

ADDRESS TO PARLIAMENT—18 FEBRUARY 1963

Lok Sabha	—	Third Lok Sabha
Session	—	First Session of the Year
President of India	—	Dr. S. Radhakrishnan
Vice-President of India	—	Dr. Zakir Husain
Prime Minister of India	—	Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru
Speaker, Lok Sabha	—	Sardar Hukam Singh

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT,

I welcome you to your labours in a new session of the Third Parliament of our Republic.

Ever since the constitution of our Republic, our Parliament has had to face difficult problems and to shoulder heavy responsibilities. Under the guidance of Parliament, we have laboured for the fulfilment of the objectives laid down in our Constitution, namely to secure for all our citizens social, economic and political justice; liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith, and worship; equality of status and of opportunity; and to promote among them all, fraternity, assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the nation. We have directed all our energies towards the establishment of a structure of society wherein these objectives might be effectively realised. We have also, in accordance with our past traditions, laboured for world peace and endeavoured to cultivate friendly and co-operative relations with all countries, avoiding military alliances. We venture to think that we have been of some service in this respect to the international community.

Soon after the constitution of our Republic, we began our long pilgrimage to reach our objective of a democratic and socialist order and adopted planned approaches to this end. Two Five Year Plans succeeded one another, and now we are in the middle of the Third Five Year Plan. During this period, we have made substantial progress in many sectors of our economy, even though we have not always been satisfied with the progress made.

Agriculture, which is the most important sector of our economy, has undergone material developments and agricultural production has increased considerably. Industry, both large-scale and small-scale, as well as village industries, have shown marked progress, and gradually an industrial base

of our economy is being established. The nation's health has improved greatly, and the expectation of life, which used to be 32 in the forties, has reached 47 and is rising still. Striking results have been obtained in the programme for the eradication of malaria. Education, even though a great deal more has to be done to improve its quality and content, has spread rapidly. By the end of March 1962, there were over fifty million boys and girls in our schools and colleges. Stress has been specially laid on scientific and technical education and a large number of new technological institutions are functioning now.

Engrossed though we were in our internal development, we continued to take purposeful interest in international affairs, always laying stress on the vital importance of world peace. On some occasions, our participation made a difference and helped the cause of peace. We had hoped not only that world peace would be progressively assured, but that we also would continue to live at peace with our neighbours, and that any problems that arose would be settled by peaceful methods. We settled some of our important problems with Pakistan, but unfortunately other important ones still remain. We are anxious to settle these also peacefully so that India and Pakistan should, in accordance with our common history, culture and traditions, live as friendly and co-operative neighbours.

Some years ago China commenced its surreptitious aggression in Ladakh which later resulted in some incidents between the two countries. This matter has often been discussed in Parliament. We hoped that we would succeed in solving this question also through peaceful methods. On the 8th September last, however, a new aggression started across the border in the North East Frontier Agency and, after some probing attacks, China on the 20th October, mounted a massive attack on both the NEFA (North East Frontier Agency) and the Ladakh sectors of the India-China boundary. In the middle of November, a second massive attack followed and our forces received a set-back. Subsequently, the Chinese Government ordered unilaterally a cease-fire and a withdrawal.

These massive attacks and further aggression on our territory had a powerful effect on our people and resulted in a widespread and spontaneous display of unity all over the country. All the petty internal differences were hushed and stopped in the face of this peril to the nation's integrity and freedom. Parliament gave a lead to the nation in this matter in November last and our people, throughout the length and breadth of India, wholeheartedly followed this lead.

Any attack on the integrity of India would have been painful, but an attack coming from a country with whom we had tried to be friendly, and whose cause we had espoused in international councils, was a gross betrayal and came as a great shock to our people. Inevitably, the first duty of the nation in these circumstances was to meet this aggression effectively and to prepare the country to that end.

At present, no actual fighting is taking place. But the experience of the last few months has warned and steeled us and made us resolve to protect ourselves from this menace and to strengthen our defences and economic structure to the utmost. Our Government is devoting itself to this urgent and vital task.

Soon after the Chinese aggression, our Government appealed to the countries of the world asking for their sympathy and support. We are grateful to the large number of them who responded and extended their sympathy. A number of them have also given practical support and we are grateful to them. In particular, I should like to express our gratitude to the United States of America and the United Kingdom for the speed with which they gave their support to us in a moment of crisis.

