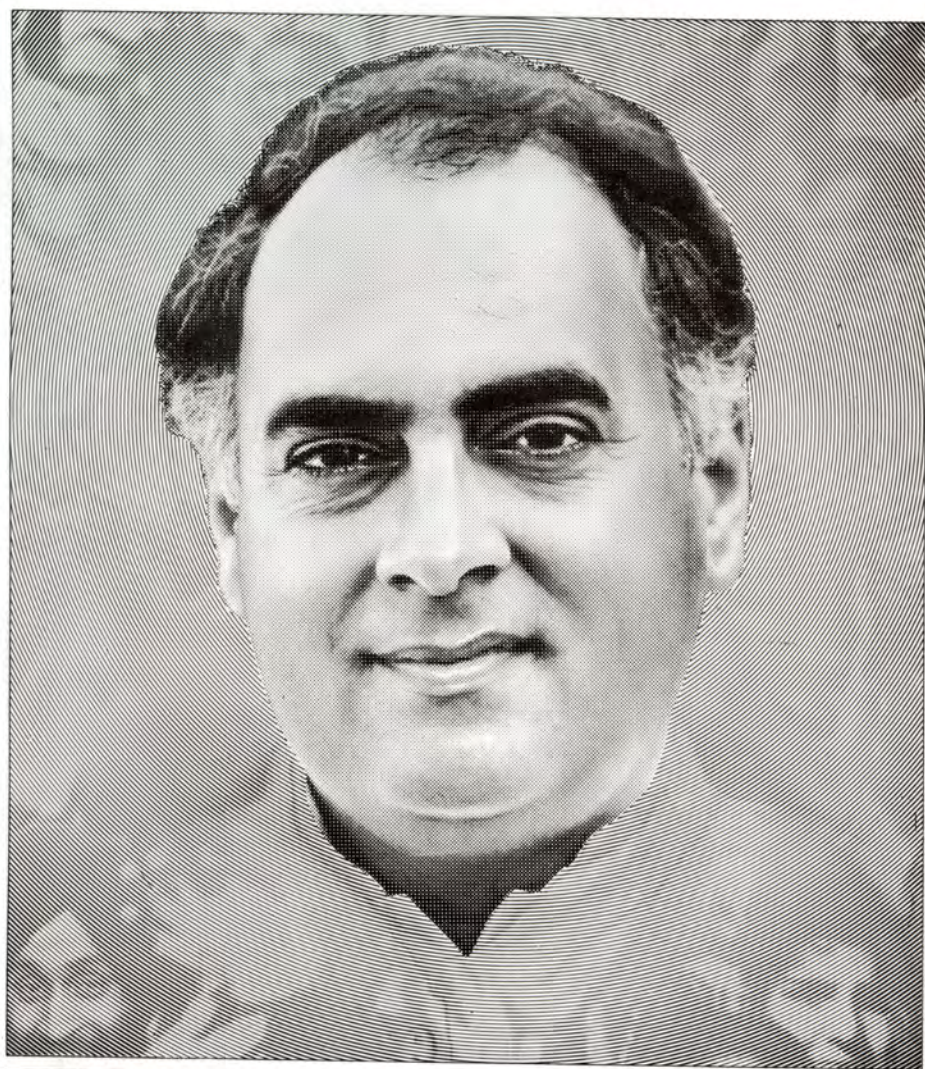


**RAJYA SABHA
PAYS HOMAGE
TO
RAJIV GANDHI**



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TO

RAJIV GANDHI

**RAJYA SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

NO. RS. 16/3/91 - R & L

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**TRIBUTE TO THE
LATE SHRI RAJIV GANDHI
FORMER PRIME MINISTER**

**Resolution moved by the Hon'ble Chairman,
Dr. Shanker Dayal Sharma and adopted by the
Rajya Sabha on Monday, 3 June 1991**

* MR. CHAIRMAN : Hon'ble Members, I rise to propose the following Resolution on the demise of Shri Rajiv Gandhi on May 21, 1991.

"This House deeply mourns the passing away of Shri Rajiv Gandhi, an outstanding world leader, who, with prescient vision, indomitable courage and tremendous determination, dedicated himself to the sacred task of building a new India, representing the dreams of generations of patriots in our glorious struggle for freedom, an India-strong, united, peaceful and progressive, an India evolving, in the genius of her time-honoured ethos of oneness and synthesis, towards modernity, an India making her contribution to the building of a better, more humane, world environment.

"This House expresses the sense of profound shock and remorse felt by our nation, and the people around the world, that Shri Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated and our nation so deprived.

"The horrendous assassination of Shri Rajiv Gandhi is recognised by us as a blow inflicted on democracy, secularism and our national goal of growth with social justice. This is the time when India must ponder over, and fully comprehend, the ramifications of this great tragedy. The nation must beware of any further attempt to convulse and disrupt national life.

"This House condemns the diabolical and premeditated conspiracy threatening the very foundations of our civilization, culture and identity as a free, sovereign and independent nation-State, a nation which nurtured Rajiv and which in turn he served, and sought to help transcend to new horizons, with his inimitable stamp of decency and distinction.

"It is vitally necessary that the nation responds to that dreadful deed by the manifestation of resolute determination upholding our national values unitedly and fearlessly, and by our rededication to the task of

* Dr. Shanker Dayal Sharma, Vice-President of India and ex-officio Chairman, Rajya Sabha.

national reconstruction and the building of a better future for the world as a whole. Nothing less would be an appropriate tribute to the memory of Shri Rajiv Gandhi."

The hope of the countrymen

Dr. Shanker Dayal Sharma
Vice-President of India and
Chairman, Rajya Sabha

Shri Rajiv Gandhi fell victim in a most gruesome and ghastly tragedy on the night of May 21, 1991, at Sriperumbudur near Madras where he had gone to address an election meeting. His death in a bomb explosion shocked and benumbed the entire nation and decent people around the world. Rajiv Gandhi lived in the shadow of death ever since he picked up the gauntlet in 1984 as Prime Minister of India in awesome circumstances. Yet he retained a youthful exuberance and courageously discharged his onerous responsibilities till the end. The country had reposed high hopes in the youthful and charismatic leadership of Rajiv Gandhi. The assassination had dealt a mortal blow to these hopes of millions of our countrymen for whose welfare and progress Shri Rajiv Gandhi had pledged his life.

Born on August 20, 1944, Shri Rajiv Gandhi was the eldest son of Shrimati Indira Gandhi and Shri Feroz Gandhi. He grew up in an environment steeped in the glorious ethos of our freedom struggle. Shri Rajiv Gandhi went to the Doon School, Dehra Dun, and Trinity College, Cambridge, and did a course in Mechanical Engineering. As a young man, he was not inclined towards a career in politics. His greatest passion was flying. After his return from England, he obtained a commercial pilot's licence and joined the Indian Airlines. His younger brother, Sanjay's death in an air accident was a turning point in Rajiv's life. It was then that he entered the political life. He came into the Lok Sabha for the first time in 1981 from the Amethi Parliamentary Constituency from which he was returned again in 1984 and 1989, and was contesting the current election as well.

In 1982, Shri Rajiv Gandhi played a pivotal role in successfully organising the Asian Games in New Delhi. He became Prime Minister at the

age of 40, hours after the assassination of Shrimati Indira Gandhi in 1984. He had to shoulder the challenging burdens of office whilst still coping with his grief. Courage, fortitude and determination inherited from his distinguished forbears stood him in good stead at those critical moments in the history of our country.

Shri Rajiv Gandhi was a visionary and an idealist. He wanted that India should enter the 21st century as a strong, stable, secular, democratic and united nation. His five years as Prime Minister were marked by a decisive drive for modernization and economic growth and sensitive handling of problems despite various natural calamities. Recognizing the importance of providing responsive administration, he personally led a nationwide initiative to gear up the apparatus for district and rural administration. All matters concerning the day to day life of the masses, received his attention. He envisaged massive induction of science and technology and acceptance of modern methods of management. The technological missions he set up to accelerate development in such critical areas as water, edible oils and telecommunications, were a daring innovation. He encouraged endeavour in the field of Science and Technology with a view to addressing the problems of poverty, disease and imbalanced development. Agriculture, industry and the tertiary sectors of the economy, received creative impetus. He nurtured and promoted nation-wide awareness of our rich cultural heritage with a view to strengthening the emotional unity of the people of India. His direct approach towards solution of vexatious problems resulted in the Punjab and Assam Accords in 1985. He was able to find a settlement of the Gorkha and Mizo agitations. Untiringly, he stressed the need for Secularism which he emphasised as the very basis of our nation. With regard to the functioning of our Parliamentary Democracy, the lowering of the voting age and the passage of anti-defection legislation comprise crucial contributions towards magnifying the ambit of our democratic system and providing wholesome parameters to political dynamics. Towards this objective he also struggled for democratic decentralization and Panchayati Raj.

Shri Rajiv Gandhi responded to the calls of neighbouring countries for assistance by signing the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord in 1987 with a view to bringing peace to the troubled island and providing succour to the beleaguered Tamils of Sri Lanka. In the case of The Maldives he despatched emergency aid to forestall the attempt to disturb the peace and tranquility of this friendly neighbour. Shri Rajiv Gandhi had a deep and abiding commitment to SAARC and played a major role in defusing tensions and promoting regional cooperation between the member countries. His visit to Beijing in December 1988 is recognized by the Chinese people and the world as a turning point in the history of our relations with this great neighbour of India.

The Six-Nation five-continent initiative on disarmament initiated by Shri Rajiv Gandhi was a practical and time-bound framework for dealing with one of the most important problems facing the world. The warming of relations with the USA and the sense of maturity that Rajiv Gandhi's premiership witnessed in the bilateral relations with the United States are a major contribution which will have continuing significance in the years to come. Building on strong existing foundations, Rajiv Gandhi signed the historic Delhi Declaration of November 1986, proclaiming to the world that Indo-Soviet friendship was a constant and abiding factor in the foreign policy parameters of both countries and reflecting a seminal initiative towards the building of a non-violent world. He set up the AFRICA Fund of which he was Chairman to assist the front-line States to fight the pernicious system of *Apartheid*. It was Shri Rajiv Gandhi's personal effort which led to the hastening of the process of granting freedom to Namibia. On North-South issues, South-South Cooperation and issues relating to the environment, Shri Rajiv Gandhi asserted India's voice which was listened to with respect at United Nations, NAM and Commonwealth forums. He was instrumental in launching the Planet Protection Fund and obtaining wide endorsement of his visionary plans at both Belgrade NAM of September 1989 and CHOGM at Kuala Lumpur in October 1989.

The presence of world leaders from as many as 63 countries at Shri Rajiv Gandhi's funeral was a fitting tribute to the unprecedented contribution

that he made to international affairs in the short space of five years that he was Prime Minister.

Who can ever forget the radiance of his personality, the warmth in his eyes and his smiling face ? His youthful charm, zeal and cheerfulness enthused everyone who met him. He was a deeply caring and thoughtful person who had a clear vision of the goals for national progress.

As we mourn the tragic death of Shri Rajiv Gandhi, our thoughts go to his wife Shrimati Sonia Gandhi and children Priyanka and Rahul. We fully share their agony and distress and assure them that this House and the nation is with them in their sorrow and grief.

