

## ADDRESS TO PARLIAMENT—23 FEBRUARY 1987

<b>Lok Sabha</b>	—	<b>Eighth Lok Sabha</b>
<b>Session</b>	—	<b>First Session of the Year</b>
<b>President of India</b>	—	<b>Giani Zail Singh</b>
<b>Vice-President of India</b>	—	<b>Shri R. Venkataraman</b>
<b>Prime Minister of India</b>	—	<b>Shri Rajiv Gandhi</b>
<b>Speaker, Lok Sabha</b>	—	<b>Dr. Bal Ram Jakhar</b>

HONOURABLE MEMBERS,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to this first session of Parliament in 1987. I extend to you my best wishes for the successful completion of the budgetary and legislative business ahead.

In 1986 many of the gains made from the thorough and comprehensive policy changes initiated in several key areas were consolidated. At the same time it was a year in which the country was called upon to grapple with challenges, external as well as internal, to its unity and integrity. Our secular, democratic structure is boldly facing the forces of communalism and separatism. Nothing will ever shake the people of India from their adherence to the basic principles of democracy, secularism and socialism which inform our Republic.

In Punjab the forces of democracy, unity, progress and secularism continue to be engaged in the struggle to isolate and wipe out the anti-national elements which are guided and controlled by foreign sources. Under the leadership of the Chief Minister, Shri S. S. Barnala, the State Government and the people of Punjab, have shown exemplary courage in upholding the values of secular democracy. The people of Punjab have always been in the forefront to defend the unity and integrity of India. They played a historic role in the freedom struggle which has left the imperishable imprint of secularism and democracy on their mind and spirit. It is, therefore, not surprising that they have stood up to the blatantly unconstitutional effort to subvert the democratic process through a sinister exploitation of religious sentiments. In flagrant violation of the sacred tenets and traditions of the great religion founded by Guru Nanak, a small section has turned religious functionaries and holy shrines into instruments of terror and subversion. Today this is the central issue in Punjab.

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Government will not allow the enemies of India's unity and integrity to abuse and misuse religion for their nefarious ends of creating communal disharmony and of unleashing violence and hatred in Punjab. All patriotic, secular, democratic and progressive forces have to unite to build the strength of the people to overcome the reactionary, fascist and anti-national elements who are misguiding and confusing the masses in the name of the religion. The challenge faces us all. No one can remain on the sidelines.

As the nation approaches the 40th anniversary of our freedom, it is fully conscious of the dangers posed by religious obscurantism and communalism. It was in April, 1948 that the Constituent Assembly (Legislative) passed a resolution calling upon Government to take steps to eliminate communalism from India's political life. The Father of the Nation had been assassinated barely two months earlier. Memories of the ghastly killings were still fresh in the minds of our Constitution makers. The threat to the unity of India from communalism loomed large before them. As we went ahead on our path of planned development, we began to assume that social and economic progress would automatically weaken the communal outlook. Experience has, however, shown that the communal and fundamentalist forces, aided and abetted by external elements, are challenging our basic values of nationalism, secularism, democracy and socialism. Indiraji's martyrdom was to defend the same sacred cause of the unity and integrity of India against the evil designs of communalists and reactionaries. These nefarious forces constitute a deeper malady which has persisted in spite of demonstrable progress in socio-economic spheres. The situation clearly calls for a reappraisal and Government propose a national dialogue for this purpose. Our precious heritage of unity in diversity can be preserved only by fighting all divisive forces.

There can be no better way of celebrating the 40th anniversary of freedom and the birth centenary of the architect of modern India, Jawaharlal Nehru, than concerted and resolute action to remove the cancerous cells of communalism from our body politic. The National Committee for these celebrations headed by the Vice-President of India, will devise a comprehensive programme to inculcate secular values and scientific temper.

While the Government were engaged in controlling extremist activities in Punjab, a new danger appeared on our borders. In January, 1987, Pakistan deployed strike formations in a menacing posture threatening Punjab and Jammu & Kashmir. As Members are aware, our borders are largely manned by para-military forces. Faced with this situation, the Government had to deploy our armed forces for safeguarding the borders. Serious tension was generated by the forward movement of Pakistani forces. The Prime Minister took the initiative for immediate talks between the two Governments. An agreement on measures to de-escalate the situation was reached during

negotiations between the two Governments held in Delhi recently and Pakistan agreed to withdraw their Army Reserve North from the Ravi-Chenab corridor. Further talks will be held in Islamabad. India's policy is based on peace and cooperation with all nations. Government have taken various measures to strengthen cooperation with our neighbours. While determined to preserve our sovereignty and integrity, India is prepared to remove all causes of tension and distrust between the two countries in the spirit of bilateral cooperation embodied in the Shimla Agreement.

