

Prime Minister Narendra Modi : Reply on Motion of Thanks to the President's Address (07-02-2018)

Hon'ble Speaker Madam,

To express my gratitude to the honourable President on his address, I would like to say a few things while supporting the proposal in the House. Several Members of the Lok Sabha had expressed their views on the Motion of Thanks to President's address in the House yesterday. About 34 hon'ble members like Mr. Mallikarjun ji, Mr. Mohammed Salim ji, Mr. Vinod Kumar ji, Mr. Narasimham Thota Ji, Mr. Tariq Anwar ji, Mr. Prem Singh ji, Mr. Anwar ji, Jai Prakash Narayan Yadav, Kalyan Banerjee, Mr. P. Venu Gopal, Anand Rao Adsul ji, R. K. Bharti Mohan ji had expressed their views. There was a detailed discussion. Some members were in favour while others opposed it. But that was a meaningful discussion and President's speech is never aligned to any party. His speech is an expression of hope and aspirations of the country and the steps taken in that direction. And in that perspective, the President's speech should be respected. Is it fair to oppose it just for the sake of opposing it?

Speaker Madam,

Some of the states of our country were created also by the respected Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ji. Three new states were created. Uttarakhand was carved out of Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh from Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand from Bihar. But the Government had such a vision that the division of the states, transfer of the officers and the entire process was smoothly done. Right decisions can be taken if the leadership is far-sighted and hurried decisions are not taken in view of political interests. One of the greatest examples the country has seen is the creation of the three states by Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji. You had divided the country and sowed the seeds of poison. Today, after 70 years of independence, 125 crore Indians are still facing the consequences of your sin. You had fragmented the country in that way. Keeping in view the forthcoming elections, you hurriedly took steps to create Telangana at a time when the doors of Parliament were shut and the House was not in order. You did not take into consideration the feelings of the people of Andhra Pradesh. Even we were in favour of making Telangana and today even we want Telangana to progress. But the seeds you sowed that day for Andhra and the hurry in which it was created in view of the elections are still causing problems after four years. Therefore, such actions are not expected from you.

Speaker Madam,

Yesterday I was listening to the speech of Congress leader Mr. Kharge ji. I was not able to understand that whether he was addressing the Treasury Benches or the people of Karnataka or was he trying to please the policy makers of his own party. Khargeji narrated the poem of Bashir Badr. And I hope that the poetry that he has narrated, the Karnataka Chief Minister must have heard it. He said that - '*Dushmani jam kar karo. 'Lekin yeh gunjaish rahein, jab kabhi hum dost ho jay, toh sharminda na ho*' - vaguely meaning- that even in a rivalry, there should be a scope to become friends again.

I believe that the Chief Minister of Karnataka must have heard this but it would have been nice if Mr. Kharge ji had also mentioned the other lines of the poem of Bashir Badr. In that case, perhaps this country would know exactly where you stand. In the same poetry, Bashir Badr said further –

'Jee chahta hain sach bole. Jee bahot chahata hain sach bole. Kya karein, hosla nahi hota' - thus, he is not able to gather guts to say the truth.

I do not know if after Karnataka elections, Kharge Ji will be in the same place or not. And thus, it could be his farewell speech as well. And so in general, when a member speaks for the first time in the House, everyone looks up to the speech with respect and in the same manner the farewell speech is also seen with respect. It would have been better if yesterday some of the honourable members restrained themselves and heard the speech of respected Kharge ji with the same respect. It is very necessary for democracy. There is a right to protest, but nobody has any right to disrespect the House.