This is also the time to reflect once again about how we can preserve and protect our democratic system. Shri Rajiv Gandhi was the third martyr at the altar of Peace, Non-violence and Secularism. Some elements which do not wish us well pursue the cult of violence. This poses a challenge to all of us who believe in the peaceful methods of ballot and debate to attain our goal of progress and development. The challenge has to be met with all our might. Then only will it be possible to fulfil the cherished dream of Shri Rajiv Gandhi - a strong and secular, developed and democratic India progressing to the 21st Century.

करोड़ों की मुस्कान की आशा

चन्द्रशेखर
भारत के प्रधानमंत्री

हम लोग एक राष्ट्रीय दुख की घड़ी में मिल रहे हैं। राजीव जी की मृत्यु से सारा देश न केवल स्तब्ध है बल्कि भविष्य की चुनौतियों के बारे में भी चिंतित है। राजीव जी ने देश के सामने नए आयाम प्रस्तुत किए। एक ऐसा व्यक्ति, जिसने अपने जीवन में शिष्टाचार और शील की मर्यादा प्रतिस्थापित की हो, वह इस प्रकार हमारे बीच से चला जाएगा, इसकी हमको आशा भी नहीं थी। गांधी जी के देश में जहां अहिंसा के रास्ते से हमने आजादी हासिल की, वहां पर आतंकवादी और निर्मम हत्या करने वाले लोग हमारे देश के एक बड़े व्यक्तित्व को इस तरह हमारे बीच से उठा ले जाएंगे, यह बात जब हमारे मन में आती है तो ऐसा लगता है कि हमारे लिए नियति ने कुछ बुरे दिन उपस्थित कर रखे हैं।

राजीव जी ने अपनी अल्प-आयु में देश के सामने एक उदाहरण प्रस्तुत किया। वह देश की सबसे बड़ी पार्टी के अध्यक्ष थे, लेकिन यही नहीं, वह कांग्रेस पार्टी के अध्यक्ष थे, उनके साथ उनके व्यक्तित्व से देश के करोड़ों लोगों की आशाएं जुड़ी हुई थीं। आज उन आशाओं को धक्का लगा है। आज लोगों के सामने एक सवाल उठ खड़ा हुआ है कि क्या देश इतने बड़े आघात को सहन कर सकेगा? और यदि सहन करना है इसको, तो क्या हम तैयार हैं कि जिन शक्तियों के कारण राजीव जी हमारे बीच से उठ गए, उन शक्तियों का हम मिलकर के सामना करेंगे, मुकाबला करेंगे?

मैं जानता हूँ कि इतने बड़े आघात के बावजूद इस देश ने असीम संयम का परिचय दिया है। मैं यह भी जानता हूँ कि देश के लोगों ने अपनी सामर्थ्य और शक्ति का परिचय दिया है। इससे यह बात सही साबित होती है कि मृत्यु उन भावनाओं को, उन मूल्यों को पराजित नहीं कर सकती, जिन मूल्यों को लेकर के राजीव गांधी ने सतत प्रयास किया - लोगों के बीच में एक नई आस्था पैदा करने का प्रयास, भारत का एक नया भविष्य बनाने की कोशिश। इतनी कम उम्र में उन्होंने सपने संजो रखे थे नए भारत के लिए। लोगों के जीवन में एक ऐसी आशा बंधी हुई थी कि शायद वे हमारे करोड़ों गरीब, दुखी लोगों के चेहरों पर एक मुस्कान दे सकेंगे। उनके चेहरे पर एक सतत मुस्कान रहती थी, उस मुस्कान को वे करोड़ों लोगों के चेहरों तक पहुंचाना चाहते थे। लेकिन मुझे दुख के साथ और सारे राष्ट्र को एक सूत्र में पिरो कर कहना पड़ता है कि न केवल वह मुस्कान हमारे बीच से उठ गई बल्कि करोड़ों की मुस्कान की आशा आज लोगों को धूमिल होती जान पड़ती है।

सभापति महोदय, राजीव गांधी ने अनेक काम किए, जिनका जिक्र आपने किया है। बड़ी चुनौती के समय में उन्होंने इस देश की बागडोर को संभाला था। चुनाव के तुरन्त बाद, एक-दो महीने के अंदर ही पंजाब और असम की समस्याओं का समाधान करने का उन्होंने जो प्रयास किया, वह उनकी सूझबूझ का परिचायक था। जैसा आपने कहा, देश में आधुनिकीकरण लाने के लिए, इक्कीसवीं सदी को एक नई आशा का संदेश देने के लिए उन्होंने जो प्रयास किए, वह न केवल सराहनीय थे बल्कि स्तुत्य थे।

सभापति महोदय, उनकी मृत्यु के बाद न केवल हमारे देश के लोगों ने अपना शोक जाहिर किया बल्कि, आपने जैसे कहा, दुनिया के दूसरे देशों के लोग यहां आए और उनकी मृत्यु के बाद उनके प्रति जो अपनी भावनाएं अभिव्यक्त कीं, उससे ऐसा लगता है कि थोड़े समय में ही राजीव जी ने उनके मन पर एक गहरी छाप छोड़ी थी। सारी दुनियां और खास तौर से तीसरे विश्व के लोग ऐसा समझते हैं कि उनका एक अंगुआ, उनका एक साथी, उनका एक सहयोगी उनके बीच से उठ गया। इस दुख की घड़ी में हमारे पास कोई शब्द नहीं, जिन शब्दों से हम अपनी संवेदना उस परिवार के प्रति व्यक्त कर सकें, मैं तो केवल इतना ही कह सकता हूँ कि सारा राष्ट्र इस शोक की घड़ी में उनके साथ है।

सभापति महोदय, मृत्यु पर किसी का वश नहीं, लेकिन जीवन चलता रहे, उसके लिए जो पुरुषार्थी लोग होते हैं, जो ऐसे व्यक्तित्व होते हैं वे अपने जीवन से नए मानदण्ड, नए प्रतीक दे जाते हैं। राजीव गांधी उन लोगों में थे। उनकी मौत के बाद भी हमारे समाने वह अभीष्ट है, जिस अभीष्ट को लेकर उन्होंने जीवन-पर्यन्त संघर्ष किया और अपना बलिदान दिया। उस मंजिल की ओर हम सब मिलकर के आगे बढ़ सकें, यही राजीव गांधी की हमारी सबसे बड़ी अभ्यर्थना होगी। मैं उनकी स्मृति को प्रणाम करता हूँ।

A believer in modernism

Yashwant Sinha
Minister of Finance and
Leader of the House

The cruel assassination of Shri Rajiv Gandhi has shocked the conscience not only of the whole nation but also the whole world. It is a tragedy of unparalleled proportions and a murderous assault on our democratic system. Shri Rajiv Gandhi was not only the President of the Congress Party but he was also a statesman and a national leader of unquestioned patriotism, unflinching commitment and indomitable courage. He was young, dynamic and full of promise. Shri Gandhi contributed immensely to the creation of a new international order and worked incessantly for the cause of international peace. Shri Gandhi's contribution, both as Prime Minister and as the leader of his party, is manifold. He really cared for the down-trodden and upheld secular values. He was an ardent believer in modernism, and added vigour to our democratic way of life. His vision of the future shall continue to be valid for a long time to come and shall continue to inspire future generations.

The assassination of Shri Rajiv Gandhi is an attack on our system, our way of life, our democracy and our long established traditions. Violence can have no place in our society. We are committed to settling all our differences peacefully and democratically. It is time for all of us, therefore, to reiterate that commitment. Violence in all forms must be condemned strongly and in unambiguous terms.

I deeply mourn the death of Shri Gandhi and place on record his invaluable services to the country and to the international community. The people must face the challenge of violence and separatism unitedly and with courage and determination. The journey must go on, for journey's end has really no end.

A protagonist of the secular ideal

P. Shiv Shanker
Leader of the Congress (I) Party
in the House

It is axiomatic that death is the necessary end of life but the gruesome, shocking and unparalleled tragic manner in which death laid its icy hands on Shri Rajiv Gandhi is traumatic. He has been eliminated from the national scenario at a time when the Prime Ministership was within his reach, nay, he was assassinated by the opponents of this nation to deprive him of the office of Prime Minister. The whole nation is aghast. I consider this session of the Rajya Sabha to have been specially summoned and convened to pay our grateful homage to the lamented leader. But for his assassination we would not have assembled here. On my part considering the disparity of age, little did I dream that I would be called upon to pay my tributes to our lamented leader. In fact, I seem to question my credentials to do so. He strode like a colossus and I can only remember his greatness and give him my tears run from a stricken heart. On the part of our party men, we have lost the Captain of our ship. But the ship must sail on, however turbulent the sea. Our new Captain will steer the ship by the light that his name and memory will shed.

It is not given to everyone to give a name to an age. Shri Rajiv Gandhi was one such. India, the Commonwealth, the Non-Aligned and the world will never be the same without him. Seldom does the world produce such a young leader of the stature and calibre of Shri Rajiv Gandhi and seldom does it lose its great leader in such a brutal manner. His life was rare, but even rarer was the manner of his going.

The whole world shares our grief, and despite the fact that he did not adorn any governmental office, the manner the foreign dignitaries have visited his funeral and the words of sympathies which have come to us from lands far and near are a matter of immense solace. In his martyrdom the humanity undoubtedly stands impoverished irreparably. He joined the ranks of the immortals of history.

Originally an unwilling player to enter the pool of politics, once he joined the ranks, he took it like fish taking to water. His span of life in the world of politics is one of dedicated service in the nation's relentless fight against economic and social ills. He was a valiant fighter. As Prime Minister of this vast and diversified country he proved himself equal to the task--though young in years--and took a series of socio-economic reformative steps. In his tenure as Prime Minister significant advances were made in diverse fields, including that of science and technology. His valour and fortitude, decisiveness and dynamism were superb and excellent.

He was a visionary who dreamt of an India of the 21st century. He was a symbol of the continuity of the past with the present envisioning the future. A passionate champion of the cause of the world peace, who assiduously tried for nuclear disarmament and elimination of cold war.

While historians and political thinkers will continue to assess and determine the impact and the imprints of the personality of Shri Rajiv Gandhi, many often feel that he did not get a fair deal at the hands of his opponents and was forced to undergo trials before the bar of the people on unsubstantial charges with practically no credible evidence against him. It is for the conscience of this Parliament to assess and determine as to how far we were fair to him on various occasions when he was the Prime Minister.

Essentially a many-splendoured personality with a proper sense of culture, Rajiv Gandhi's sense of tolerance, understanding and belief in human dignity made him a protagonist of the secular ideal. His eschewing us only proves the adage: 'Whom Gods love die young.' Every drop of blood that he spewed will strengthen our commitment to the unity and integrity of our country. The soul of this great leader will rest only if we bring about a secular, harmonious, tolerant, dignified, purposeful and egalitarian society in this country.

At this moment our hearts go out in sympathy and affection to Shrimati Sonia Gandhi and children Rahul and Priyanka. We share their sorrow intensely and wish them the strength and the courage.

