

English rendering of PM addressing last sitting of 17th Lok Sabha

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Hon'ble Mr Speaker Sir,

Today is an important day in the great tradition of democracy. Over the past five years, the 17th Lok Sabha has made numerous significant decisions in the service of the nation. In the wake of many challenges, everyone has endeavoured to steer the country in the right direction with their capabilities. In a way, today is an opportunity for all of us to reflect on our five-year ideological journey, dedicated to the nation, and to once again dedicate our resolutions to the nation. These five years of reform, perform, and transform are quite rare. It is rare that reforms happen, performance is achieved, and we witness transformation before our eyes, instilling a new confidence. Today, the nation is experiencing this certainty from the 17th Lok Sabha. And I am confident that the nation will continue to bless the 17th Lok Sabha. All Hon'ble members of the House have played a very important role in all these processes. And this is the time when, as the leader as well as a companion to all of you, I congratulate each and every one of you.

Especially, Hon'ble Mr Speaker Sir,

I also express heartfelt gratitude to you. Sumitra (Mahajan) ji occasionally indulged in light-hearted humour (during her five-year tenure as Speaker of the House). However, you always wore a smile on your face. No matter what happened (in the House), that smile never faded. In various diverse circumstances, you have guided and led this House with great balance and impartially in a true sense. I also commend you wholeheartedly for your conduct. There were moments of anger and accusations, but you handled all these situations with complete patience and insight, leading the House and guiding all of us. I am grateful to you for this.

Hon'ble Mr Speaker Sir,

In these five years, the entire human race has endured the biggest crisis of this century. Who will survive? Can one save anyone? That was the situation. In such times, coming to the House, leaving one's home, was also a period of crisis. Despite that, whatever new arrangements had to be made, you made them, without letting the work of the nation stop. In order to ensure that the dignity of the House remained intact and the necessary work of the country continued to progress, you did not lag behind even a bit in your role of running the House. You handled it with great skill and became an example for the world.

Hon'ble Mr Speaker Sir,

I also want to express my gratitude to the Hon'ble MPs for agreeing to give up their MPLAD funds without a moment's delay when such a proposal was made in the wake of the needs of the country during that period. Not only that, MPs themselves decided on a 30 per cent salary cut in order to give a positive message to the citizens and instill confidence in society. It led the country to believe that the MPs are the first ones to step forward in this regard.

And Hon'ble Mr Speaker Sir,

Without any reason, we MPs were often criticized in some section of the Indian media twice a year for the privileges we receive and eating subsidised food in the Parliament Canteen. It's like we were constantly being ridiculed over the cost of the food in the Parliament Canteen compared to what is available outside. You made the decision that there would be uniform rates in the canteen for everyone, and MPs never opposed it and never complained. And those who used to embarrass all MPs for no reason were also enjoying the subsidised food available in Parliament Canteen before. You saved us all from that ridicule, and I express my gratitude to you for this too.

Hon'ble Mr Speaker Sir,

It is true that regardless of whether it was our 15th, 16th or 17th Lok Sabha, there was a demand for a new Parliament building. Everyone discussed this collectively, in one voice, but no decision could be made. It is your leadership that made the decision, pushed things forward, held various meetings with the government, and as a result, today the country has got this new Parliament building.

Hon'ble Mr Speaker Sir,

Establishing the Sengol in the new Parliament building, which preserves a part of our heritage and keeps alive the first moment of independence as a guiding light, has been a monumental task under your leadership. It will now be a part of the ceremonial event every year which will forever connect the future generations of Bharat with that moment of independence. And that significant moment of independence will remain etched in our memories, serving as inspiration to propel the nation forward—a sacred task that you have accomplished.

Hon'ble Mr Speaker Sir,

It is also true that during this period, Bharat received a lot of praise during the presidency of the G20 summit. Every state of the country showcased Bharat's strength and their own identity in front of the world (by holding various G20 meetings), the impact of which is still felt on the global stage today. Along with that, under your leadership, the P20 summit was held soon after the G20 when speakers from many countries came here. We have carried forward the great tradition of Bharat, the Mother of Democracy, and the democratic values that we have advanced for centuries. Systems may have changed, but Bharat's democratic spirit has always remained, and you presented that fact excellently before the speakers of the world, earning Bharat respect in democratic systems as well under your leadership.