The Mizoram Accord, signed in 1986, brought to an end decades of insurgency and strife in that beautiful part of our country. Pursuant to this Accord, Statehood has been conferred on Mizoram and elections have been held. A new Government has taken office.

The aspirations of the people of Arunachal Pradesh for a full-fledged State have been fulfilled by the enactment of Parliamentary legislation to confer the Statehood on Arunachal Pradesh. The new state came into existence on February 20, 1987. A new chapter in the history of the people of Arunachal Pradesh has begun.

Government are committed to safeguarding the rights and interests of minorities. The solemn assurances contained in our Constitution regarding religious, cultural and linguistic matters have been and are being implemented in letter and spirit. Government have continued to carefully monitor the implementation of the 15-point programme formulated by Shrimati Indira Gandhi to ameliorate the condition of minorities.

In my address on February 20, 1986 I had outlined the priority areas for 1986-87 and beyond. The main policy thrusts were:—

- (i) Formulation of the revised 20-point programme;
- (ii) Formulation of the new education policy;
- (iii) Formulation of technology missions to improve the condition of the rural and urban poor;
- (iv) A new orientation to our agricultural policy and taking the green revolution to the eastern region;
- (v) A more effective strategy for family planning;
- (vi) Intensification of industrial growth;
- (vii) Promotion of exports and tourism;
- (viii) Reforms in the administrative system; and
- (ix) Changes in electoral laws.

My Government have taken action in all these areas and positive results are beginning to flow.

The 20-point programme of 1986 has sharpened the focus on measures to eradicate poverty. The main features of the restructured programme are:—

- (i) Poverty alleviation programmes which aim at expansion of rural employment and improvement of productivity and production;
- (ii) Programmes for ensuring justice to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes;
- (iii) Reduction of income inequalities and removal of social and economic disparities;
- (iv) Strengthening of the movement to ensure equal status for women;
- (v) Creation of new opportunities for youth;
- (vi) Provision of safe drinking water for all villages;
- (vii) Protection of environment;
- (viii) Supply of energy for the villages; and
- (ix) Evolving a more responsive administration.

The new education policy has been formulated. It is an effective instrument in our fight against poverty. Its major aim is to reach out to the poor and the deprived and to place in their hands the means to gain control over their own destiny. Programmes such as the Operation Blackboard, non-formal education, adult education, vocational education and Navodaya Vidyalayas will bring about qualitative changes in education. They will directly help socially and economically backward sections of the community. The new policy will also strengthen national integration. We have emphasized the importance of spreading an awareness and involvement of all our people in the heritage of India. The newly established zonal cultural centres have begun undertaking this task with enthusiasm and have organised innovative Festivals of our culture in Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Meghalaya, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram and *Apna Utsav* in the capital.

Five technology missions have been set up in the following areas:—

- (i) Drinking water for all villages;
- (ii) Eradication of illiteracy;
- (iii) Universal immunisation of children;
- (iv) Production of oilseeds and manufacture of edible oils;
- (v) Improved communications.

Government are considering issues relating to an effective management and monitoring system for the missions. The key idea here is to involve the people in activities relating to the missions so that they realise the potential for individual and social development.

The reorientation of agricultural policy has proceeded satisfactorily. Growth of productivity in the eastern region has vindicated Government strategy. To increase and stabilise production and productivity in the major part of our land resources, a national programme of rain-fed agriculture through watershed development has been launched during the current year in 16 major rain-fed/dryland farming States. A National Pulses Development Project, with an outlay of Rs. 50 crores, has been started in 1986-87 to increase production of this essential protein crop.

We have formulated a new family planning strategy with major emphasis on voluntary acceptance of the two child norm. The programme will be integrated with health care, nutrition and education programmes. Government have decided that the leading role in promotion of the family welfare programme should be played by voluntary agencies.