Madam Speaker,

yesterday, I observed the fact that whenever some people from the opposition went on to criticize some of our policies, while they did not have enough facts or grounds for that but at the same time, started with the same old record about their own achievements. But do not forget that India has been liberated and several other countries were liberated after us but those countries have moved far ahead of us. We have to accept the fact that we could not progress at that pace and even after you partitioned Mother India, the country was with you. You were ruling the country that time. In the initial three-four decades the opposition was just for namesake. It was a time when the media's expansion was limited and the existing media was always in favour of the government with the hope that it would benefit the country. Radio used to sing in to your tune only. And later on, when television came, that too was entirely devoted to you. At that time, top positions of the judiciary were also appointed by the Congress Party. You had all the luxury. At that time there was no PIL in the court nor were there enough NGOs. At that time, there was this perfect environment available to you in which you grew up. There were

no protests. Your flags were waving from the Panchayat to Parliament. But you spent the whole time in singing the praise for one family. All the energy was focused on ensuring that the country remembers just one family, ignoring the history of the country. There was altogether a different zeal in the countrymen just after independence. This zeal was to carry the country forward. If you had worked with some responsibility, then the strength of the people of this country would have carried the country to great heights. But you were busy with your personal agenda. And you cannot deny the fact that if you had taken right direction, if your intentions were honest, if you made responsible initiatives and policies, the country would have been way ahead of its time. You cannot deny it. It is unfortunate that the Congress party leaders think that the country called India was born on August 15, 1947; as if the country never existed before that. And yesterday I was astonished to hear something! Should I call it ego or foolishness or an attempt to save his chair during the rainy season? I heard them saying that Nehru brought democracy in the country; Congress brought democracy in the country. Oh Kharge Saheb, this is really embarrassing. I would like to ask you that as you are talking of democracy you must be aware of the fact that democracy existed even when our country was ruled by the Lichchawi Empire, when there was Buddhism. The Congress party and Nehru ji did not bring democracy.

The Buddhist Sangha was a system that used to make judgments on the basis of debates, discussion, and voting, and Mr. Kharge, you belong to Karnataka. You may get the seat here after Karnataka's elections by dint of your devotion to one family but at least do not insult Jagat Guru Basaveshwara ji. You should know, since you belong to Karnataka, that Jagat Guru Basaveshwara, who in that era had established a system of Anubhava Mandapam in the 12th century, and took all the decisions in the village democratically. Moreover, steps were taken for women empowerment. Presence of women in that Sabha was mandatory. It was in the 12th century in the era of Jagat Guru Basaveshwara ji that this country could savour democracy. Democracy is in our veins and in our tradition. And the history of Bihar is witness to this. If we look at the ancient history of Lichchavi Empire, there was a system of the Republic in our country 2500 years ago. This was the system of democracy. We had given recognition to the people's consent and disagreement.

You talk of democracy? During elections a minister from your party in the government of Mr. Manmohan Singh had said something before the media. He had said that Shahjahan replaced Jahangir and Aurangzeb replaced Shahjahan as the ruler. Was any election conducted in that period? It was a similar case here as well. You talk of democracy? I would like to ask, what kind of democracy are you talking about? When former Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi had insulted a Scheduled Caste Chief Minister of your party who had come to receive him at the Hyderabad airport! You people talk of faith in democracy in the name of Nehru ji on one hand and Mr Rajiv Gandhi had humiliated the Dalit Chief Minister T. Anjaiah, an elected public representative, at the Hyderabad airport. This insult of a Dalit Chief Minister prompted legendary actor NT Rama Rao to leave films and launch Telugu Desam Party (TDP).

You are teaching us democracy? In this country, 90 times, more than 90 times Section 356 has been misused. You have given state governments formed by the emerging parties in those states a blow. What did you do to the Akali Dal in Punjab? What did you do in Tamil Nadu? What did you do in Kerala? You did not allow this country's democracy to flourish. You consider democracy of your family as the real democracy. And you are misguiding the country. What is the democracy followed by Congress party? The democracy is suppressed every time the voice of soul arises. You know that Congress Party had chosen Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy as the Presidential candidate. And overnight, he was stabbed in the back. The candidate was defeated. And observe, he too belonged to Andhra. You had insulted both Sanjeeva Reddy and T. Anjaiah. How do you talk of democracy? Not only that, Dr. Manmohan Singh, the former Prime Minister of this country, had taken a decision along with the Cabinet and one of your party's office-bearers tore that Ordinance passed by the Manmohan Singh Cabinet. The word Democracy from you does not look nice. So please do not teach us the lessons of democracy.