The last session of Parliament discussed fully certain proposals which were put forward by the Governments of Ceylon* and five other non-aligned countries. These proposals did not deal with the merits of the basic dispute between India and China but suggested some method of creating an atmosphere which would enable these basic questions to be discussed. After full consideration and reference to Parliament, our Government conveyed their acceptance of these proposals, as clarified by the Colombo Powers, without any reservation. The Chinese Government has thus far not accepted them and we cannot say at present what developments may take place in the future. Our country, committed as it is to peaceful methods, will always endeavour to solve disputes peacefully, provided this is in consonance with our honour and freedom. But whatever may happen, we cannot and will not submit to dictation backed by military force.

The issue of the Chinese aggression has been, and is today, the overriding issue before us and everything else has to be considered in that context. The freedom and honour of a country must be given the first place and, if a country cannot defend them, then other matters lose significance. The nation's activities have thus been concentrated on this basic issue. A National Defence Council has been formed and a National Defence Fund started. This Fund has met with a generous response from our people. Many Citizens' Councils have been formed in the different States and a Central Citizens' Council, to co-ordinate the activities of the other Councils, has also been instituted.

Many steps have been taken in order to expand our armed forces and increase production in our ordnance factories and other defence establishments. The assistance of civil factories is also being taken to this end. I should like to express our Government's gratitude to the workers of all these factories. They have responded wonderfully to the cause of the nation. This is true of others working in fields and factories and in Government undertakings all over the country, and it has been a heartening experience for all of us to see this mighty response of a great people in the face of peril to the motherland.

* Now known as Sri Lanka.

Soon after the declaration of Emergency, the central organisations of labour and management unanimously adopted an industrial truce resolution aiming at the total elimination of industrial disputes, and increase of production and reduction of cost to the maximum extent possible. In pursuance of this, Emergency Production Committees have been set up at the Centre, in the States and in many industrial establishments.

In view of the great burdens cast on us by the Chinese aggression and the steps taken to meet it, the question arose as to how far our Third Five Year Plan could be carried through without considerable change. On full consideration of the matter, our Government came to the conclusion that a very great part of the Plan was essential for strengthening the nation and its implementation was, therefore, necessary even from the point of view of defence. Economic development and industrial growth are the very basis of our defence preparedness. To stop or slow down this process of economic development would result in weakening the country. It has therefore been decided to continue implementing the Third Five Year Plan with such minor modifications as may be necessitated by the circumstances, and by reorienting our industrial pattern so as to give priority to defence needs. Thus, in the field of agriculture, industry, transport, communications, power, technical education and research, we have to continue to do our utmost. A strong agricultural base is a prerequisite of national security. Industry is essential for defence, so also the growth of power and transport and technical education.

Intensive agricultural programmes have led to increases in per acre yields of rice from 15 to 21 per cent, of wheat from 8 to 15 per cent, and of barley from 11 to 25 per cent, as compared to the previous year. The upward trend in industrial output has continued and the increase in industrial production, in the first nine months of 1962, is estimated to be around seven and a half per cent. The production of iron and steel is steadily increasing and steps have been taken for the expansion of the steel plants in the public sector, and the setting up of an alloy steel plant at Durgapur. Further progress has been made in the development of our mineral and oil resources. Coal production has been steadily increasing and it is hoped that the target for production of 61 million tons will be achieved this year.

In December 1962, the Indian merchant fleet reached a tonnage of one million gross registered tons. The target for acquiring additional tonnage of five hundred and fifty thousand gross registered tons, to be attained by 1966, is well within sight three years ahead of the close of the plan. Two hundred thousand tons have already been acquired and firm orders have been placed for acquisition of more than two hundred thousand tons.

Economy in expenditure, the elimination of waste conservation of our limited material resources, and restraint on consumption, always important, are of particular importance today. The basic necessities of the people

should be fully secured and price line maintained. It is a tribute to the sense of discipline and solidarity of our people that, immediately after the declaration of Emergency, there was a spontaneous and general recognition of the need for preserving the stability of the economy. The general level of wholesale prices at present is no higher than it was at the beginning of Third Five Year Plan. In order to put an end to the strain on our foreign exchange resources through smuggling of gold into India; certain rules have been framed to bring gold under control.