In the sphere of industry, the dynamic thrust for efficiency and modernisation has begun to show results. Industrial production has picked up significantly.

Intensive efforts have been made on the basis of a coordinated approach to promote exports of both primary commodities and manufactured products. In our strategy manufacturing has been assigned the role of growth sector. A concessional rate of duty has been allowed on imports of modern capital goods for export production. Contemporary technology is being permitted for the thrust sectors. Significant fiscal and financial measures such as the new cash compensatory scheme, the duty drawback system, availability of MODVAT in respect of 38 specified chapters, deduction in respect of profits for exports, sharp reduction in the rates of interest on pre-shipment and post-shipment credit for exports and the new computer software policy are intended to boost exports.

The process of reform in our administrative system has gathered momentum. There has been a positive response of the civil servants to the new imperatives of accountability, social responsibility and a new work ethic. Government are determined to carry forward the task of bringing about qualitative improvements in Government management with the cooperation of all sections of the work force.

The basic structure of our electoral system has stood the test of time. It has ensured free and fair elections to Parliament and State Legislatures and has been recognised and acclaimed as such by the whole world. Based on the report of the Chief Election Commissioner of 1986, Government have formulated certain suggestions, which are to be discussed with the various political parties and also thrown open to public debate. Necessary legislation will be initiated, as in the past, on the basis of consensus evolving from such discussions.

1986 will be remembered for significant legislation affecting important areas of national life. Stringent and comprehensive environment protection legislation has been enacted. It was brought into force on November 19, 1986 as a fitting tribute to the memory of Shrimati Indira Gandhi who did more than anyone else to raise environmental consciousness.

- The rights of the consumers are now part of the statute book.
- Radical laws have been passed to improve the status of women.
- The Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls Act, 1956 was amended to protect all persons sexually exploited for commercial purposes. Stricter punishment has been prescribed for living on the earnings of prostitution of children and minors.
- The Dowry Prohibition Act was amended, shifting the burden of proving that there was no demand for dowry on the person who takes or abets the taking of dowry. Offences under the Act have been made non-bailable.
- Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act has been passed under which depiction of figure of a woman, her form or body, which has the effect of being indecent, derogatory or which denigrates women has been made punishable.

A significant feature of these laws is that legal remedy can be invoked by citizens. In implementing these far-reaching laws, the cooperation of public, spirited and socially conscious citizens is of vital importance.

Let me now turn to the major trends in the economy.

Notwithstanding an indifferent monsoon the growth in gross national product in 1986-87 will be around 5 per cent. Thus the targeted growth rate of the Seventh Plan will be achieved for the second year in succession.

The foodgrain output will be somewhat higher than last year in spite of inadequate rains for the third year in succession. Government are concerned over the fact that even though agricultural production has reached higher levels, it is showing signs of levelling off. It is partly the result of three consecutive years of poor precipitation. The basic strategy for increasing agricultural production is sound. Vigorous implementation of projects and programmes for increasing irrigation potential and popularising the use of high-yielding varieties of seeds is expected to achieve the targeted growth rates of the Seventh Plan. Government have taken major policy initiatives to increase the domestic production of oilseeds.

The industrial infrastructure has performed remarkably well both in 1985-86 and 1986-87. The average annual growth rates for the last two years are likely to be 9.5 per cent in power, 6 per cent in coal, 7.7 per cent in saleable steel, 6.8 per cent in hot metal, 8 per cent in railway freight

and 16.5 per cent in fertilizers. The significant aspect of the infrastructural scene is that annual performance has continuously improved, extending over every quarter. In many cases, the lowest production in a quarter has been higher than the highest production recorded in any quarter of the preceding year. The infrastructure has begun to use investments in an efficient manner.

The revised index of industrial production (base 1980-81=100), with wider and more representative coverage than the old index, provides evidence of satisfactory industrial growth. In 1985-86 industrial production grew at the rate of 8.7 per cent. In 1986-87 growth rate is expected to be 7-8 per cent. There has been impressive growth in electronics during the previous two years at the rate of around 40 per cent per annum. The public sector has continued to play the key role in our economic development. At the end of 1985-86, the total investment in Central public enterprises stood at Rs. 50,341 crores, registering an increase of Rs. 14,947 crores compared with 1984-85. The financial performance of Central public enterprises has shown an encouraging trend. Measures have been taken to strengthen the autonomy of public enterprises and to make them accountable for results.