I want to remind you all of another incident today. Isn't true that there were elections in the Congress Party for choosing its leader? Twelve Congress Committees out of 15 had chosen Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel. Three had opted for NOTA i.e. they had decided not to vote for anyone. Nevertheless, the leadership was not given to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. What kind of democracy was that? Pandit Nehru was chosen instead. Had Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel been the first Prime Minister, a part of Kashmir would not have been under control of Pakistan today.

The Congress President was elected recently in the month of December. Was it an election or coronation? A youth from your party had raised the voice as he wanted to apply for his candidature. You did not allow him and you talk of democracy. I know very well that all the efforts to suppress this voice will go in vain. One should have the courage to face criticism. Therefore Speaker Madam, different work culture is the specialty of our government. We do not believe in just announcing new schemes and grabbing the headlines of the newspaper and cheating the public in this way. This is not our work culture. We declare only those things that are possible to achieve. We try to complete all the suspended good initiatives of previous governments because in a democracy governments come and go but the country lives on forever. We believe in that philosophy. Isn't it true that these are the same files and the same officials? What is the reason that the previous government could complete only 11 km of national highway per day while today 22 km of national highway is being constructed every day? Roads were constructed by every government. The previous government could construct only 80 thousand kilometres of roads in the last three years of their tenure and we have constructed 1 Lakh 20 thousand kilometres of roads in three years. In the last 3 years of their tenure the previous government has constructed 1100 kilometres of new rail lines; while our government has laid 2100 km of rail lines in 3 years. The previous government in its last 3 years had electrified 2500 kilometres of rail lines, but this government in 3 years has electrified more than 4300 km of the rail lines. Optical Fibre network - now you will say that this plan was conceptualized by us and we should get the credit for this. What was the way of working that you had adopted? You believed in partisan

politics. Between 2011 and 2014 you could spread the optical fibre network in only 59 panchayats. After getting elected we have provided it to more than 1 Lakh Panchayats in such a short span of time. On one hand, we have less than 60 villages in 3 years and on the other hand more than 1 Lakh villages in the same span of 3 years. These figures are far from comparison. The previous government has implemented the Shahari Awas Yojana in 939 cities while today the Pradhanmantri Awas Yojana (urban) is being implemented in 4320 cities. Your figures are less than a thousand while ours are more than 4000. The previous government in their last 3 years had added only 12000MW new capacity of renewable energy while more than 22000 MW has been added by this government in 3 years. Shipping industry, cargo handling was showing a negative growth while under this government this sector has shown more than 11% growth in 3 years. You would not have been in such a mess, had you cared for the reality. I am happy that Kharge ji has mentioned these two things - Railways and Karnataka. You mentioned about Bidar Gulbarga Railway line. The country should know the truth. The Congress never mentioned this - not even during the inauguration ceremony. You should accept the fact that this 110 kilometre rail line project was approved by the Atal Bihari Bajpayee ji's government. Your government was in power till the year 2013 and you were the Railways Minister as well. It is your parliamentary constituency. After Atal ji's government, several years had passed and only 37 kilometres were constructed, only 37km! Moreover, this little work was done under the initiative of Chief Minister Yeddyurappa. He approved of the things demanded by the Central government. Then only your government moved ahead with Atal ji's dream. Moreover that was the time of elections. You felt that starting this railway line would be beneficial for your elections. Instead of 110km, you were happy with only 30.5km railway line. We took the initiative and completed the rest of the 72km of railway lines in this short period of time. We never thought of ignoring this project as it was in the opposition party's Parliamentary constituency. It was your constituency; but the work was for the country. We completed the work for the welfare of the country. You were pained with the fact that I inaugurated this line. The medicine for the pain, I believe, has been given to you by the people of this country long ago.