Hon'ble Mr Speaker Sir,

I also want to extend special congratulations to you for something that perhaps neither our Hon'ble MPs nor the media have paid attention to. We would gather together in the Samvidhan Sadan (the new name for) the old Parliament, to offer floral tributes to the statues of great personalities on their birth anniversaries. But it used to be a 10-minute event, and then we would leave (to perform our duties in Parliament). You initiated a campaign of speech and essay competitions across the country for these great personalities. Two children from each state awarded as the best orators and essayists would come to Delhi on that day and remain present during the floral tribute ceremony on the great person's birth anniversary along with the political leaders and give speeches afterward. They would visit other places in Delhi and try to understand the activities of the MPs. You have done a great job

of constantly engaging millions of students with Bharat's parliamentary tradition. And you will be credited for this tradition. I hope everyone will proudly carry forward this tradition in the future. I congratulate you for this as well.

Hon'ble Mr Speaker Sir,

I cannot say how much they, who were supposed to use, were able to utilize the Parliament Library, but you opened its doors for the common person. You have rendered a great service by opening this treasure trove of knowledge, this heritage of traditions, to the general public. I congratulate you wholeheartedly for this initiative. You incorporated modern technology into our system by way of paperless Parliament and digitization. Initially, some colleagues faced difficulties, but now everyone has become accustomed to it. When I see you sitting here and constantly doing something, you have accomplished a significant achievement. You have established permanent systems. I express my sincere gratitude for this also.

Hon'ble Mr Speaker Sir,

I can say that your expertise and the awareness of these Hon'ble Members of Parliament and their collective efforts have resulted in 97 per cent productivity of the 17th Lok Sabha. The 97 percent productivity is a matter of satisfaction in itself. But I believe that as we move towards the conclusion of the 17th Lok Sabha today and the beginning of the 18th Lok Sabha (in a few days), we will resolve to ensure that our productivity will be more than 100 per cent. There were also seven sessions where productivity was even more than 100 per cent in the 17th Lok Sabha. And I have seen that you have sat through all night, constantly making efforts to bring the concerns of every Member of Parliament to the attention of the government. I express heartfelt gratitude and congratulations to all the Hon'ble Members and all the Floor Leaders for these successes. In the first session of the 17th Lok Sabha, both Houses passed 30 bills, and this is a record in itself. New benchmarks have also been set in the 17th Lok Sabha.

Hon'ble Mr Speaker Sir,

The celebration of 75 years of independence is a matter of great fortune for all of us, and it is indeed a momentous occasion where our Parliament has played a crucial leadership role in every aspect. Perhaps there is hardly any Member of Parliament who has not played a role in making the 75 years of independence a celebration in their respective domains. Truly, the nation celebrated the 75 years of independence with full fervour, and the significant role of our Hon'ble MPs and this Parliament cannot be overlooked. The 75th anniversary of the enactment of our Constitution has coincided with this time, and all Hon'ble Members of Parliament have had the opportunity to be part of it. The responsibilities of the Constitution start from here, and being associated with them is inherently very inspiring.

Hon'ble Mr Speaker Sir,

In this tenure, there have been significant reforms, which are game-changers. The strong foundation of Bharat in the 21st century is evident in all these aspects. The country has moved forward at a rapid pace towards a big transformation, and in this, all colleagues of the House have provided excellent guidance with their participation, and contributed significantly. We can say with satisfaction that many changes, which were being awaited for long, have been accomplished through the 17th Lok Sabha, ending the anticipation of generations. Many generations had dreamed of one Constitution, but there was a crack, a pitfall, an obstacle every moment. By abrogating Article 370, the House has

manifested the full realization of the Constitution with its complete radiance. And I believe that on the completion of 75 years of the Constitution...wherever the souls of those great men who framed the Constitution may be, they must be blessing us, as we have completed this task. The people of Jammu and Kashmir were deprived of social justice. Today, we are satisfied that by fulfilling our commitment to social justice, we are also reaching out to our brothers and sisters in Jammu and Kashmir.

Hon'ble Mr Speaker Sir,

Terrorism used to haunt the country like a demon, firing bullets into the heart of the country every day, staining the land of Maa Bharti with blood. Many brave and talented individuals of the country would fall prey to terrorism. We enacted strict laws against terrorism, and this very House made them. I firmly believe that those who struggled with such problems before have now gained strength. Confidence has increased psychologically. And Bharat is feeling a sense of complete liberation from terrorism. And that dream will also come true. We have lived under the British-imposed penal code for 75 years. We will proudly tell the country, we will tell the new generation, you will be able to tell your grandchildren with pride that the country lived under the penal code for 75 years, but the coming generations will live under the code of justice. And that is true democracy.