Public stocks of foodgrains have continued at high levels and stood at 23 million tonnes in December, 1986. This has enabled Government to make additional allocations of rice and wheat to States for public distribution, to provide rice and wheat at concessional rates to integrated tribal development projects and nutrition programmes and to make higher allocations for the National Rural Employment Programme and the Rural Labour Employment Guarantee Programme. Comfortable stocks of foodgrains also enabled Government to give adequate quantities to drought-stricken States for the food-for-work programme.

There has been a major reorientation of policy to stimulate sugarcane and sugar production. The new two-year sugar policy aims at providing sugarcane farmers with more remunerative prices. It has also created a stable environment by announcement of the statutory minimum price a year in advance. As a result of this policy, sugar production increased by almost one million tonnes in 1985-86, and is expected to increase further in 1986-87. This has enabled Government to reduce sugar imports.

The technology mission for boosting oilseeds production has started functioning. A programme with an outlay of Rs. 170 crores during 1986-90 has been launched to increase production of oilseeds to 18 million tonnes in 1989-90. In *Kharif* 1986, productivity of oilseeds is estimated to have gone up by 10 per cent and production by 7 per cent over *Kharif* 1985, despite adverse weather conditions which reduced average by 3 per cent. Edible oil imports were reduced to provide an incentive to domestic production. In 1985-86 imports were reduced by 55 per cent in value terms

and over 15 per cent in quantity terms. Fiscal incentives have been provided to ensure processing of greater quantities of minor oilseeds and rice bran into edible oils.

In 1986-87, anti-poverty programmes received stronger emphasis. The Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) and the Employment Programmes are the kingpin of the antipoverty strategy. In 1986-87, an outlay of Rs. 543.83 crores was provided for the Integrated Rural Development Programme. This may be compared with Rs. 207.7 crores provided in 1984-85 and Rs. 205.9 crores in 1985-86. Upto the end of December 1986, 2.07 million families have been assisted. New features have been introduced in the implementation of the programme. They are higher level of investment per family, provision for forward and backward linkages, emphasis on training of beneficiaries, involvement of voluntary organisations, introduction of concurrent evaluation and increasing the assistance to women. Under all these programmes the basic thrust is to provide maximum assistance to the poorest of the poor and to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

The National Rural Employment Programme and the Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme were strengthened in 1986-87. Employment aggregating to 550 million mandays is expected to be created. There has been a noteworthy step up in outlays on NREP. In 1986-87 a total outlay of Rs. 479.75 crores was provided by the Centre compared with Rs. 230 crores for 1984-85 and Rs. 337.21 crores for 1985-86. Under RLEGP, which is wholly funded by the Centre, an outlay of Rs. 731.10 crores was provided for 1986-87 which may be compared with Rs. 400 crores for 1984-85 and Rs. 606.33 crores for 1985-86.

The 20-point programme of 1986 emphasises the provision of safe drinking water for all villages. In 1986-87, a total amount of Rs. 794.05 crores was allocated for the drinking water programme in Central and State plans taken together. 40,000 villages are expected to be covered exceeding the target of 35,930 villages. Special attention is being paid to provision of water supply for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

In 1986-87, the outlay for the annual plan was stepped up substantially. For the first time in our planning history, 40 per cent of the Five Year Plan was financed in real terms in the first two years of the plan period. In allocation of resources, high priority was accorded to anti-poverty programmes and to strengthening the core sectors of the economy. A massive increase of 65 per cent was made in the outlay for major anti-poverty programmes. The outlays for agriculture, rural development and irrigation were stepped up by nearly 30 per cent. The plan provision for education was increased by 60 per cent. The Central Plan for 1986-87 envisaged an outlay of Rs. 22,300 crores, representing an increase of 20.5 per cent over

the last year's outlay. The actual outlay of the plan is likely to be higher at around Rs. 23,000 crores. Nothing could illustrate better the strong commitment of Government to the pivotal role of planning in India's development.

Government have taken steps to implement the basic proposals outlined in the long term fiscal policy. The tax structure is being reformed and simplified, strong emphasis has been laid on mobilising resources for development by better administration and enforcement to improve compliance; a stable fiscal environment is being created to stimulate savings and investment, and a more open approach has been adopted in regard to fiscal policy.