Speaker madam,

They were also discussing about the refinery in Barmer. They thought that by laying the foundation stone just before elections will help them succeed. You laid the foundation stone in the Barmer Refinery but when we came and looked at the papers we realised that the foundation stone of the refinery was laid but everything was on papers and nothing on ground. There was no approval or land or any final agreement with the central government. The Central Government and the government of Rajasthan had to face a lot of trouble in correcting your mistakes and giving a proper shape to the plan. We have now started that work after rectifying everything.

When I inaugurated the Dhola Sadiya Bridge in Assam, it didn't go down well with some people. They started saying that it was their initiative. They didn't have the honesty to mention the fact that this project too was conceptualized and approved by the Bajpayee Government. A BJP leader had demanded it after an extensive study. After 2014 when we came to power we prioritized the development of North Eastern India and the work was expedited. Consequently, the bridge became a reality. I am proud to announce that this government has taken the initiative to build the longest tunnel, the longest gas pipeline, the longest bridge over the sea and the fastest train. Only this government is capable of taking such decisions and much work is being accomplished well within the time limits. Therefore, this period has seen the record launch of 104 satellites together into space.

We cannot deny the facts delivered by the President in his speech. I would like to describe what democracy is and how everyone in the government is respected. Look at every speech delivered by the Prime Ministers from the ramparts of Red Fort. Has anyone acknowledged the fact that every government has made contributions in some or the other way? Has any Congress leader ever acknowledged this fact ever? This Narendra Modi had said that all the previous governments, state governments as well as the citizens have made contributions. We have the courage to accept it openly. This is our character.

When I was the Chief Minister of Gujarat in that period we were celebrating the golden jubilee year of Gujarat. One of the programmes in our celebration of the golden jubilee year was that of the speech of the Governor. What are the speeches of the Governors? A Governor's speech is similar to that of the President, which describes the activities of the government of the day. The Governor's speech showcases the work done by the state government of that period. However, till 50 years since the formation of Gujarat, Congress party had ruled the state, and all the Speeches of the Governors in that period were highlighted extensively and archived. This is called democracy! You claim everything is done by you and by that family! Today you are compelled to sit there just because of this mentality! You did not acknowledge the nation. Today, the railway lines are expanding at a rapid rate, the port development is under focus, gas pipelines are being laid, the fertilizer plants that were shut down are again being started, toilets are being built in crores of households and new opportunities of employment are coming up.

I want to ask my friends in the Congress Party and also to the people concerned with employment and unemployment. Whenever you come up with the figures of unemployment you give that for the entire country; then why can't you give the statistics for employment for the entire country? Now you will not believe me. I want to bring something to your kind notice. You may check the records. The government of West Bengal, the Government of Karnataka, Government of Odisha and the Government of Kerala have claimed that in three four years approximately 1 crore people have been given employment. Our party has not formed the government there. Even NDA is not there. Can you deny even this fact? Will you not consider that as employment? Here I am not talking about the developed states of

the country. I am not talking of the states ruled by BJP or NDA. I am talking about those governments where people from your party parties or allies are ruling the states. They are claiming the increase in employment levels in those states. Can you deny that the figures given by the Karnataka government are lies? Tell me?