Hon'ble Mr Speaker Sir,

I would like to congratulate you on one more thing. The new House, with all its grandeur, commenced with an act that strengthens the fundamental values of Bharat, and that is the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam (Women Empowerment Act). Whenever discussions about this new House will take place, the mention of the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam will be made. Even though it was a brief session, it was a session that made far-reaching decisions. The sense of purity of this new House began from that very moment, which gives us a new strength. As a result, when a large number of our mothers and sisters will be seated here in the coming times, the country will feel a sense of pride. Our Muslim sisters were waiting for relief from the triple talaq for so long. The courts had ruled in their favour, but they were not getting their rights. They were forced to endure hardships. Some may say it openly, some indirectly. But the 17th Lok Sabha has done the very important work of freeing them from triple talaq. All Hon'ble members, regardless of their opinions or decisions, will someday say that we were present here to ensure justice for these daughters. We have remedied the injustice done to the generations, and these sisters are blessing us.

Hon'ble Mr Speaker Sir,

The upcoming 25 years are very important for our country. The hustle and bustle in politics has its place. The aspirations of people in the political arena have their place. But the expectations of the country, the concerns of the country and the dreams of the country have become the determination of the country. So the country will achieve the desired results in the next 25 years. People were not very enthusiastic when Mahatma Gandhi embarked on the Dandi March in 1930, when there was the Salt Satyagraha. Whether it was the Swadeshi movement, whether it was the tradition of Satyagraha, or whether it was the Salt Satyagraha. At that time, these events seemed small but in 1947, that 25-year period instilled the spirit within the country that now we have to live free. Today, I can see the same spirit which is being instilled in the country. From every street corner, from the lips of every child, it is heard that in 25 years we will make a 'Viksit Bharat'. Therefore, these 25 years are an extremely important period for the youth power of my country. And there will be no one among us who does not want Bharat to become a developed nation in 25 years. Everyone has a dream, some have already

made their dream a resolution, perhaps some may take longer to make it a resolution, but everyone will have to join, and those who cannot join and would be still alive will surely reap the rewards, this is my belief.

Hon'ble Mr Speaker Sir,

These past 5 years have also seen historic laws enacted for the youth. Bringing transparency in the system has provided new opportunities for the youth. Issues like paper leaks, which used to worry our youth, have been addressed very strictly. All Hon'ble members, understanding the sentiments of the youth of the country and addressing the questions or concerns in their minds about the system, have made very important decisions.

Hon'ble Mr Speaker Sir,

It is true that no human society can progress without research. Research is essential for continuous evolution. The history of humankind spanning thousands of years is evidence that research has been ongoing in every era, leading to the advancement and expansion of life. This House has done a significant job by formally establishing a legal framework to promote research. The National Research Foundation, though not often the subject of everyday political discussions, will have far-reaching consequences, and this is a very important task undertaken by the 17th Lok Sabha. I firmly believe that due to the talent of our youth, our country can become a hub for research worldwide. The talent of our youth is such that even today, many global companies are conducting their innovation work in Bharat. But our country will become a major hub, I am completely confident about it.

Hon'ble Mr Speaker Sir,

Our basic needs are undergoing a complete transformation in the 21st century. What had no value until yesterday, no attention was paid to it, has become very valuable. It is data... There is a global discussion about the potential of data. By introducing the Data Protection Bill, we have ensured the security of the entire future generation. We have provided a new tool to the entire future generation, based on which they will also make the right use of it to build their future. And the Digital Personal Data Protection Act has generated interest not only among the youth of our country but also among people around the world. Countries around the world are studying it. They are making efforts to adapt their new systems accordingly. There are also guidelines on how data should be used. That is how its potential can be enhanced while managing protection in a way, which people call the gold mine, the new oil. I understand that Bharat has this potential because it is a country rich in diversity. The kind of information and data that is with us... Just consider the data of our railway passengers ... It can become a subject of great research for the world. We have recognized its power and given this legal system.

Hon'ble Mr Speaker Sir,

Discussions about these sectors, namely water, land, and sky, have been ongoing for centuries. But now, there is a need to confront the challenges posed by maritime power, space power, and cyber power, considering the crises the world is going through. As the world is trying to create thoughtful impacts, we also need to generate positive capabilities in these areas and empower ourselves to face challenges from negative forces. Therefore, reforms related to space were very necessary, and with a far-sighted vision, the work of space reform has been completed in our country.

Hon'ble Mr Speaker Sir,

The Hon'ble Members of the 17th Lok Sabha have played a significant role in the economic reforms that the country has undertaken. Over the past few years, thousands of compliances have needlessly entangled the public. It is a matter of great pride that the distorted governance systems that had developed have been freed, and a great deal of credit for this goes to this House as well. These kinds of compliances burden ordinary people. As I once said even from the Red Fort that when we talk about "minimum government, maximum governance," I truly believe that the sooner the government exits from people's lives, the more the democracy will be strengthened. Why does the government intervene at every turn in people's daily lives? Yes, the government will always be present for those in need, but a democracy cannot thrive if government interference becomes an obstacle in people's lives. Therefore, our goal should be to minimise government intervention in the lives of ordinary citizens as much as possible, thus presenting a prosperous democracy to the world. We will fulfil that dream.

