

BIRTH OF INDIA'S FREEDOM: NATION WAKES TO NEW LIFE MR. NEHRU CALLS ...

Our Special Representative

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BIRTH OF INDIA'S FREEDOM

NATION WAKES TO NEW LIFE

Mr. Nehru Calls For Big Effort From People

"INCESSANT STRIVING TASK OF FUTURE"

Assembly Members Take Solemn Pledge

WILD SCENES OF JUBILATION IN DELHI

From Our Special Representative

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 14

**ENTIRE DELHI KEPT AWAKE TO WIT-
NESS THE HISTORIC EVENT OF
USHERING IN THE FREEDOM OF INDIA
AT THE HOUR OF MIDNIGHT.**

Unprecedented scenes of enthusiasm were witnessed both inside and outside the Constituent Assembly Chamber, where seething, swaying humanity wildly cheered the momentous event, heralded with the blowing of conches.

Raising to the height of the occasion, Pandit Nehru made a speech in the Assembly which was at once notable and a masterpiece of literature.

"Years ago we made a tryst with destiny", he said, "and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge not wholly or in full measure, but very substantially. . . At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom".

With becoming humility, Pandit Nehru reminded the House that freedom and power bring responsibility and "that the future is not one of ease or resting but of incessant striving, so that we may fulfil the pledges we have so often taken and the one we shall take today."

Choudhury Kalquzzaman, leader of the Muslim League group, in a warm speech, wholeheartedly supported the motion moved by Pandit Nehru for the adoption of the pledge and assured "faithful and loyal" co-operation of the Muslims of India in implementing the pledge of dedication.

Dr. B. Radhakrishnan, the noted philosopher, supporting Pandit Nehru's motion, pointed out the sores in the Indian body politic and urged that every Indian at this hour should pledge himself to purge the society of corruption and intolerance, and took the occasion to pay a sincere tribute to the rule of British and British statesmen in bringing to

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Dedication To Service Of Country And People

PANDIT NEHRU ON SIGNIFICANCE OF NEW OATH

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fruition India's political aspiration. Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the President of the Constituent Assembly, opening the proceedings, recalled "in grateful remembrance the services and sacrifices of those men and women, known and unknown, who with smiles on their faces walked to the gallows and faced bullets on their chests" and both "our tribute and reverence to Mr. Gandhi who has been our beacon light, our guide and philosopher during the last 30 years." Dr. Prasad declared "to all the minorities in India, we give the assurance that they will receive fair and just treatment and there will be no discrimination in any form against them."

DIPLOMATIC CORPS

The entire diplomatic corps, headed by the Chinese Ambassador in his national costume, were seated to the right side of the President. On his left sat the Ministers and Ministers-designate who were not members of the Constituent Assembly.

The entire Assembly rose to repeat the pledge of dedication in three languages one after the other—Hindi, Urdu and English.

When the members and visitors stood in two-minute silence in memory of those "who have died in the struggle for freedom in India and elsewhere," a pin drop could have been heard.

Two thoughts were uppermost in the minds of most members in the Assembly tonight—grateful remembrance of Mr. Gandhi's leadership of the country's political struggle and the bad news pouring in from Lahore. The four speeches of the night were listened to in disciplined silence which was broken only when members cheered.

Freedom's bells tolled in Delhi's temples and churches and All-India Radio's specially installed amplifiers relayed the melodious chimes striking the fateful hour of midnight. As the last of the twelve strokes boomed in the Chamber, 250 members of India's Constituent Assembly stood up in their seats to take a solemn pledge to dedicate themselves "to the service of India to the end that this ancient land attain its rightful and honoured place in the world and make its full and willing contribution to the promotion of world peace and welfare of mankind."

Six hundred visitors and 150 Indian and foreign journalists packed the galleries upstairs and every inch of floor space in the Chamber down below to watch the historic ceremony of the country's sovereign Constituent Assembly "assume power for the governance of India."

DR. PRASAD'S PROPOSAL

At the conclusion of this brief ceremony, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of the Constituent Assembly, himself proposed to the House "that it should be intimated to the Viceroy that:—

(1) "The Constituent Assembly of India has assumed power for the governance of India, and

(2) "The Constituent Assembly of India has endorsed the recommendation that Lord Mountbatten be Governor-General of India from August 15, 1947."

Dr. Rajendra Prasad further proposed that this message be conveyed "forthwith" to Lord Mountbatten by the President and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the Leader of the House, who had been earlier in the day formally unanimously elected leader of the Congress Party at a party meeting.

SITTING OPENS WITH SONG

The sitting of the Constituent Assembly tonight opened at 11 o'clock with the singing of the first verse of 'Vande Mataram' by Shrimati Sucheta Kripalani, wife of the Congress President.

The President addressed the House and thereafter the Assembly stood up and observed a two-minute silence in memory of those "who have died in the struggle for freedom in India and elsewhere".

Prior to the pledge-taking ceremony, which took place exactly after midnight, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru moved to the House the adoption of the text of the pledge in the shape of a motion.

When the members sat down after taking the oath of dedication, Shrimati Hansa Mehta presented a na-