Our atomic energy programme has shown rapid progress. A uranium mine is being opened in Bihar and a uranium mill is under construction. The first nuclear power station at Tarapore will be followed by a second such station near Rana Pratap Sagar in Rajasthan; a third one will be located at Kalpakkam on the east coast in Madras State. It appears, on further enquiry, that the cost of electric power from the Tarapore Station will be less than from a coal power station of the same size in the same locality. These power stations will also lighten the pressure on our railway and transport system.

The Community Development programme now almost covers the entire country, and Panchayati Raj is now functioning in nine States. In view of the Emergency, a special programme has been started for the full mobilisation of rural India to meet the challenge of national defence. Village Volunteer Forces will be organised in every Panchayat with a three-fold programme—production, mass education, and village defence. An integral part of the scheme is the creation of a Defence Labour Bank based on the donation of free labour at the minimum rate of one day's labour per month by every adult. The co-operative movement in the rural areas has made considerable progress and membership of primary agricultural credit societies, which is 20 million now, is expected to rise to 24 million in 1963 and to 28 million next year. More than a thousand co-operative farming societies have been organised so far.

I am glad to inform you that the Government of France has ratified the Treaty of Cession in respect of the former French establishments. This completes the *de jure* transfer of these establishments to India.

Our relations with Nepal continue to be friendly. Indian aid to Nepal, both in the field of economic help and technical assistance, has achieved satisfactory results. India has promised Nepal economic aid to the extent of eighteen crores of rupees during the Third Five-Year plan period, apart from the Kosi and Gandak projects, the benefits from which will accrue both to India and Nepal.

India has also given substantial aid to Bhutan and Sikkim for their economic development. India sponsored the membership of Bhutan to the Colombo Plan, and Bhutan participated in the Colombo Plan Consultative Committee at Melbourne in November 1962.

The Government of India has welcomed the independence of Algeria, Burundi, Jamaica, Rwanda, Trinidad, Tobago and Uganda, which have been admitted as members of the United Nations. We wish these newly independent countries every success. Nyasaland is also to have self-government soon.

In the Congo, our troops functioning under the United Nations, have helped greatly in solving some of the difficult problems that had arisen there. Our troops will remain there until the United Nations is able to release them without putting their peace-keeping operations into jeopardy.

In the course of the past year, we have had goodwill visits, which we have welcomed, from many Heads of States and Prime Ministers and others from many countries. Among them were, Their Majesties the King and Queen of Nepal, President Lopez Mateos of Mexico, Mr Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, President of the People's Republic of Rumania, President Makarios of Cyprus, Dr. Heinrich Lubke, President of the Federal Republic of Germany, His Royal Highness Prince Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia, Their Majesties the King and Queen of Greece, Prime Minister Mr Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore, Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman of Malaya, Mr Edward Kardelj, Vice-President of Yugoslavia, and Dr. Rachid Karame, Prime Minister of Lebanon.

While our efforts are directed to meeting our grave problems and mobilisation of our human and material resources, both for defence and economic development, we welcome the slight improvement in the international situation. Cuba afforded us an example of the world hovering over the very brink of nuclear war, which, however, was avoided by the restraint and goodwill of the Great Powers involved. There have been some indications of relaxation of tension and the possibility of agreements being reached in regard to the banning of nuclear weapons.

A statement of the estimated receipts and expenditure of the Government of India for the financial year 1963-64 will be laid before you.

Among the Bills that will be placed before you for your consideration, will be:

- (1) A Bill to provide for the representation for the Union territory of Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam in Parliament.
- (2) The Union Territories Bill.
- (3) The Slum Areas (Improvement and Clearance) Amendment Bill.
- (4) The Indian Emigration (Amendment) Bill.
- (5) The Industrial Disputes (Amendment) Bill.
- (6) The Factories (Amendment) Bill.
- (7) The Electricity (Supply) Amendment Bill.
- (8) The Delhi Development (Amendment) Bill.

Members of Parliament, we are meeting today at a grave moment in our history. Committed as we are to build a democratic socialist society in which progress is sought and attained by peaceful methods and by consent, we have to face the menace of foreign aggression. I earnestly trust that this Parliament which is ultimately responsible for our policies and for guiding the nation, will face these great tasks with courage and wisdom, and a spirit of tolerance and co-operative endeavour. May your labours bear fruit for the good of our country and people and the world. Awake, arise, understand the opportunities you have and stop not till the goal is reached—

Uttisthata jagrata prapya-varan nibodhata.