A man with values

M.S. Gurupadaswamy
Leader of the Janata
Dal in the House

Words fail me to express my sorrow and anguish over the tragedy that has overtaken this nation. The death of Rajiv Gandhi has shaken everybody's heart and mind not only in India but elsewhere. It is not a small misfortune, it is not a small tragedy but it is a great calamity that has created a feeling of horror and grief in the young and old, and it conveys a very disturbing message to the nation. Rajiv Gandhi, we all knew, virtually lived under the shadow of death, but none of us thought that he would be snatched away so soon from our midst. And what a tragedy for the family to suffer three deaths in a matter of a decade! The whole nation is with the family of Rajiv Gandhi today and that family has suffered which very few families in the country have suffered.

It is really sad, sad and sad that such a death has come to such a young man with a long future. He had dreams, he had hopes, he had aspirations, he had visions to fulfil. He did strive when he was in office and also when he was out of office, to realize the goals. Which he set for himself and for the country. You have rightly said, and my friend, the Prime Minister, also has said rightly that he symbolized modernism against all tendencies of revivalism in this country. He tried to rationalize and bring about some rationality into the political system in India. In this he made some enemies. Any politician or leader makes some enemies and that is the fate of a politician, that is the fate of a leader, but this cannot be carried too far. Rajiv Gandhi fell victim to barbarism, to violence. This country is drifting from barbarism to degeneration. That is the meaning of the death of Rajiv Gandhi today. The country has become sick. We have brutalised politics. Rajiv Gandhi's death, his passing away should send a message, give a message to the whole country that violence and brutality and criminality in politics should not be encouraged by any party or any

group in this country. That is the message. All of us who have assembled here should remember this poignant occasion. Let the martyrdom of Rajiv Gandhi create a new atmosphere, a new environment in public life. All of us should unreservedly condemn terrorism and violence. There is enough violence in the country, and the country is in a very critical stage. There is a threat to democracy and democratic institutions.

My party and I deeply mourn the passing away of Rajiv Gandhi. Our heart-felt condolences will go to Sonia Gandhi and her children. This is an occasion when we certainly remember the contribution he has made to Indian public life and the contribution he has made to the world. He was a leader. He was a patriot. And he was an administrator. Above all, he was a man, a man of values. This country and we miss him, and we miss him very much indeed. And all of us, whatever may be our differences in the past, we always look at Rajiv Gandhi as a person who could lead this country to the 21st century. He was dreaming of the 21st century. We should carry forward his example, and we should emulate his spirit. Only thereby can we pay adequate tribute to his memory.

With these words, once again I convey my condolences to the family of Rajiv Gandhi.

A great leader and a world statesman

Dr. (Smt.) Najma Heptulla
Deputy Chairman,
Rajya Sabha

Thank you, Sir, for giving me this opportunity to join you and the House in paying my humble tribute to the beloved, respected, honoured leader, Shri Rajiv Gandhi. I have no words to express my grief and condemnation of this ghastly crime. While I stand here to pay my homage to that departed noble soul, I remember him in this House and outside where I had the honour to serve him. I am one of those fortunate ones who had the privilege of knowing him from his young age and his grandfather, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, and his mother, the great daughter of India, who also made a supreme sacrifice like her son, Rajivji, for the unity and integrity of the country.

Many a time in this very House he made historical statements and at times kept us amused with his humour, but when things were not tranquil and smooth he sat with dignity and utmost serenity and with a smile on his face which remained on his lips till the last moment of his life and which will remain in our memory for ever.

In spite of all adversaries and allegations, difficulties and obstacles in his path, this young man and dynamic leader gave inspiration and courage to young and old alike.

He had the vision for a modern India, a scientifically and technologically advanced India, where youths and women, poor and down-trodden in cities and villages will get their share and opportunity to serve the nation.

He advocated the cause of peace in India and abroad. Whether it was the Delhi Declaration or his address to the United Nations, he talked of disarmament and peace. Is it not an irony of fate that the one who talked of peace, became the victim of violence? Our hearts go out to his family,

Madam Sonia Gandhi and children Rahul and Priyanka, who have shown great courage and dignity at this hour of tragedy and loss. May God give them solace.

This great son of India will be remembered, not only in India, but beyond our shores, throughout the world, for his concern and action for all those who are fighting for their rights and dignity, may it be in South Africa against Apartheid, or Palestine against Zionists. No wonder, leaders and Heads of Government came from far and near to share the nation's grief and pay homage not to a former Prime Minister, nor a former M.P., but to a young, yet a great leader and a world statesman, who made a place for himself in history and who lived and died for a noble cause.

He wanted an India free from hunger and ignorance, a united India with no barriers of caste, creed or religion. He believed in action and perfection and he listened to the voices of reason.

I am reminded here of the verses of Rabindranath Tagore, perhaps he said what Rajivji's dream was.

"Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;
Where Knowledge is free;
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by
narrow domestic walls;
Where words come out from the depth of truth;
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;
Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the
dreary desert sand of dead habit;
Where the mind is led forward by Thee into ever-widening
thought and action.
Into the heaven of freedom, my father, let my country awake."

The memory of Rajivji will remain with us--his voice and laughter, his deeds and, above all, his sacrifice and martyrdom. We pledge to follow the path he showed us and fulfil his dreams.

To conclude, I recite a couplet of a poet who said :

"Live so beautifully that if death is the end of life,
God may Himself feel sorry for having ended thy career."

A leader of great stature

Samar Mukherjee
Leader of the Communist
Party of India (Marxist)

My party and myself fully share the shock and anguish expressed by the entire country and this House. The way the tragedy has come to us, it should not be looked as an isolated event. It has a background and it has also some future. That is why great lessons are to be drawn so that the whole country can face the attack, the offensive, of the forces which are working behind this tragic action. If we miss this simply by paying homage and expressing shock and anguish, it will not lead us to the objectives for which Rajiv was fighting and we all are now fighting. We think it is an attack not only on Rajiv as a person, but it is an attack on the very unity and integrity of our country; it is an attack on secularism and it is an attack on democracy. And the person who is responsible for this tragedy, is not individually a criminal, but he is acting as an instrument of those forces which are very much interested in the destabilisation and disintegration of our country.

There are ramifications not only inside our country but in foreign countries also and foreign imperialism is also very much interested in utilising these forces. This tragedy has come in a background when the forces of disintegration are trying to create chaos in the country and above that, communal forces, fundamentalist forces are raising their heads in a big way and everyday murders of innocent people are taking place in Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, Assam and in other parts of the country. In this background this tragedy has taken place. If we do not take serious lessons out of this, simple homage to the memory of this great man, Rajiv, who has raised himself not only to the stature of a national leader but to an international leader, will remain purely formal.

Personally, I had some occasions to discuss with him both international and national issues informally. I knew that he had some dreams. He had

some ideas. No doubt we differed on some points but we agreed on many points. Whenever he took a bold initiative to solve these problems, we extended our full support to him. In the case of Rajiv-Longowal accord, we extended our full support. In the case of Indo-Sri Lanka accord, we extended our full support. When he visited China, we gave our full support to him. Before he visited China, he called me personally and told me what he was going to discuss there. I told him "Our full support is behind you. You go ahead." He assured me that the border dispute will be settled in course of time. Then after coming back he called me. I had a long discussion with him. With the help of a diagram he showed me what he had discussed with the Chinese Government. Then, he assured me that within a short period the border dispute would be settled and solved. But the main thing is that now our country is passing through a severe crisis, economically, socially and politically. Our country is now passing through a stage where disruptive and divisive forces are on the offensive. Rajiv became a victim of these forces. In this context if we look at this tragedy, no doubt we feel it is a great tragedy. Then after drawing proper lessons we have to prepare the whole country to face these challenges. I agree with the spirit of the resolution that our secularism, the question of national unity, the question of democracy, the question of social justice, all these have to be upheld in a big way. For that, rethinking and reconsideration is absolutely essential. So, in this context we pay our heartfelt homage to Rajiv Gandhi and expect that at least his sacrifice will bring out a very big positive contribution in fighting the forces of disruption and secessionism. These forces are anti-national, reactionary, and imperialism is fully behind them. This should always be kept in mind because the ramifications are international. Without international ramifications this type of tragedy cannot take place. That is quite obvious.

The way this blast was organised, the way the arrangements were made, suggests that big ramifications are there. That is a very serious danger. And if we become conscious of that -- 'we' means the people of the whole country--then, that will be the real homage to Rajiv Gandhi.

With these words, we convey our heartfelt condolence to the family of Rajiv Gandhi.

अदम्य साहसी व्यक्तित्व

अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी

सदन में भारतीय जनता पार्टी के नेता

मृत्यु शरीर का धर्म है। जन्म के साथ मरण जुड़ा हुआ है। लेकिन जब मृत्यु सहज नहीं होती, स्वाभाविक नहीं होती, प्राकृतिक नहीं होती, वासांसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय - गीता की इस कोटि में नहीं आती, जब मृत्यु बिना बादलों के बिजली की तरह गिरती है, भरी जवानी में किसी जीवन पुष्प को चिता की राख में बदल देती है, जब मृत्यु एक साजिश का नतीजा होती है, एक षड्यंत्र का परिणाम होती है तो समझ में नहीं आता कि मनुष्य किस तरह से धैर्य धारण करे, परिवार वाले किस तरह से उस वज्रपात को सहें। श्री राजीव गांधी की जघन्य हत्या हमारे राष्ट्रीय मर्म पर एक आघात है, भारतीय लोकतंत्र पर एक और कलंक है। एक बार फिर हमारी महान सभ्यता और प्राचीन संस्कृति विश्व में उपहास का विषय बन गई है। शायद दुनिया में और कोई देश नहीं होगा जो अहिंसा की इतनी बातें करता हो। लेकिन शायद कोई और देश दुनिया में नहीं होगा जहां राजनेताओं की इस तरह से हिंसा होती हो। यह हिंसा और हत्या का सिलसिला बंद होना चाहिए।

मैंने श्री राजीव गांधी को अनेक रूपों में देखा। बहुत निकट से तो नहीं लेकिन बहुत दूर से भी नहीं। मैंने उन्हें एक विनयी पायलेट के रूप में देखा, फिर भाई के लिए शोक में डूबे एक भाई के रूप में देखा, फिर मा के शोक में डूबे पुत्र के रूप में देखा, फिर सत्ता के शिखर पर चढ़े प्रधानमंत्री के रूप में देखा और फिर पराजय में अपने मोर्चे पर डटे रहने वाले एक सेनानी के रूप में भी देखा। कुछ लोग यह सोचते थे कि चुनाव में कांग्रेस की पराजय हो गई और श्री राजीव गांधी प्रधानमंत्री नहीं रहें तो शायद वे राजनीति से किनारा कस लेंगे, अलग-थलग बैठ जायेंगे। लेकिन उनमें एक जुझारु प्रवृत्ति थी, वे लड़े। उन्होंने भरपूर वार झेले और कसकर वार किये। वे एक साहसी व्यक्ति थे, बहादुर थे। जैसा प्रधानमंत्री जी ने कहा कि जब वे मिलते तो हंसते हुए मिलते, पूरे शिष्टाचार का पालन करते थे, मधुर भाषी थे। मतभेद होने पर समझाने की कोशिश करते थे और समझाने का प्रयत्न करते थे। कभी-कभी विरोधी दलों की बैठकों में बहस के लिए तैयार हो जाते थे और अपने पक्ष को प्रभावी तरीके से प्रस्तुत करते थे। यह ठीक है कि हमारे मतभेद थे। राजनीति में मतभेद स्वाभाविक है, कुछ मात्रा में मतभेद आवश्यक हैं। मगर मतभेदों के कारण श्री राजीव गांधी ने कभी व्यक्तिगत संबंधों को नहीं बिगड़ने दिया। मैं उनका विशेष रूप से आभारी हूँ। बीच में मेरी तबीयत खराब हो गई। पता नहीं किसने उन्हें खबर दी, मेरा ख्याल है कि शायद फोतेदार साहब ने उन्हें बताया था कि वाजपेयी जी को इलाज के लिए विदेश जाना चाहिए।