Central Government revenues which increased by 23 per cent in 1985-86 have shown a further increase of over 17 per cent in April-December, 1986. Personal income-tax collection recorded an impressive growth of 30 per cent in 1985-86; they have grown by another 16 per cent in April-December, 1986. The continued buoyancy of Central revenues has vindicated Government's fundamental approach of reasonable tax rates combined with strict enforcement of tax laws.

A Cabinet Committee on Exports was set up to expedite decision making on policies and programmes for promotion of exports. Exports grew by 17.3 per cent in April-November, 1986 over the corresponding period of last year. Imports increased by only 1.4 per cent over the same period. As a result the trade deficit has shown a substantial decline. We cannot, however, afford to be complacent. The challenge of self-reliance and of building a fully independent economy demands unremitting effort.

In the current year we crossed the one million mark in foreign tourist arrivals. Foreign exchange earnings from tourism are estimated at Rs. 1,600 crores as compared to Rs. 1,300 crores during 1985-86.

Domestic tourism is being given special importance to promote national integration. Central Government is providing assistance for wayside facilities, wildlife sanctuaries, sound and light shows, and cheaper tourist accommodation.

While impressive results have been achieved in the matter of resource mobilisation, a similar effort has to be directed to controlling expenditure. The imperatives of growth with social justice compel serious attention to the task of containing unproductive expenditure.

The consumer price index gives cause for concern. However, inflation, as measured by the wholesale price index has been kept within reasonable limits. Government will continue to pursue policies to counteract inflationary trends in our economy.

During the last two years, a positive trend of improvement was seen in industrial relations. Strikes and lockouts declined from 2094 in 1984 to 1716 in 1985 and 1234 in 1986 (January to October). The loss of mandays due to industrial disputes fell from 56.03 million mandays in 1984 to 29.37 million mandays in 1985 and 19.41 million mandays during 1986 (January to October). Government have taken a number of steps to ensure that unorganised workers receive entitled benefits.

Industrial workers have made a notable contribution to raising production and productivity in the last two years. Government are committed to safeguarding their interest and to enlist their cooperation for accelerated industrial growth.

Government have continued to pursue our non-aligned foreign policy objectives of peace, disarmament, development and cooperation with all nations for building an equitable world order.

The Six Nation Five Continent initiative in which Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, Sweden and Tanzania are taking part, has produced a favourable impact on public opinion throughout the world for intensive and sustained effort to bring about nuclear disarmament. At Reykjavik radical proposals of ending the nuclear arms were placed on the table. It is unfortunate that no agreement was reached. We have continued to urge both the USA and USSR to persevere in their efforts to fulfil the aspirations of humankind for peace and for a world free from nuclear weapons.

At the Non-aligned Summit at Harare, India handed over the chairmanship of the movement to Zimbabwe. The Summit acclaimed the role of our country has played in strengthening non-alignment and in reaffirming the basic objectives of the Movement. The Summit entrusted to our Prime Minister the chairmanship of the newly established AFRICA Fund Committee to carry forward the struggle against apartheid and to support the efforts of the Frontline States. The AFRICA Fund Summit held in Delhi on January 24-25, 1987 has given concrete shape to the concept articulated at Harare. Government are convinced that comprehensive mandatory sanctions alone will compel the racist regime in South Africa to forestall bloodshed and listen to the voice of reason. Governments that are in a position to influence South Africa, because of their commercial and economic relations, have to mount pressure through comprehensive mandatory sanctions.

India's policy of expanding cooperation in our region has achieved significant results. The successful SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) Summit held in Bangalore\* in November, 1986 under India's chairmanship has demonstrated the benefits of regional cooperation. A permanent Secretariat of SAARC has since been established in Kathmandu.

\* Now known as Bengaluru.

New areas including control of drug trafficking children's welfare, broadcasting, tourism and scholarships have been identified for the programme of SAARC cooperation. Our Prime Minister took the opportunity of SAARC meeting to hold useful bilateral discussions.

Despite the set-back caused by the deployment by Pakistan of its troops on our borders, efforts are continuing to create a basis for cooperation with Pakistan. The main hurdles in the way of normalisation are Pakistan's clandestine effort to acquire nuclear weapons capability, its arms programme with serious implications for our security environment and its support to anti-national and secessionist elements in Punjab.