Therefore, do not try to mislead the country. These are the efforts of the Government of India for employment that have borne fruits in these states. You know that 70 Lakhs new EPF accounts have been registered in one year. These are the accounts of youngsters in the age group of 18-25 years. Isn't that employment? Moreover, the Doctors, Engineers, lawyers and Chartered Accountants have provided new job opportunities in their businesses and companies. They have expanded their businesses and incomes. You don't want to acknowledge it. You are well aware of the fact that the formal sector employs only 10% of the people and 90% are employed in the informal sector. Today we have made successful attempts and schemes to provide incentives for getting the informal sector into the formal. Moreover, the middle class family today doesn't want to beg for work but wants to live with dignity in an independent manner. I have asked several IAS officers about what their children want to do. I expect them to tell me that they would follow the convention and join the government but today they tell me that time has changed. They tell me, 'sir, though we have followed the convention of our forefathers, our children are not interested in joining the service. They want to open their start-ups. My child has been educated abroad. Now he wants to begin a start-up'. These are the aspirations of the youngsters who come from abroad today. So, every government of the country should make efforts to push the aspirations of the zealous middle-class youth. We should not disappoint them. Therefore, schemes like the Mudra Yojana , Skill Development Scheme, entrepreneurship training and so on are efforts in the direction of pushing the aspirations of these zealous youngsters. As a result, today under Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana loans of more than 10 lakh crore Rupees have been approved. This is not a small figure. Till now there has not been any complaint of the loan being stuck or middlemen coming in between. This is the result of the work culture of this Government. As a result of our rules and policies, anyone could go to the banks for loans without a guarantee. Loans worth ten lakh crores of Rupees have been approved! Out of that more than 4lakh crore rupees have been given. Moreover, 3 crore people among the loan seekers are new businessmen. These are the people who were deprived of the opportunities for so long. Isn't it an attempt to increase employment in the country? You have kept your eyes shut. Therefore, you are constantly boasting about yourself. This mentality is not letting you grow. Atal ji had said a wonderful line - 'no one can make it great with a small mentality' and 'no one can stand up with a broken mind'. Therefore, you can never grow like this. You will remain in the same place forever.

You are constantly boasting about yourself. I want to remind you of something. During the 1980s an echo of the statement regarding the arrival of the 21st century was heard everywhere. And in that period one Congress leader was showing the people the dreams of the 21st century. He was a young and a fresh leader. He had won seats even more than his maternal grandfather. At that time I had seen a very interesting cartoon. A man was standing at a railway platform and a train was passing by. The train was labelled with the word '21st century' and the man was running towards it to catch it. An old man beside the man was saying -"wait, the train is going to come anyway. You don't have to do anything." People were shown the dreams of 21st century in the 1980s. The Government that was talking about the 21st century could not even form An Aviation Policy! If it was not for an Aviation Policy in the 21st century then what was it meant for? Was it for a bullock cart? You are moving at that very pace.

Speaker Madam, we have framed an Aviation Policy and have started using the small runways in small cities. Today we have 16 new air-strips. There are several possibilities in the aviation sector and we are working in that direction. Flights will also take-off in tier-2 and tier-3 cities. There are about 450 operational aeroplanes now. But you will be happy to know that with this initiative we are purchasing more than 900 new aeroplanes this year. This was possible not only because of our firm decisions but also because we use technology and are constantly monitoring the work. We are also monitoring the work of roads and railways with the help of drones. We are geo-tagging using satellite technology. Moreover, the toilets that are constructed are clicked and tagged with mobile phones. Work could progress at a fast pace due to monitoring with the help of technology. Monitoring has also resulted in transparency.

I am astonished with the fact that when we won the elections, your party had raised doubts that Modi would end your Aadhaar scheme. Therefore, you used Aadhaar to attack Modi as you believed that it would be removed by him. But it did not go down well with you when Modi linked the Aadhaar with technology. It was beyond your imagination that Modi would re-introduce it in a new way. When the poorest of the poor started benefiting from the scheme, you felt bad about it. 'Heads I win and tails you lose'. No, that is not going to work. Therefore, today more than 115 crore people have Aadhaar cards. Funds are being deposited by Direct Benefit Transfer in the accounts of the poor for about 450 schemes of the central government. For several years you have given pension to those widows who were widows only on papers and to those daughters who did not even exist. The amount was taken away by the middlemen. Similar was the case for the senior citizens, disabled people. The funds meant for them were taken away by the middlemen. 57000 crore rupees went to the middlemen. Today you are unhappy not because Aadhaar is being used for Direct Benefit Transfer but because the middlemen have lost their businesses. Mind it, only the frauds who used to loot the country have lost their incomes.