उन्होंने मुझे बुलाया और मेरा तत्काल प्रबंध किया। बात छोटी सी है मगर हृदय को स्पर्श करने वाली है। जब तक भारतीय लोकतंत्र में एक दूसरे के प्रति यह समादर, स्नेह है तो हत्यारों के आक्रमण का सामना करने की शक्ति हमारा गणतंत्र जुटा सकता है। जिस दिन एक दूसरे की प्रामाणिकता पर सन्देह पैदा हो जाएगा उस दिन भारत का भविष्य अंधकारमय हो जाएगा। श्री राजीव गांधी अब हमारे बीच में नहीं हैं, उनकी जघन्य हत्या से एक बार फिर भारत जिन गंभीर संकटों में घिरा है, वह संकट हमारे सामने उजागर हो कर खड़े हो गए हैं। हमें उन चुनौतियों का उत्तर देना होगा। मैं इस अवसर पर कोई राजनैतिक भाषण नहीं करना चाहता, उसके लिए कल का समय तय है। किस ने हत्या की, हत्या के लिए कौन शक्तियाँ जिम्मेदार हैं, इसकी चर्चा कल होगी। हत्यारों को बेनकाब किया जाना चाहिए लेकिन किसी दल को इस जघन्य कृत्य का राजनैतिक लाभ उठाने का प्रयत्न नहीं करना चाहिए। यह श्री राजीव गांधी के बलिदान के साथ न्याय नहीं होगा। उनकी आत्मा के साथ भी न्याय नहीं होगा। अगर इतने भारी बलिदान के बाद हम दलबंदी की छोटी-छोटी दीवारों में बंधे रहे तो अतीत हमें कभी माफ नहीं करेगा। मैं, अपनी ओर से, अपने दल की ओर से, हृदय से श्री राजीव गांधी की स्मृति में विनम्र श्रद्धांजलि अर्पित करता हूँ और परमात्मा से प्रार्थना करता हूँ कि दिवंगत नेता की आत्मा को सद्गति दे और शोक संतप्त परिवार को इस वज्रपात को सहन करने की शक्ति दे।

A fine leader, a decent and lovable person

Parvathaneni Upendra
Leader of the Telugu
Desam Party in the House

The nation has yet to recover from the shock and it is very difficult to believe that Rajivji is no more with us. It is a quirk of fate that just like his beginning in the political arena, the end also came in very tragic circumstances. He was a reluctant entrant into politics soon after the tragic death of his brother. He took up the Prime Ministership when his mother, Shrimati Indira Gandhi had a tragic death and ultimately his death also came in very tragic circumstances and in a barbaric manner. When we think of Rajivji we are reminded of his courtesy, politeness, his good manners, his gentleness, consideration for others and we remember him as a man with a class and his own style. He had natural elegance and immense charm. He was a fine leader, a decent and lovable person. We are constantly reminded of his open and cheerful smile. Whenever we met him and saw his charming disposition, it was difficult to criticise him and attack him and it is an irony of fate that we could not have even a last look at that beautiful face which had charmed millions all over the country and the world.

When he came into politics, leaving his job of pilot people had doubts about his capacity to handle the affairs. But he was very quick in grasping the matters and we saw him day-to-day and ever since he became the Prime Minister, we saw him shaping into an able administrator and a great statesman.

Though he became the Prime Minister in October, 1984 as a son of Shrimati Indira Gandhi, but in December, 1984 he won a massive mandate in his own right and established his sway over the masses. His advent in the political arena represented a chance for the younger generation and his stirring speech in the centenary celebration of the Congress at Bombay in 1985 still rings in the ears of the people.

Assessments may differ of his performance as a Prime Minister during those five years he held that office but his sincerity of purpose and his efforts to raise the standard of living of the people and to solve the problems of the country will go down in the history of this country forever. He had a great vision of the problems and the future of India. It was not just a hollow thing, but borne out of conviction. He had a scientific and modern outlook and the various modernisation schemes undertaken by him in telecommunications and electronic media stand testimony to his modern outlook. The experiments he made in the economic field and industrial sector also stand out.

His greatest contribution was in the field of foreign relations and I have no hesitation to say that after Jawaharlal Nehru he was the only Prime Minister who established close personal contacts with world leaders and brought a great name for this country.

People know that he was fond of many western things. He was equally at home with Gucci shoes, Cartier sunglasses and designer jeans, but he was also equally at home with the kurta-pyjamas and sometimes even the *lungi* and *Angavastrams* whenever he visited the South. He was fond of music, fine arts, photography and several other good things in life. He always had the right instinct, but sometimes he had to listen to others also.

As Atalji has said, people had doubts about his adjustment to the new role when he lost power, but we were all pleasantly surprised at the way he adjusted himself to the new role of the leader of the Opposition and I had personal experience of the same. I was one of the bitterest critics when he was alive but I also had very warm and personal equations with him and particularly when I was the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, I had occasions to meet him and to talk to him almost on a daily basis and I had the good fortune of receiving very considerate treatment and warm affection from him. It was a great personal loss to me. On that night when I heard the news of his death, I could not contain myself and I tried to go to his house at 1.45 A.M. But I was prevented by the police because agitated crowds were preventing even the President from going in. So I

had to come back. I consider Rajivji's death as a great loss to me personally. Atalji has mentioned about some other features which we will have occasion to discuss tomorrow, particularly the security lapses and the circumstances which led to his assassination. On behalf of my party, my leader and my party members I convey our heartfelt condolences to Shrimati Sonia Gandhi and her children on this great loss, which is indeed a great loss for the nation as a whole.

एक नया संदेश, नई आशा

विशम्भर नाथ पाण्डे
नाम-निर्देशित

इस दुखद घटना के लिए मेरे पास शब्द नहीं हैं कि कैसे मैं अपने दुख को व्यक्त करूँ। गुरुदेव रवीन्द्र नाथ की एक पंक्ति मुझे याद आती है :

मोनेर कया मोनेइ थाके भाषा थेके जाय बाहिरे।

मन की बात मन के भीतर रह जाती है, भाषा बाहर रह जाती है, लेकिन जिस तरह से पूरे राष्ट्र ने इस दुख को अपना दुख समझा, जिस तरह करोड़ों आँखों से आँसू बहे, उससे लगता है कि कबीर की वह पंक्तियाँ चरितार्थ हो उठी हैं :

याद है तुझको जब तू आया था,
सब ये हँसते, मगर तू रोता था।
इस तरह घर बसर के जब तू जाए,
सब तुझे रोवें, और तू हँसता जाए।

राजीव गांधी जी ने अपना कर्तव्य पूरा किया। जिस महान संस्था के वह प्रतिनिधि थे, उस संस्था के संदेश को उन्होंने अपना रक्तदान देकर पूरी तरह प्रसारित किया, लेकिन प्रश्न उठता है कि हमारे इस जनतंत्र को क्या हो गया है? हम कहाँ जा रहे हैं? महात्मा गांधी की हत्या, इन्दिरा गांधी की हत्या, राजीव गांधी की हत्या और छोटे-मोटे अनेक कार्यकर्ताओं की हत्या, विविध दलों के - आखिर यह देश कहाँ जा रहा है? तीर्थंकर महावीर और भगवान् बुद्ध का यह देश, नानक और कबीर का यह देश कहाँ जा रहा है? कब तक हम इस तरह अपने नेताओं का रक्त बहाते रहेंगे? कब तक हम अपने जनतंत्र को कलंकित करते रहेंगे? आज यह प्रश्न है, इस पर सोचना है, विचार करना है। मौलाना रूम ने कहा :

तू बराये वस्त करदन आमदी
नै बराये फ़हल करदन आमदी।

हमने इन्सान को दुनिया में मुहब्बत के लिए भेजा है, लड़ाने के लिए नहीं भेजा, हत्या के लिए नहीं भेजा। हमें सोचना है कि यह देश जो अपनी महान संस्कृति का दम भरता है, क्या उस देश के लोग इस समय जो कुछ हो रहा है, उसको रोक नहीं पायेंगे? यह बहुत बड़ी चुनौती हमारे देश के विचारकों के ऊपर है, हमारे देश के राजनीतिज्ञों के ऊपर है। हमारे देश के चिंतकों के ऊपर है कि वह इस देश को किधर ले जाना चाहते हैं। क्या हम मिल कर इस देश में इस समय की जो स्थिति है, उसका मुकाबला नहीं कर सकते?

इसीलिए इस भयानक ट्रेजेडी के बाद हमें सोचना है कि राजीव गांधी जी - अब वह नहीं हैं, वह चले गये 'वाससि जीर्णानि' की बात कही जाती है गीता में, लेकिन उनकी देह अभी जीर्ण नहीं हुई थी, वह तो जवान थे, अभी उन्होंने शुरू किया था, वह आये थे, एक नया संदेश, नई आशा वह दुनिया के लोगों को दे रहे थे, इस देश के लोगों को दे रहे थे। वही संदेश आज कम से कम इस देश के विचारकों को आगे बढ़ाना है और विशेष रूप से जिस संस्था के साथ मैं जुड़ा हुआ हूँ - सत्तर वर्ष से जुड़ा हुआ हूँ, शायद बहुत कम लोग अब ऐसे हैं जो कि सत्तर वर्ष से इस संस्था के साथ जुड़े हुए हों और जो संदेश हमने अपने जीवन में शुरू किया, क्या उस संदेश को हम फिर एक बार जन-जन के पास तक नहीं पहुँचा सकते? प्रेम का संदेश, अहिंसा का संदेश, जनतंत्र का संदेश, गरीबों के दुख को दूर करने का संदेश, आत्मत्याग का संदेश, बलिदान का संदेश - यह रास्ता बलिदान का रास्ता है।

लोगों ने शिकायत की कि एक ही परिवार के हाथ में सत्ता दी जाती है लेकिन वह परिवार ऐसा है कि जो मौत की कसौटी पर कसा जा रहा है। इसीलिए आवश्यकता इस बात की है कि जो मशाल राजीव गांधी जी ने हमारे हाथ में दी है उस मशाल को लेकर हम सारे भेद-भावों को भूल कर जन-जन के पास जाएँ और उनको संदेश दें कि हमें इस देश में मिल कर रहना है, हमें इस देश में एकता के साथ रहना है, हिन्दू, मुस्लिम, सिख, ईसाई सब को एक साथ लेकर चलना है, तब हम उनकी आत्मा को संतोष दे सकेंगे, तब उनकी आत्मा को शांति मिल सकेगी। आइए, उस मशाल को हम जन-जन तक पहुँचाएँ। सारे