Hon'ble Mr Speaker Sir,

We have repealed more than 60 unnecessary laws, including the Companies Act and the Limited Liability Partnership Act. This was a crucial requirement for improving the ease of doing business because if the country is to progress, it must overcome numerous obstacles. Many of our laws were such that people ended up in jail for trivial reasons. For example, if a factory's restroom was not whitewashed once every six months, it could lead to imprisonment, no matter how big the owner of such a large company. Now, we should have the confidence to get rid of those who call themselves left-liberals, their ideology, and the era of 'Kumar Shahi' in this country. So, the 17th Lok Sabha has done commendable work in increasing public trust. Let's talk about the Jan Vishwas Act. I understand that more than 180 provisions have been decriminalized under this act. I talked about how people were thrown into jail for trivial matters. By decriminalizing these, we have empowered citizens. This House has done it, Hon'ble members have done it. It's very important work to save lives from the courts' tangles, to free them from disputes outside the courts, and mediation laws in that direction have also been instrumental, and Hon'ble members have played a significant role in that too. Those who were always on the sidelines, no one bothered about them, they realized the importance of a government. Yes, they understood the importance of the government when free vaccinations were available during COVID. The government being there was important, and this is very necessary in the lives of ordinary people. The experience of helplessness should not arise now.

The transgender community used to feel discriminated against. And when they were repeatedly discriminated against, the possibility of distortions within them also increased...and we used to shy away from such topics. All Hon'ble members of the 17th Lok Sabha also expressed sympathy for transgender individuals and contributed to making their lives better. And today, Bharat's work for transgender individuals and the decisions made for them are being discussed worldwide. The world is surprised when we say there is maternity leave of 26 weeks during pregnancy for our mothers and sisters...even prosperous countries in the world are amazed. This means these progressive decisions have been made here, in this 17th Lok Sabha. We have given transgender individuals an identity. So far, identity cards have been issued to nearly 16-17 thousand transgender individuals so that their lives are improved. And I have seen that now they are starting small businesses with money from the Mudra scheme, they are earning. We have awarded Padma awards to transgender individuals, a recognition for living a dignified life. They will continue to benefit from various government schemes. The process has begun and they have started living a life of dignity.

Hon'ble Mr Speaker Sir,

It was a very difficult time, when the COVID pandemic put a lot of pressure on us for about one and a half to two years, but despite that the 17th Lok Sabha has been very beneficial for the country, and has done very good work. However, during this time, we have also lost many colleagues. Perhaps if they were among us today, they would have been present at this farewell ceremony. But due to COVID, we have had to lose many talented colleagues in between. The sorrow of that loss will always remain with us.

Hon'ble Mr Speaker Sir,

This is the last session and last hour of the 17th Lok Sabha. The journey of democracy and Bharat is endless. This country is for a purpose, it has a goal that is for the entire humanity. Whether it was seen by Aurobindo or by Swami Vivekananda ... Today we are witnessing the capability in those words, in that vision, right before our eyes. The world is accepting Bharat's greatness, acknowledging Bharat's capabilities, and we need to move forward with more strength in this journey.

Hon'ble Mr Speaker Sir,

The elections are not far away. Some people might feel a little nervous, but this is an inherent and essential aspect of democracy. We all accept it with pride. And I believe that our elections will continue to be a source of pride for the country, continuing our tradition of democracy, and will surely continue to amaze the entire world. This is my firm belief.

Hon'ble Mr Speaker Sir,

The support I have received from all Hon'ble members, the decisions we have been able to make, and sometimes the attacks have been so amusing that it has brought out the strength within us. And I believe it's by the grace of the Almighty that when challenges come, there's a sense of joy as well. We have faced every challenge with great self-confidence and belief. Today, the resolution passed by this House regarding the construction of the Ram Temple will give the future generations of this country, the constitutional power to take pride in the values of this nation. It's true that not everyone has the courage to engage in such endeavours; some people leave the field. But still, when we look at the records of the future, the speeches made today, the sentiments expressed, the resolutions put forward, there is empathy, determination, and compassion, and there is also an element to advance the mantra of 'Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas'.

This nation, no matter how many bad days it has seen, will continue to do something good for the future generations. This House will continue to inspire us, and with collective resolve and collective strength, we will strive for the best possible outcomes according to the aspirations of the young generation of Bharat.

With this belief, I express my gratitude to all Hon'ble members once again.

Thanks a lot!

DISCLAIMER: This is the approximate translation of PM's speech. Original speech was delivered in Hindi.

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