Speaker Madam,

We have brought the Saubhagya scheme for providing free electricity connections to 4 crore poor and middle income families. Now you will say that you had started a similar scheme. I agree there was a scheme but did the people have access to electricity? Were there enough transmission lines? Even the poles were not erected. People were forced to live in the conditions that of the 18th century and you are boasting that it was your scheme. We do not see development in isolation. We follow a holistic and an integrated approach and a long-term vision. I want to talk about the subject of electricity. You will get to know the working style of the government. Out of the 25 crore households in the country, 4 crore households do not have access to electricity connection. This means nearly 20% of the population are still living in darkness. This is not something to feel proud of. You have bequeathed this to us and we are trying to accomplish this task of getting it fixed. But how are we doing it? We have divided this task into four parts - electricity generation, transmission, distribution and connection. We are developing all these together. First of all we are emphasizing upon increasing the generation through solar energy, hydropower, thermal, nuclear and so on. We have developed the transmission network at a rapid pace. We have worked on projects worth more than 1.5 Lakh crore rupees in the last 3 years. This is 83% more than that of the previous government's last three years of work. There is a 31% increase in the expansion of transmission lines just by our government after 2014. We have increased the transformer capacity by 49% in the last three years. We have done the work of establishing the entire network from Kashmir to Kanyakumari and Kutch to Kamrup for the transmission of electricity. In order to strengthen the power distribution system we came up with the Ujjwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana i.e. UDAY scheme and signed MoU with the states. We have emphasised upon better operation of the power distribution companies and financial management. Thereafter, we have launched the Saubhagya scheme to connect the households with electricity. On one hand we have focussed on electricity connection while on the other, we are focusing on saving electricity. We have distributed 28 crore LED bulbs. About 15 thousand crore rupees were saved in electricity bills. We have tried to prevent wastage of time as well as wastage of money honestly.

Madam Speaker,

Attempts are being made to politicize the issue of farmers. It is true that even after 70 years of Independence, the produce of the farmers such as fruits, vegetables, grains or flowers etc. worth 1 Lakh crore rupees often gets wasted in the process of carrying it to the storage and to the market due to lack of an efficient supply chain. We have launched Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana to strengthen this infrastructure so that the farmers get proper storage facilities at affordable prices and their produce is not damaged.

The Government has decided to help in boosting the supply chain infrastructure. The 1 Lakh crore that will be saved henceforth can be used for providing opportunities to middle class youth engaged in the food processing sector. Animal husbandry is as important as agriculture in our country. Both are inter-dependent activities. Every year about 40 thousand crore rupees are lost due to lack of facilities in the animal husbandry sector. We have started focussing on this sector for with the Kamdhenu initiative in an aggressive manner.