भेद-भाव भूलकर पहुंचाएं, एक नई जागृति हम पैदा करें। इस दुर्घात घटना के बाद देश को लगे कि हाँ, यह सोचने वाले लोग हैं, हम देश को अब नया रास्ता दिखा रहे हैं। कोई नया रास्ता नहीं है, वही पुराना रास्ता है, जिस रास्ते से हम भटक गए हैं, जिस रास्ते को हमने छोड़ दिया है, उसी रास्ते पर हमें चलना है, साम्प्रदायिक सद्भावना के रास्ते पर, अहिंसा के रास्ते पर, बलिदान के रास्ते पर, कुर्बानी के रास्ते पर, आत्म-त्याग के रास्ते पर। जब तक हम इन चीजों को लेकर नहीं चलेंगे तब तक यह देश उपहास का विषय बनता रहेगा। सारे संसार में, कैसे हम इस देश को ऊँचा उठावेंगे, बड़ी भारी जिम्मेवारी है इस सदन के लोगों पर, सांसदों पर, क्योंकि सारे देश में और सारी दुनिया में हमने अपने आपको बहुत छोटा बना दिया है। भारत ऊँचा सिर करके नहीं खड़ा हो सकता जब तक कि यह स्थिति रहेगी।

आज इस विषम परिस्थिति में हमें अपनी पुरानी मर्यादाओं को फिर से दोहराना है। मैं किन शब्दों में, क्योंकि न केवल राजीव गांधी से बल्कि उनके परिवार की कई पीढ़ियों से मैं परिचित हूँ। बहुत निकट से उनके सम्पर्क में मैं रहा हूँ। मैंने देखा है उनके भीतर कितनी कुर्बानी का मादा रहा है, कितने त्याग का मादा रहा है, किस तरह से उन्होंने अपने आपको न्यौछावर कर दिया था देश की सेवाओं के लिए, देश की आजादी के लिए, देश को आगे बढ़ाने के लिए, देश की जनता को ऊँचा उठाने के लिए और उन्होंने जो संदेश दिया साम्प्रदायिक सद्भावना का आज वही सब से बड़ा संदेश इस देश में है जो हमें घर-घर तक पहुंचाना है। नानक और कबीर के उस संदेश को फिर से दोहराना है, महावीर और बुद्ध के उस संदेश को फिर से दोहराना है। जब तक हम यह काम नहीं करेंगे तब तक हम राजीव की आत्मा को पूरा संतोष नहीं दे सकेंगे, शांति नहीं दे सकेंगे और आज सब पर बहुत बड़ी जिम्मेदारी है, मेरे दल के लोगों पर है, कांग्रेस के लोगों पर है कि वे इस संदेश को जगह-जगह पर जा कर पहुंचाएं।

मैं इन शब्दों के साथ, अपना दुख प्रकट करते हुए राजीव जी की आत्मा की शांति की कामना करता हूँ और उन के परिवार के प्रति अपनी हार्दिक संवेदना प्रकट करता हूँ।

A noble son of India

S. Viduthalai Virumbi
Dravida Munetra Kazhagam

The whole world was shocked to hear about the brutal assassination of a noble son of India, Shri Rajiv Gandhi. Such a tragedy should not have happened in our country. It is a fatal blow to Indian democracy. This dastardly act has brought a perennial stigma to the image of India which is the land of the Mahatma.

We strongly condemn violence in all aspects of life, especially in the political arena. We, on behalf of our party President, Dr. Kalignar, and the DMK Party, pay our respectful homage to the departed leader. We share the grief of the bereaved family.

A champion of unity and integrity of India

N.E. Balaram
Leader of the Communist Party
of India in the House

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I share the sentiments expressed by you and my colleagues on both the sides.

This is for the third time that our country is passing through agony arising out of a national tragedy at the demise of Rajiv Gandhi. Earlier it was when Mahatma Gandhi and Shrimati Indira Gandhi were assassinated. Now we are experiencing the same agony. Of course, we should condemn and also join others in condemning the creed of violence. But, Sir, the people of this country are eagerly waiting. They would like to know the hands behind this crime. At least, this time we should think very seriously about this sort of a thing, how they are repeating inside the country and what forces are behind this nefarious, dastardly deed. This must be seriously considered.

Rajiv Gandhi's contributions have been very well explained by my colleagues from both sides. He was an outstanding patriot. He was a champion of the unity and integrity of our country. He was a champion of peace and non-violence. His contributions have been manifold. I agree with that though I sometimes differed with his political philosophy. I agree that he has made a valuable contribution for the development of our country. I think the befitting tribute to the memory of Shri Rajiv Gandhi should be our affirmation to stand united to defend the unity and integrity of our country.

A very good Prime Minister and a great opposition leader

G. Swaminathan
Leader of the All India Anna
Dravida Munetra
Kazhagam in the House

Rajivji was scheduled to visit Pondicherry on 22nd morning. He was touring Tamil Nadu at that time and on the 22nd morning he was to be in Pondicherry. And after going to so many places, he was to visit Krishnagiri and many other constituencies. On 21st night, at about 11.30 we heard the news that he was shot. We were shocked because only the previous evening, myself on behalf of my Party and some of the Congress friends there have been planning how to receive him at the helipad and how to give him a big welcome. We were discussing this. so, it was a rude shock to us to hear this news. It was more shocking to us, because we never expected this thing to happen in Tamil Nadu; we have been priding ourselves that Tamil Nadu is one of the peaceful States. And we never thought that this kind of a thing would happen in Tamil Nadu. And we were very much shocked about this.

I had some personal occasions to meet and discuss with Rajivji after I became a member of the Rajya Sabha. After I became a Member here, when I was the Vice-Chairman of the House, I had many occasions to meet him privately and also as a Leader of the party to which I belonged. And I still remember on many occasions when I met him how strongly he felt, how courteous he was to the Members of the Opposition. And as it has been said, he was always very kind and he was always very courteous whenever we used to meet him either at the party thrown by the Chairman of the House or whenever he invited me to his house to discuss matters as a Leader of a particular Party or whenever he invited me to his own room when he was the Prime Minister to discuss matters relating to Tamil Nadu. I always found that he was courteous. During those days in 1986, when I became a Member, he caught my imagination as a person

moving with the people, as a human being and as a very soft-spoken person. And I had great admiration for Rajiv Gandhi in that way. Another very important thing about him was that whenever he took up a matter, he always discussed it threadbare with others. Our respected Member Shri Samar Mukherjee just now said that even though they had differences of opinion, they used to talk to him on many matters of importance. I still remember an occasion when in 1986, he was invited by the Chairman to a usual dinner where I was also present in my capacity as member of the panel of Vice-Chairmen. There was a heated discussion. I think Samar Mukherjee will remember this. After his visit to Soviet Russia he was discussing about USSR. He was discussing about communism and what his view was on communism. He felt after his talk with Gorbachev that the very system might have a lot of difficulties in future. There was a heated discussion. Our revered friend could not agree with what he was saying. The discussion was so heated that all of us left the dinning table and went near them. At one point Samar Mukherjee said, "Rajivji you are too young to understand all these things". It was shocking to us that a senior member could tell the Prime Minister that 'you are too young to understand all these things; you may not know about it; you cannot know about it'. This is what he said to him on his face. With calm Rajivji said 'I understand it'. With great regard he told him so. He would argue on his perception of communism, how it is operating and what is going to happen. He used to invite us to discuss some important matters. Before the discussion he used to study about the matter and during the course of the discussion he used to throw light on matters concerning Tamil Nadu about which we ourselves did not know. He used to think logically and argue with his friends before coming to a conclusion. One day I went to his house and I was surprised to see one thing. He was talking to another person to get a matter from the computer which was in his house. This gentleman who was close to him and who was also from Tamil Nadu and was a former Minister asked him how to enter in the computer and get the figures from it. He immediately pointed out proper words. He said 'you put these words you will receive the message from the computer and then give it to me'. This was the kind of attention he was giving to every matter. He was that kind of person.

This kind of ghastly crime that has been committed raises so many questions in the mind of everybody. He proved himself a great leader. Sir, we also found in this House, when Indiraji was alive, how much fight was going on in the House. During the Prime Ministership of Rajivji there was so much of apprehension and tempers were rising all the time. In spite of that and in spite of accusations he remained calm. We had a wonderful person in him as the Prime Minister. We also found him a good opposition leader. He proved himself not only a very good Prime Minister, but a great opposition leader as well. Generally these two things do not go together. One may be a very good Prime Minister but he may not be a good opposition leader. One may be a very good opposition leader but when he becomes the Prime Minister he may not be a very good administrator and a good Prime Minister. I have seen in my career of 22 years in the Tamil Nadu Legislature, very good Chief Ministers but when they were in the opposition they were not able to acquit themselves well. They may be good as Chief Ministers but bad as opposition leaders. One may be a good opposition leader but when he becomes a Prime Minister or Chief Minister he may not be able to do well. He was a very good Prime Minister and he was also a very good opposition leader that way.

Then, there is the main question which we may discuss tomorrow *i.e.* the cult of violence. Before I end I would like to point out about the great friendship that was there between him and our great leader MGR. I still remember, whenever our great leader MGR came to Delhi, Rajivji always gave an appointment to him. He used to feel very happy in meeting him. Sometimes he would even talk with Rajivji for hours.

I remember an occasion when MGR came here. Rajivji was to unveil the statue of Bharati. On that particular day when MGR came, he was not able to articulate well; we were all waiting for Rajivji to come and unveil the statue. We were expecting him to come in a big car with security around. But we were surprised to see that Rajivji himself drove the car. MGR never expected a Prime Minister driving his car and he asked him as to why he himself drove the car and he replied, "I am the Prime

Minister and in charge of the country; I have to drive the country as a Prime Minister and as a person I am driving the car. There is not much difference". Everybody laughed.

Politically we were an alliance party and two or three times he came to Madras. He addressed big meetings with Jayalalitha on the beach and we looked forward to a long period for him not only as a politician but also as the Prime Minister of the country. But all our hopes have been belied. I, on behalf of my party and my own personal behalf, associate myself with the sentiments expressed by you and by other leaders of the House. I convey, on behalf of my party and my own behalf, our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family.

A great loss to the nation

Prof. Sourendra Bhattacharjee
Revolutionary Socialist Party

This is a very solemn occasion. When in Calcutta, at about midnight a friend told me, it was unbelievable to my entire family. What I felt at that moment was, it was a sad end to a very young and promising life. Undoubtedly it was a great loss not only to his party, but to the nation at large, and I think, on this point, there is not just consensus but unanimity.

But I would like to draw the attention of the House to another aspect of our national life. The point of late being raised in different quarters is as to how far this proves that ours is a country of non-violence. Independent India was born out of bloodbath and the vivisection of the country. Independent India began its journey with the assassination of -- who was called and perhaps is called -- the Father of the Nation. There has been violence galore and it started, perhaps, in the North-East with insurgency, secessionism and other things and now we find that insurgency or secessionist movement practically in all parts of the country, in the North-East, in the North-West, and communal and caste battles in between, and a complete picture of violence has been created in the country. Unless we can combat this violence which seems generic to our country we may face disasters. See the tragedies that happened on 30th January 1948, on 31st October 1984 or 21st May 1991, and this may not be the last unless steps are taken to bring back the country to senses. I am not referring to violence inherent in an exploitative system in which we live, but violence of a different nature. This is something which has to be taken care of. At the same time, we must come to grips with those evil forces which are continuously striking at our nation in diverse forms through violent methods.