It is unfortunate that the promise held out by our bilateral discussions with Sri Lanka at Bangalore\* and of subsequent high level consultations in December, 1986 has received a set-back. The negotiating process has been hindered by the hesitations of the Government of Sri Lanka in regard to their own formula of December 19, 1986. The massive military operations undertaken by the Sri Lanka security forces and the economic blockade of Jaffna area have created further complications. We are deeply affected by the hardship, suffering and loss of life of the Tamil civilian population of Sri Lanka. The ethnic issue in Sri Lanka can only be resolved through political dialogue.

My Government continues to strive for a just and peaceful settlement of the border question with China. The question remains crucial to full normalisation of our relations. The unfortunate development on the border continues to cause concern. Our position on the border question is well known. We are in discussion with China on the issue.

We uphold the unalienable rights of the Palestinian people. We support the liberation struggle of the peoples of Southern Africa. We have repeatedly urged an early end to the fratricidal war between Iraq and Iran. We continue to support the efforts of the Contradora group to achieve a peaceful and lasting settlement of the crisis in Central America. We have also supported the UN Secretary General's initiative on Afghanistan. We welcome the flexible responses to the outstanding issues in regard to Afghanistan and trust that conditions will be created soon to ensure the status of Afghanistan as an independent, non-aligned country free from outside interference and intervention.

During the last year I paid goodwill visits to Nepal, Greece, Poland and Yugoslavia. The Vice-President visited France and Botswana. The Prime Minister paid bilateral visits to the Maldives, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Angola, Tanzania, Mauritius, Mexico, Indonesia, Australia, New Zealand and Thailand. The Prime Minister also participated in the Commonwealth Heads of Government Review Meeting in London, the Summit Meeting of the Six

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\* Now known as Bengaluru.

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Nation Five Continent Peace Initiative at Ixtapa and the Eighth Non-aligned Summit in Harare, besides visiting Sweden to attend the funeral of the late Prime Minister OloF Palme.

We had the privilege to host the Prime Minister of Greece, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea, the Prime Minister of Turkey, the President of Seychelles, the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, the President of the African National Congress, the President of SWAPO, the President of Bangladesh, the Prime Minister of Yugoslavia, the President of Nicaragua, the Prime Minister of Zambia, the King of Jordan, the Prime Minister of Denmark, the President of Peru, the Prime Minister of Malaysia and the President of Finland. The then Prime Minister and the current President of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and the Prime Minister of Italy made transit visits to India. President Zia-ul-Haq of Pakistan paid an unofficial visit.

These bilateral visits have strengthened our friendly relations with these countries. A large number of agreements have been signed to further bilateral cooperation in economic, commercial, scientific and cultural fields.

In the context of the close and friendly relations that have characterised the four decade history of Indo-Soviet cooperation, the visit of Mr Gorbachev, the General Secretary of CPSU, was a landmark. The Delhi Declaration signed by Mr Gorbachev and our Prime Minister has provided a qualitatively new framework for international relations based on non-violence, justice and equality. It will have worldwide significance in establishing new attitudes and values relevant to the crucial problems of humanity.

The thrust of Government policy is to improve the welfare of economically and socially weaker sections of the community. The primary focus of policies and programmes initiated during the last two years has been to assist the landless agricultural labour, the small and marginal farmers, artisans and craftsmen, handloom weavers, women, children, the urban poor, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and other backward classes. Our strategy of development will continue to strongly emphasize social justice as its foremost objective.

In spite of the many difficult problems we are facing, the people have high confidence in their capacity to build a strong and prosperous India. This confidence comes from our impressive achievements. India stands as a symbol of stability and progress. Our commitment to basic values and our determination to preserve our cultural heritage have enabled us to march forward with our head held high. We still have much to do. With the cooperation and unbounded enthusiasm of our people, my Government will take the country forward on its chosen path.

Our tasks are anchored to basic national priorities. National cohesion will be strengthened. Communalism will be fought tooth and nail. The anti-poverty programme will be implemented with vigour. The core sectors of our economy will be strengthened and expanded to ensure self-reliant growth. The energy and vitality of our youth will be harnessed to nation building. The spirit of sacrifice which permeated the struggle for freedom must be recaptured to face the challenges that confront us. A passion for nation building must fill our hearts. For the accomplishment of these momentous tasks, I give you my good wishes.

Jai Hind.