The Kamdhenu initiative will bring a great relief to those engaged in animal husbandry. We are talking of doubling the farmers' income by 2022. It was fine for you when you were talking about the 21st century in the 1980s but when Modi is talking of 2022 in the year 2018, you are finding it difficult to accept. You were showing the dreams of 21st century in the decade of 80s. Now you are having trouble when my government is working in a time-bound manner by fixing a specific target for the year 2022 for marking 75 years of Independence to inspire people. You are having doubts about our goal of doubling the farmers' income by 2022 because you have never dreamt big. Nothing can be achieved with a narrow mind. Can't we reduce the input cost of the farmer to double his income? Initiatives like Soil health card, solar pumps, Neem coated urea and so on have helped in reducing the input costs of the farmers. Similarly, we have encouraged the farmers to plant bamboo on the boundaries of their agricultural fields to expand their income opportunities. Bamboo has an assured market. Today the country imports bamboo worth thousands of crores of rupees just because of your one wrong policy. You labelled bamboo as tree and as a result no one could chop bamboo. My people from the Northeast were extremely inconvenienced. We have the courage to include bamboo in the category of grass. This will increase the income of the farmers. If he plants bamboo on the corners of his field, its shade will not affect the crops. In this way he can increase his income manifold. We want to increase milk production. We want to encourage bee keeping. You will be surprised to know that there has been an increase of about 40% in bee keeping. Very few people will be aware of this fact. Today the world is focusing upon holistic healthcare and ease of living. Therefore, they are moving from chemical wax towards bee wax. There is a huge market for bee wax today in the world. Our farmers can now engage in bee keeping along with agriculture. His income will be increased manifold due to bee wax. We are well aware of the fact that bees help in growing crops. There are several areas that can increase farmers' income - milk production, poultry farming, fisheries sector, bamboo etc. Those who believed that Aadhaar would not be implemented also believed that they won't let GST to be implemented. They wanted the government to sink. Now both Aadhaar as well as GST have been implemented. They are looking for new avenues to criticize and create problem for the government. They are playing this game. Every political organisation avoids doing anything that can possibly disappoint the country. But a group of people are using this path to disappoint the people. Today, GST has benefited the logistics immensely. Earlier there used to be a lot of wastage due to traffic jam and toll tax during transportation. Today that can be prevented. Our transportation capacity has increased by 60%. The amount of work done by a truck in 5-6 days can now be done in two and a half to three days. It has benefited the country immensely. The middle class has a significant role in the country's progress. Attempts are being made by some people to disappoint the middle class by spreading rumours. The country's middle class wants good governance and better facilities. If a person is purchasing a railway ticket he wants all the facilities in the train as a right. If he is sending his ward to school he wants good education for his ward. If he is purchasing a food item he wants that to be of good quality. The responsibility of the Government is to provide him with good institutions for education, housing at reasonable and affordable prices,

proper roads, better transportation facilities, urban infrastructure and so on. The government has been proactively taking steps for the past 1.5 years to fulfil the aspirations of the middle class for ease of living. You will be surprised to know that India has the lowest levels of income tax of 5% at entry level in the world. This is something that is not available in any developed country but in India. In the budget before the year 2000, tax exemption limit was increased by 50,000 rupees to 2.5 Lakh rupees. This year we have approved the standard deduction of forty thousand rupees in the budget. There is also a provision for tax exemption for senior citizens. Our government has made efforts to increase the benefits for the middle class by Rupees 12000 crore every year. We have allocated more than 31000 crore to the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban). For the first time the middle class people will get benefits in loans. This was done by our government. We have started new IITs, IIMs, AIIMS and are starting metros in 11 new big cities and more than 32 lakh LED street lights were introduced. This is boosting the new industries and MSMEs which no one can deny. People associated with MSME sector belong to the middle class and upper middle class families. We have reduced the tax rate on the turnover of 2.5 crore from 30% to 25% for the welfare of the middle class. The traders doing business up to Rs.2 crore transact only through banks. The government considers their income as 6% of the turnover instead of 8%. This means that they have a benefit of 2% on taxes. Under GST, those with turnover up to 1.5 crore have been covered under composition scheme and they are required to pay only 1% of the turnover. Even this is the lowest in the world.

Hon'ble Speaker Madam,

More than 31 crore bank accounts have been opened under Jan Dhan Yojana, more than 18 crore poor people will benefit from the health insurance scheme with a premium of just 90 paise per day or 1 rupee per month. You will be happy to know that those poor families that were in trouble have received 2000 crore rupees under this scheme. Such extraordinary work has been done.

3 crore 30 Lakh poor mothers and daughters have benefited from the Ujjwala Yojana. Earlier people had to be after MPs for getting a gas connection but we are bringing the gas connection to their doorsteps. We are aiming to increase this figure to 8 crore!