I express my heartfelt sympathy with the family members of Shri Rajiv Gandhi - Shrimati Sonia Gandhi and her children Rahul and Priyanka.

A leader of the emerging new world order

Shabbir Ahmad Salaria
National Conference

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you very much for having afforded me an opportunity to speak.

I confess that I did not know Shri Rajiv Gandhi personally. But like the crores of other people of India, I have seen him as the leader of the biggest Party in India and as the Prime Minister of India. In his demise, the country has suffered a great loss. Firstly, he not only stood for the cherished values of secularism and democracy in our polity, but he also fought for these values to the end. Secondly, he was one of the great leaders of the emerging new world order, the SAARC and the NAM, which envisage the freedom and development of the under-developed countries so as to rid them of poverty, hunger, disease and foreign interference. Thirdly, he had the vision and the dream of a happy and modern India, free from hunger, injustice and unemployment, an India, which has its pride of place in the comity of nations. These are the reasons why the teeming millions of India, on his sad and sudden demise, feel as if they have lost a near and dear one.

“ए कबीर जब हम आये जग हंसा हम रोये,
ऐसी करनी कर चलो हम हंसें जग रोये।”

This is an occasion on which we must realise that the cult of violence is trying hard to shatter the values of democracy, debate and tolerance in our country. We must recall that it was against such evil forces that, forty-one years ago, Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of the National, laid down his life. We must, therefore, pledge ourselves to continue the struggle for democracy, secularism and non-violence -- values for which Shri Rajiv Gandhi laid down his life.

As Winston Churchill had said: 'Grass does not grow on the gallows'. The assassins of Rajiv Gandhi are not going to gain anything. On the other hand, his sacrifice will strengthen the mission of democracy and secularism, for which he stood.

“कल्ले हुसैन असल में मरगे यज़ीद है,
इस्लाम जिन्दा होता है हर करबला के बाद।”

We must, therefore, not lose heart, but pledge ourselves to do all in our power to go ahead with the task of rooting out communalism and strengthening the forces of democracy and non-violence in our country. Lives of great men remind us that we can also make our lives sublime. And departing leaves behind footprints on the sands of time so that some other shipwrecked-brother seeing them may take heart again.

I convey my heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family and pray that the departed soul may rest in peace.

A man with commitment and clear vision

Dr. Nagen Saikia
Asom Gana Parishad

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I associate myself with what has been said by your honour and by my colleagues in the House.

The nation has been confronted with some violent events during the last fifteen days. Of these violent events, the gruesome and heinous killing of Shri Rajiv Gandhi is an event of the most dangerous dimensions. It was not just an attack on an individual. It was an attack on our democracy. It was an attack on the policy of non-violence. This has shocked the whole nation, nay, the whole world. A dynamic personality with a broader understanding of the national and global problems, a man with commitment and clear vision, a man with youthful vigour and high hopes and dreams, a man with all the niceties of human behaviour, Shri Rajiv Gandhi became not only an unparalleled national leader but an international figure within a short span of about ten years. He fought for the cause of the humanity and for the global peace. Without Rajivji there would not have been the Assam Accord in 1985 to find out a solution to the problems of the State of Assam.

I, on my own behalf and on behalf of my party, condemn the gruesome killing. I pay homage in the memory of Rajivji and pray for eternal peace to the departed soul.

India's man of destiny

R. K. Dhawan
Congress (I)

My heart is filled with deep sorrow, pain and anguish at the brutal assassination of our dear and respected leader Shri Rajiv Gandhi. Words fail me to express my feelings and to express them fully and, if I may say so, the Oxford dictionary will have to find new words to express my feelings at this juncture.

I have the distinction of being associated with him for almost 30 years. I have seen him grow from school days as a bright, alert, energetic and smart youngman. The qualities of his calmness, coolness, tenderness are beyond description. From all that I have seen, I can say that he was a very cool, calm, generous and a very large-hearted person. He had the highest respect for values and system. He was a man of his word. I would like to share with this House my experience, how he demonstrated his highest respect for the values and the system. Of course, it was a very sad occasion. At the time of the death of Shri Sanjay Gandhi it was decided that the ashes of Shri Sanjay Gandhi would be immersed in the rivers of various States. Pradesh Congress(I) Presidents of various States were sitting in my room and in the adjacent room. When they were about to take away the ashes, Shri Rajiv Gandhi gave them certain instructions. You can say that they were sort of guidelines or in the form of guidance. He said that since Sanjay Gandhi did not belong to or did not hold any Government office, no Government rules should be violated and we should go by the system. At this, one of the PCC Presidents -- and I would like to mention his name because he can vouch for it -- Shri Jagannath Mishra quipped : हमारी अपनी सरकार है। This visibly annoyed Shri Rajiv Gandhi and he immediately told him: जगन्नाथ जी, आपकी सरकार नहीं है, यह भारत की सरकार है, आप किसी रूल का उल्लंघन नहीं कर सकते।

This is how I am trying to explain that he had the highest respect for values and system.

He was a man of his word. When he said something, he meant it and kept it. To prove that I will quote my own case. It was on 31st December, 1984, at about 10.30 in the night, he told me and to put it in his words, he said: "Mr. Dhawan, Thakkar Commission has decided to look into your conduct and they want you to proceed on leave, but I promise you that if after investigation nothing comes out against you, I will take you back." I would like to inform you and this august House that I have had two meetings with him before I joined him--one in Parliament House -- he had sent for me--and another at the Prime Minister's House. Then he said only two words to me : "Mr. Dhawan, do you remember the promise which I made to you at the time when I asked you to proceed on leave?" I said, "Yes, Sir, I do." He said, "I am fulfilling that promise. There is nothing against you, and I have decided to take you back." This is how I can say that he was a man of his word. That is my experience with him and I am sure the experience of others with him is also equally the same.

He was a meticulous person, a thorough gentleman who liked to go deep into the root cause of each and every problem and tried to find a solution. He did not believe in or accept any excuses. The way he stood by his mother during her difficult times between 1977 and 1980, and the poise and dignity with which he conducted himself at the time of the death of his younger brother, Shri Sanjay Gandhi, and the solace which he provided to his mother at that time are a matter of record.

I would say that he was full of love for his countrymen and he was totally committed to secularism, not in the cold political dictum but as a part of his very being. He always looked towards the welfare of the downtrodden, the weaker sections, harijans, backward classes, women and children. I had a number of meetings with him along with my other colleagues when he was Opposition Leader, and he always felt concerned that his touring throughout the country as the Leader of the Opposition has made him feel and realize, in a better way, the difficulties and problems that the downtrodden people of this country were facing and how to resolve them. The killings that were going on in Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir and Assam were always paining him and he was

always thinking of how to solve this problem, how to come forward with some ideas of how to save the situation so that all these things were not there.

He emerged on the Indian political scene at a time of seeing India as advanced, with a vision of a forward-looking and one of the most prosperous countries in the world, a nation committed to peace, a nation wedded to secularism, with respect for all religions, equality for all citizens without distinctions of race, caste, region or sex.

I can say--and I think all of you will share my view--that he will be remembered as India's Man of Destiny who was snatched away at the prime of his life when he was full of life. He was full of dreams, he was full of vision, he had the dream of seeing India as one of the most prosperous countries in the world. He was snatched away cruelly from our midst. We all will miss him and history will miss him. He was snatched away by the forces of violence and hatred which he fought relentlessly. These are the tributes I pay to him.

A beloved leader

B.V. Abdulla Koya
Muslim League

The crores and crores of people in India and abroad have not yet recovered from the shock of the dastardly and cruel assassination of our beloved leader, Shri Rajiv Gandhi. Even though this great man has lived only for a short period in our midst, he, within that period, had earned a perpetually loving place in our hearts and life. It is a pity to have such calamities, forgetting the advice of great Indians like Mahatma Gandhi. It is our bounden duty to see that political and social violence is stopped at any cost, and those human devils who perpetrated this crime are to be identified, isolated and suitably punished.

I, on behalf of my party, the Muslim League, and on my own behalf, express sorrow and convey our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family of the departed leader.

A great tragedy

Jagjit Singh Aurora
Akali Dal

I would like to express my deep sorrow and shock at the untimely and violent death of Shri Rajiv Gandhi, our ex-Prime Minister and President of the Indian National Congress (I). I condemn this dastardly act unequivocally. Shri Rajiv Gandhi's assassination is a great tragedy. It has shocked not only us but the whole world. I consider that it has also diminished us by giving such a violent turn to our politics.

The roots of democracy are still tender in our country. We have to nurture them, not destroy them. No democracy can survive the malice, hatred and vendetta that have become the order of the day these days. The loss of this valuable and young life is an immense jolt to us. Are we manly enough to turn back to follow the example of the Father of the Nation, eschew violence and jingoism in politics and create a peaceful and non-violent and wholesome society where real *Ram raj* would prevail?

My heart goes out to the bereaved family, and I take this opportunity to convey my heartfelt condolences to Shrimati Sonia Gandhi and the children.

एक बड़ा आघात

देवव्रत बिस्वास
फॉरवर्ड ब्लॉक

हमारे देश के और विश्व के एक महान नेता भूतपूर्व प्रधान मंत्री राजीव जी की निर्मम, जघन्य हत्या की निन्दा करने के लिए कोई भाषा हमारे पास नहीं है। हमारे देश के लोकतंत्र, जनतंत्र के ऊपर और गुटनिरपेक्ष आंदोलन के ऊपर एक बड़ा आघात है। लोकतंत्र में इस तरह से व्यक्ति की हत्या होती रहे इस पर हम लोगों को सोचना पड़ेगा। आज राजीव जी के प्रति श्रद्धा निवेदन करते समय हम लोगों को यह शपथ जरूर लेनी पड़ेगी कि देश की विघटनवादी ताकतें, सम्प्रदायवादी ताकतें हमारे देश की अखंडता, देश की धर्मनिरपेक्षता के ऊपर जो प्रहार कर रही हैं उनके खिलाफ हम लोगों को एक साथ लड़ना है और इसी प्रकार राजीव जी के प्रति हम सच्ची श्रद्धा निवेदन कर सकते हैं। हमारी पार्टी की ओर से और मैं अपनी ओर से राजीव जी के प्रति श्रद्धा निवेदन करता हूँ और उनके परिवार को अपनी संवेदना भेजता हूँ।

शब्द अब असमर्थ हैं

सीताराम केसरी
कांग्रेस (आई)

श्री राजीव गांधी आज हमारे बीच नहीं हैं। हमारे पास शब्द भी नहीं हैं कुछ कहने के लिए। उनकी स्मृति उनकी अनुपस्थिति में हमारे आंसुओं में हैं। ये आंसुओं की बूँदें श्रीमती सोनिया गांधी और उनके दोनों बच्चों के लिए समर्पित हैं। इन्हीं शब्दों के साथ मैं उनके प्रति संवेदना प्रकट करता हूँ।

