora of things that Muslims have done. But I do not want to spoil the debate. You please understand that both the communities have to draw a right message from what has been happening because strong Hindus are sending a message that what is happening today in Gujarat is this that 'if you can stop fire brigade, stop policemen and burn 60 Hindus, then in return we will burn 200 Muslims for every Hindu'. That is what the staunch Hindus are saying. They are saying that if you will sow the wind, you will reap the whirlwind. This must stop. Both the communities must come together

मंदिर, मस्जिद, गिरजाघर में बांट दिया भगवान को

सागर बांटा, धरती बांटी, मत बांटो इंसान को ।

कोई मुसलमान हिंदू को न मारे, कोई हिंदू मुसलमान को न मारे । यह हमारा हिंदुस्तान बना रहे और हम कहते रहें "सारे जहां से अच्छा हिन्दोस्तां हमारा ।"

Thank you.

DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA (Assam): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity. Sir, I rise to support this Motion. Sir, the President of our Party, the Asom Gana Parishad, Shri Brindaban Goswami on various occasions has made our stand clear on the recent communal violence and the continuing communal violence in Gujarat. I am also of the opinion that a prolonged deliberation like this will not result into any practical solution to the unfortunate happenings that are taking place in Gujarat. The AGP rather appeals to all the political parties to take a joint initiative to work for Gujarat; towards confidence building measures, amongst all religious communities instead of wasting time in Delhi by deliberation which are aimed at gaining political mileage out of such situation concerning the lives of innocent people.

The AGP is a secular regional party which could establish its secular credentials through maintenance of communal harmony in Assam during its two terms in office, on the contrary to the innumerable instances of communal riots during the Congress rule in the State of Assam.

We condemn all sorts of communal violence in Gujarat starting from the time of massacre of *Karsevaks* in Godhra. We also equivocally condemn the failure of the Government machinery, as well as the party in power in controlling the situation even after two months.

[3 May, 2002]

RAJYA SABHA

At the same time, the AGP cannot endorse any move to interfere as to who should or should not be the Chief Minister of a State as well as to interfere in the internal affairs of a political party. Neither we want to be a part to exploit political advantage out of such killings as has been done by the Congress, the BJP and some other national parties as part of their campaign for future elections. We strongly feel that all of us should join hands to rebuild our secular foundation at this need of the hour, instead of accusing at each other. Despite limitations, as a regional party, from an isolated problematic area, the AGP offers to join in any such positive endeavour to restore peace and communal harmony in Gujarat. Thank you.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI NILOTPAL BASU): Now, the general discussion on this Motion is over. As has already been mentioned, the hon. Prime Minister, the hon. Home Minister, and the hon. Leader of the House would intervene in the discussion on Monday. No new names will be entertained. The mover of the Motion will thereafter reply to the debate. After the reply is over, the expression of opinion by the House on the Motion will be taken.

Now, I adjourn the House till 11.00 a.m. on Monday, 6th May, 2002.

The House then adjourned at fifty-six minutes past five of the clock till eleven of the clock on Monday, the 6th May, 2002.