एक अटूट प्रयास की हत्या

राम अवधेश सिंह
लोकदल

सभापति महोदय, आपके द्वारा, माननीय प्रधानमंत्री जी के द्वारा, विपक्ष के नेता के द्वारा और कांग्रेस पार्टी के नेता शिव शंकर जी के द्वारा एवं अन्य माननीय सदस्यों के द्वारा जो उद्गार व्यक्त किये गये हैं जो संवेदना व्यक्त की गई है, उससे मैं अपनी सहमति प्रकट करता हूँ और गहरी संवेदना राजीव जी के परिवार के प्रति व्यक्त करता हूँ।

राजीव जी को जिस बर्बरतापूर्वक भारत के राजनैतिक मंच से उठाने की कोशिश की गई है या उठाया गया है वह भारत के इतिहास के पन्नों को कालिख से पोत देता है। यह न केवल जम्मूरियत पर करारा प्रहार है बल्कि धर्मनिरपेक्षता और राष्ट्रीय एकता पर भी करारा प्रहार है। राजीव जी की लोकप्रियता कितनी थी और उनकी पहुंच आम जनता के दिलों तक कितनी थी, इसका सबूत 22 मई को सवेरे मिला। बिना प्रयास के शहरों के सारे कामकाज बंद हो गए, सारी दुकानें बंद हो गईं। किसी ने कोई दुकान बंद नहीं कराई। अपने आप सारी दुकानें बंद हो गईं। 21 मई को साढ़े दस बजे रात में मैं लखनऊ स्टेशन पर उतरा। स्टेशन पर तूफान चल रहा था, चारों तरफ अंधेरा था, कहीं बिजली नहीं थी। ऐसा नहीं लगता था कि हम किसी शहर में हैं। हम लोग लखनऊ स्टेशन से बाहर नहीं जा पाये। आंधी तूफान इतना था कि वहीं स्टेशन पर रुके रहे। सवेरे जब यह समाचार मिला तो इतना सदमा लगा कि उसका मैं बयान नहीं कर सकता हूँ। राजीव जी से मैं तीन बार व्यक्तिगत तौर पर मिला था और कमेटियों में तो कई बार मिला था। एक बार जब वे प्रधानमंत्री की कुर्सी पर थे तो तब मिला था। मंडल कमीशन पर मेमोरेन्डम देने के लिए मिला था। दूसरी बार उनके घर पर मिला था तो करीब-करीब 30 मिनट तक उनसे बातचीत हुई। उस समय उन्होंने कहा कि आप बात तो अच्छी बोलते हो, लेकिन तीखी क्यों बोलते हो। मैंने कहा, सरकार मधुर भाषा समझती नहीं है, सरकार तीखी भाषा ही समझती है, इसलिए तीखी भाषा ही बोलनी पड़ती है ताकि सरकार कहीं गलती न करे क्योंकि सरकार की तिल भर की गलती प्रतिपक्ष की पहाड़ भर की गलती से ज्यादा होती है। हम गलती करेंगे तो उससे देश का क्या बिगड़ेगा? लेकिन अगर सरकार गलती करे तो देश का बिगड़ जाएगा। यह बात डा. लोहिया कहा करते थे। यह बात जब मैंने उनको बताई और डा. लोहिया का नाम लिया तो उन्होंने कहा कि आप हमें डा. लोहिया का लिट्रेचर दो, हम पढ़ना चाहते हैं। मैंने उनसे वायदा किया कि मैं डा. लोहिया का लिट्रेचर आपको दूंगा। उसमें भारत की समस्याओं के बारे में गहरी बातें कही गई हैं और समाधान की बातें भी कही गई हैं। लेकिन मुझे अफसोस है कि उनको मैं वह लिट्रेचर दे नहीं पाया, इसका मुझे दुख है।

राजीव जी की हत्या केवल एक व्यक्ति की हत्या नहीं है बल्कि एक ऐसे अटूट प्रयास की हत्या है जो राष्ट्र को जोड़ने का प्रयास कर रहा था। राजीव जी की हत्या के जरिये भारत की राज-व्यवस्था और भारत की अर्थ-व्यवस्था को अव्यवस्थित करने की एक नापाक और गहरी साजिश की गई है। इसलिए यह वक्त ऐसा है जब इस देश के तमाम विवेकशील राजनेताओं को, नागरिकों को अपने दल की दीवारों को तोड़कर राष्ट्रीय समस्याओं के समाधान के लिए एकजुट हो जाना चाहिए और धर्मनिरपेक्षता और राष्ट्रीय एकता वाली ताकतों को मिलकर एक साथ उन तमाम ताकतों का मुकाबला करना चाहिए जो इस देश की अर्थ-व्यवस्था और राजनीतिक व्यवस्था को क्षत-विक्षत करने के लिए राजीव जैसे राजनेता की हत्या का षड्यंत्र रच चुकी हैं और रचती रही हैं। यह बड़े अफसोस की बात है कि इस देश में तीन गांधियों की हत्या एक ही ढंग से हुई और ये तीनों गांधी धर्मनिरपेक्षता, राष्ट्रीय एकता और समाज के दबे-कुचले लोगों के लिए कुछ करने का संकल्प रखते थे।

अंत में मैं अपने दल, लोकदल की ओर से और अपनी ओर से इस देश के युवा लेकिन महान नेता के प्रति संवेदना और श्रद्धा अर्पित करते हुए विदा लेता हूँ।

The brightest star

Karma Topden
Sikkim Sangram Parishad

I rise to pay homage with everybody else in this House to the memory of late Shri Rajiv Gandhi and also to strongly condemn this heinous act of murder. We live in a civilised age. Ours is a civilised society and in a civilised society nobody deserves to die in such a cruel, senseless, brutal and barbaric manner, least of all, Shri Rajiv Gandhi, who was the youngest and brightest star in the Indian firmament. He was a good man, a gentle person, a noble soul, a loving husband and a caring father. He was a leader of international stature who was totally committed to the cause of India. He was a young man, modern in outlook and with a young man's dream for the future of India. I knew him in his younger and happier days when we were both working in a bakery in Cambridge.

Though, he was the grandson of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who was the then Prime Minister of India, yet he had the humility of mind and the seriousness of purpose to take on a job during his holidays and even earn his pocket money. At this sad hour my heart goes out to Shrimati Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi who have impressed the whole world by the dignity and courage with which they have borne this irreparable loss.

On behalf of myself, my leader Shri Nar Bahadur Bhandari, Chief Minister of Sikkim and the whole State of Sikkim, I extend to Shrimati Sonia Gandhi and her family our deepest and sincerest condolences.

The whole of India loved him

Jayanthi Natarajan
Congress (I)

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the fact that I stand here before you and before this august House is itself by the grace of my leader, Rajivji.

I was standing right next to him when this terrible tragedy occurred and for some reason, he sent me away to his car and that had saved my life. This is yet another debt, an eternal one, which I will never be able to repay.

He brought me into politics. He was the sustenance that I found in politics. And to me and to countless others of the post-Independence generation, he represented all that is good, honest, decent and young in politics. History will bear testimony to his manifold achievements. Those who are more competent than I am to talk about his achievements in economy, in administration, in foreign affairs and towards the unity and integrity of this country have already spoken about him. My loss is deeply personal in the sense that my faith in him was unquestioning and unshakable. I believed implicitly that my own future and the future of this country were safe in his hands. I have lost the source of my guidance, the rock of my sustenance and the fountain - head of my inspiration. His integrity was of crystalline purity and equally uncompromising. I want to place on record that on several occasions I had gone to him for guidance on various sensitive issues and his answer had always been: "Always do the right thing. We have nothing to hide. Go and do your duty. Don't be afraid of anything." He was uncompromising in his integrity and he had always shown us the path to do the right thing, to never fear anything. Because of him, my colleagues and I, some of us who had no other introduction, no other sustenance, nobody else to guide us in politics, were able to walk with our heads held high; we were able to walk without fear that we might slide into the various pitfalls that faced us in political life. His smiling countenance and unfailing good humour and the fact

that he was a human being are some of the details that haunt us, those of us who were fortunate enough to work with him. Above all, he was all things to all Indians. To me, the greatest appeal, the reason why I considered him to be my leader, was that he was not confined to any one region; he was not confined by linguistic, regional or even by gender chauvinism. He belonged to all the parts of India, to all the States of India, to all the languages of India, to all the religions, to all the castes, to all the communities, to men and to women. It is particularly poignant for me and for all women in the country and in politics to say, 'Here was a man who genuinely believed that women were his equals.' Every time I worked with him, I could see that he genuinely believed in the equality of women. He did not simply pay lip service to them. This was why he was a repository of all our hopes and aspirations.

It saddens me beyond words that this terrible tragedy should have occurred in my peace-loving State, at the very place where Saint Ramanuja was born. So much has been said about him. As I said, he was so many things to so many people. As we were walking through the streets of Madras in procession, in memory of Rajivji, a vegetable seller who recognised that I was present, caught hold of my hands and said, "I sell vegetables. Everybody who comes to buy cabbage or beans wants something that is young and tender and this is the story of the way I sell my vegetables. I didn't realise that God himself was so greedy that he should take away even a leader from the people of this country, he should take away a leader who was young and tender, warm and had the best to offer for the future." The people of Tamil Nadu and the whole of India loved him. They loved him for his warmth, for his smiling countenance because he represented so much to them-the very future of this country. Today, he is no longer here. But the final tribute that I can pay to him is that I will certainly try to stand strong, keep my head held high as I was able to do when he was here and stand for whatever is good, peaceful and honourable. Although he is not here to sustain me, at least his spirit, his memory and the words that he shared with us, will sustain me through this journey.

यावद् चन्द्र दिवाकरो....

चन्द्रिका प्रेमजी केनिया
शिव सेना

जिंदगी में कुछ ऐसे क्षण आते हैं, ऐसे पल आते हैं कि जब अहसास होता है कि अनुभव की अनुभूति के लिए, अनुभव की अभिव्यक्ति के लिए शब्द कमजोर पड़ जाते हैं। आज राष्ट्र की इस दुख की घड़ी में, वेदना के इस पल में शोक और गमगीनी के वातावरण का शब्दों में बयान करना नामुमकिन लगता है, असंभव लगता है। यह सच है कि मौन की अपनी भाषा होती है जो न कहते हुए भी बहुत कुछ कह जाती है और मूक संविदनाओं का स्पंदन सितार के तार को छेड़ने के बराबर होता है। यह समय, यह पल, यह लम्हा मौन व्यथाओं का नहीं है, न मूक संविदनाओं का है और यही वजह है कि पूरे देश और समस्त विश्व की जो अकल्प्य वेदना है, जो अकल्प्य व्यथा है उसको शब्दों में बयान करने के लिए हम सब आज यहाँ पर इस सदन में इकट्ठा हुए हैं राजीव जी की आत्मा को श्रद्धाजलि देने के लिए।

जो फूलमाला श्रद्धा सुमन बनकर मंदिर में ईश्वर की पूजा और ईश्वर की आराधना के लिए चढ़ाई जाती है, जो फूलमाला, सद्भाव, प्यार और मैत्री का प्रतीक बनकर दूसरों के हाथों में दी जाती है उसी फूलमाला को हत्यारों ने राजीव जी की मौत का सामान बनाकर, राजीव जी की मौत का संदेश बनाकर उनके गले में डाल दिया। यह कैसी निर्मम हत्या थी, यह कैसी निष्ठुर हत्या थी जिससे पूरा देश, समस्त विश्व स्तब्ध हो गया। ऐसा लगता है जैसे वेदना के इस पल में विश्व रुक सा गया है, थम सा गया है और जैसे लोगों की सांसें रुक गयी हैं, खामोशी और मौत का मातम छा गया है, मौत का सन्नाटा छा गया है सब जगह पर।

इस निर्मम हत्या के बाद में वह निर्दोष हास्य जो लोगों के अंतःकरण को छू जाता था, देखने को न मिलेगा। इस निर्मम हत्या के बाद अब वह आँखों से झलकता और टपकता आत्म विश्वास, जो हमेशा देश के भविष्य के सपने को साकार करने में जुटा हुआ था, न देखने को मिलेगा। अब वह निर्भय आवाज जो भारत की अस्मिता को दुनिया के कोने-कोने में पहुँचा चुकी थी, सुनाई नहीं देगी। इस निर्मम हत्या के बाद में वह चिर युवा, तपस्वी, सितारा सा चमकता व्यक्तित्व दृष्टि से ओझल हो गया है और रह गयी हैं सिर्फ यादें और यादें। रह गयी हैं सिर्फ स्मृतियाँ और मीठी मुस्कान भारतीय जनता के पास, जिसे वे हमेशा अपने पास संभाल कर रखेंगे और 'यावद् चन्द्र दिवाकरो' राजीव जी की याद भारतीय लोगों के दिलों में बसी रहेगी।

राजीव जी की हत्या के वक्त राजीव जी की जुबान पर एक ही बात थी कि कैसे राष्ट्र को मजबूत किया जाए, कैसे राष्ट्र को शक्तिशाली बनाया जाए, कैसे राष्ट्र को एकता के बंधन में बांधा जाए और हम सही माने में राजीव जी को श्रद्धांजलि तब दे पायेंगे जब भारत के नव-निर्माण का उनका अधूरा काम हम पूरा करेंगे और ऐसे समाज की रचना करेंगे जो शांति और समता की नींव पर खड़ा हो। हम राजीव जी को श्रद्धांजलि सही माने में तब दे पायेंगे जब भारत की एकता और अखण्डता को सुरक्षित रखने के लिए हम प्रतिज्ञा करेंगे।

देश के सामने अनेक समस्याएँ हैं, अनेक प्रश्न हैं, अनेक मुश्किलें हैं और आज भी रास्ता कठिन है, हिमालय पर चढ़ने जैसा रास्ता है हमारे सामने, मगर हम धैर्य न खोयें, हम शांति को न छोड़ें, हम श्रद्धा न खोएँ, हम निष्ठा से चलें, तभी हम सही माने में राजीव जी को श्रद्धांजलि दे पायेंगे।

हम यह समझ लें कि हिंसाचार से किसी प्रश्न का हल नहीं होता है। हिंसाचार तो लोकशाही पर लगा हुआ बदनुमा दाग है। हम सब अपने से यह शुरुआत करें कि भाषा, वाणी, विचार, वर्तन और कर्म से हिंसाचार को उजागर न करें, हिंसा को न बढ़ायें, आगे न फैलायें, लोगों को न भड़कायें, मगर शांति, सच्चाई, अहिंसा, प्यार और सद्भावना का वातावरण बनायें, तभी सही मानों में हम राजीव जी को श्रद्धांजलि दे सकेंगे।

फिर एक बार राजीव जी की इस निर्मम हत्या की मैं अपनी और शिव सेना की ओर से कड़ी से कड़ी निन्दा करती हूँ और अपनी सहानुभूति और हमदर्दी सोनिया जी, प्रियंका और राहुल को भेजना चाहूँगी, और भगवान से प्रार्थना करना चाहूँगी कि इस दुखद घड़ी और आघात को झेलने के लिए उनको अतुल शक्ति दें।

The champion of the poor

Madhavsingh Solanki
Congress (I)

We are all assembled here to mourn the sudden passing away of our great leader who was till yesterday in the midst of us. Shri Rajiv Gandhi was no ordinary human being. Not only have we, but the whole world has now recognised that he was a highly intelligent person with a keen eye for perfection, possessing indomitable strength and courage, a far-sighted visionary, full of dynamism and at the same time a genuine charismatic personality. In a very short period of the Indian history he had risen to become the symbol of the hopes and aspirations of the youth of this country and the coming generations find their hopes in this extra-ordinary young man. He had done and wanted to do so much in so short a time. Let me say, Mr. Chairman, the teeming millions of the Third World saw in him the champion of the poor and the down-trodden people of the whole world. By losing Shri Rajiv Gandhi we do not know what we have not lost.

21 मई को एक नियोजित साजिश के परिणामस्वरूप श्री राजीव गांधी के असामयिक निधन से सारा राष्ट्र आक्रांत हो उठा, देश के राजनीतिक क्षितिज पर एक देदीप्यमान नक्षत्र विलीन हो गया। सारे राष्ट्र ने अश्रुपूर्ण, करोड़ों नेत्रों के द्वारा उस महान नेता को अपनी श्रद्धांजलि दी। यह उस राजनीतिक दलगत सीमाओं की पंथि से ऊपर उठ कर उसकी महानता का द्योतक है।

यह एक ऐसा कारगरतापूर्ण और जघन्य कृत्य था, जिसकी जितनी भी निंदा की जाए, वह कम है। जब हमारा राष्ट्र चुनाव की लोकतांत्रिक प्रक्रिया से गुजर रहा था, उस समय यह कारगरतापूर्ण घटना धर्मनिरपेक्षता लोकतंत्र और राष्ट्र की एकता पर एक जबरदस्त आघात है। धर्मनिरपेक्षता और लोकतंत्र के भविष्य के सामने जो चुनौती खड़ी हो गई है, उसका सामना एकजुट होकर हम कर पायें, साहस जुटा पायें, यही उस दिवंगत आत्मा के लिए सब से बड़ी श्रद्धांजलि होगी।

मैं अपनी तरफ से हार्दिक संवेदना व्यक्त करते हुए ईश्वर से प्रार्थना करता हूँ कि दिवंगत आत्मा को शान्ति प्रदान करें और इस वज्राघात को सहन करने के लिए राष्ट्र को साहस दें और शोक-संतप्त परिवार को ऐसे महानतम दुख को बर्दाश्त करने की शक्ति प्रदान करें।

सदर साहब, मैं शुक्रगुजार हूँ आपने मुझे मौका दिया यह मौका हमारे मुल्क के लिए और सारी दुनिया के लिए जो अमलन साबित भी हो चुका है बहुत ही सद्मे और तकलीफ का है। राजीव जी ने अपनी जवानी और नौजवानी की उम्र में हिन्दुस्तान के मसायल और इसी तरह तमाम दुनिया के मसायल से अपनी अमली दिलचस्पी, कुबनियां, कोशिशें करके और मामलात को समझ कर उसके लिए जद्दोजहद करके अपनी शख्सियत का लोहा ही नहीं मनाया बल्कि सब के दिलों में जगह बनाई। हमारे मुल्क ही जम्हूरियत यहां सैकुलरिज्म और इसी तरह मुल्क की तरक्की, मुल्क की हकीकी आजादी ये तमाम चीजें आज उनके चले जाने से खतरे में हैं। अगर हम लोग मुल्क को आइंदा इन चीजों में आगे बढ़ा सकें तो यह मुल्क की बहुत बड़ी खुशकिस्मती और हमारा बहुत बड़ा अदाय फर्ज होगा और अगर इन चीजों में कोई भी रुकावट आती है और दुनिया की बड़ी ताकतों के सामने हमारा मुल्क हकीकी तौर पर झुक जाता है तो यह मुल्क की बहुत बड़ी बदकिस्मती होगी।

बहरहाल मैं अपनी तरफ से, पार्टी की तरफ से जमीयत-ए-उलेमा की तरफ से उनको खिराज-ए-अकीदत पेश करता हूँ और इसी के साथ यह जो हमदर्दी और सद्मे का जो ताल्लुक है वह यकीनन उनके खानदान को बहुत ज्यादा है लेकिन उससे ज्यादा पूरा मुल्क और सारी दुनिया इस हमदर्दी की मुस्तहक है जिस तरह उनके खानदान के लिए तकलीफ की बात है इसी तरह दुनिया की मज़लूम ताकतें, मुल्क, ज़मायतें और हिन्दुस्तान के अवाम आज हमदर्दी के मुस्तहक हैं और उनके लिए बड़ा सद्मा है।

मैं इन अलफाज के साथ, हाउस के सब मੈम्बरों के साथ, इस गम में शरीक होता हूँ।

• Hindi script of the Urdu speech

کے عوام آج ہمدردی کے مستحق ہیں۔ اور انکے لئے بڑا صدمہ ہے۔

میں ان الفاظ کے ساتھ ہاؤس کے سب ممبروں کے ساتھ۔ اس غم میں شریک

مولانا اسعد مدنی "ادب پرورش" : صدر صاحب میں شکوگزار ہوں آپ نے مجھے موقع

دیا۔ یہ موقع ہمارے ملک کیلئے اور ساری دنیا کیلئے جو "علا" ثابت بھی ہو چکا

ہے۔ بہت ہی صدمے اور تکلیف کا ہے۔ راجپوتی نے اپنی جوانی اور نوجوانی

کی عمر میں ہندوستان کے مسائل اور اس طرح تمام دنیا کے مسائل سے اپنی اصلی

دلچسپی۔ قربانیاں۔ کوششیں کر کے اور مصامحہ کو سمجھ کر اسکے لئے جدوجہد

کر کے اپنی شخصیت کا لوہا ہی نہیں مٹایا۔ بلکہ سب کے دلوں میں جگہ دی۔

ہمارے ملک کی جمہوریت یہاں سیکولرازم اور اس طرح ملک کی ترقی۔

ملک کی حقیقی آزادی یہ تمام چیزیں انکے چلے جانے سے خطرے میں ہیں۔

اگر ہم لوگ ملک کو اقتدار ان چیزوں میں آگے بڑھا سکیں تو یہ ملک کی بہت بڑی

خوش قسمتی اور ہمارا بہت بڑا ادائیہ فرض ہوگا اور اگر ان چیزوں میں کوئی بھی

دکاوت آتی ہے اور دنیا کی بڑی طاقتوں کے سامنے ہمارا ملک حقیقی طور پر چمک

جاتا ہے تو یہ ملک کی بہت بڑی بد قسمتی ہوگی۔

بہر حال میں اپنی طرف سے پارٹی کی طرف سے جمیۃ العلماء کی طرف

سے انکو خراج عقیدت پیش کرتا ہوں اور اس کے ساتھ یہ جو ہمدردی اور

صدمے کا تعلق ہے وہ یقیناً انکے خاندان کو بہت زیادہ ہے لیکن اس سے

زیادہ ہوا ملک اور ساری دنیا اس ہمدردی کی مستحق ہے جس طرح انکے خاندان

کیلئے تکلیف کی بات ہے اس طرح دنیا کی مظلوم طاقتیں۔ ملک۔ جماعتیں اور ہندوستان