Ayushman Bharat Yojana - shouldn't we focus on healthcare of the poor? The poor avoids going for treatment due to lack of money and prefers to die. He doesn't want to leave his children in debt. Is this decision to help the poor families wrong? However, if you want the project to be modified then you may bring good positive changes. I will definitely look at the suggestions closely so that this government can help the poor who spend up to 5 lakh rupees annually. But unfortunately you are making these kind of statements for them! If you have a good plan, kindly suggest that to me and we can settle that out.

Speaker Madam,

The steps taken by the government has also changed the way people used to think. The Jan Dhan Yojana has increased the self-confidence of the poor. He is depositing money in his account and using RuPay debit card. Today, he considers himself among the wealthy families. Swachh Bharat Abhiyan has boosted the self-confidence of the women. It has become one of the reasons for liberating them from great pain. Earlier the workers used to fear quitting the old job for a better job as they could have lost their accumulated money. We have transferred the 27 crore rupees of unclaimed money to their bank accounts with the help of Universal Account Number. Now a poor labourer can carry his bank account with him.

Corruption and back money- I know you are deprived of your sleep. I can understand your reason for restlessness. Those accused of corruption cannot move around freely. No one can escape! For the first time in the history of India, four former Chief Ministers have been declared as guilty for corrupt practices by the court. Now they have to spend their lives in prison. This is our commitment. Those who have robbed the country of its wealth have to return that and I will never step back in these efforts. I am a warrior. Therefore, today there is an environment of honesty in the country. We are celebrating the festival of honesty. Many more people are coming forward to pay the income tax. They have trust in the government that their money going to the government's treasury will be put to right use.

I want to elaborate the issue. It has become a trend to tell lies by some people repeatedly. My Finance Minister has explained the actual situation time and again. But some people suppress the truth and the liars keep on mouthing lies openly and loudly. The issue is that of the NPAs. Speaker Madam, I want to tell the nation about the issue of NPAs through you. The country should be told that the previous government is 100% responsible for the issue of NPAs. No one else is even 1% responsible for this. They had framed such policies that used to pressurize the banks. Loans were provided only to their people. Those people couldn't repay the loans. The banks, politicians, government and middlemen used to restructure them. The outgoing money never returned to the banks. The transactions were just on papers. The country was being looted. They had given millions and billions of rupees to them. When we got elected, this was brought to our notice. If I wanted to politicize the issue I could have put forth all the facts in front of the nation on the very first day. However, at that time highlighting the poor condition of the banks could have destroyed the economy. Therefore, considering the impending danger to the economy I was silent despite having proofs of your sins. This was for the welfare of the country. I continued to tolerate your accusations for the welfare of the country. But now we have boosted the banking structure and the time has arrived to reveal the truth

before the nation. Today standing in this House, I want to declare that NPAs were a result of your misdeeds. I am saying this in the temple of democracy. Our government has not given a single loan that might convert into NPA. Moreover, you had hidden the facts. You didn't reveal the actual figures. You said that the percentage of NPAs was 36%. In the year 2014 we had urged you to reveal the actual figures. Do not lie. When we got elected and checked the papers we realized that the actual percentage was 82%! In March 2008, total advance given by the banks was 18Lakh crore. Then by 2014, it rose to 52Lakh crores! The total advance made by banks rose from 18 Lakh crores to 52 Lakh crores. This big difference in 6 years! You had robbed the country. We kept on restructuring and monitoring the papers- when exactly the loans were given and returned. You continued to protect the middlemen because they were your favourite. You were personally gaining out of it. This is the reason you indulged in this act. We were determined to tolerate every pain for cleaning this country. The cleanliness campaign is not limited to this place. This campaign is for the right of the people of my country and it persists in their mindset. Therefore, we have done this.

We framed the scheme and continued to pursue it for the past 4 years. We have worked on recapitalisation. We have boosted the country's banking sector by analyzing the experiences of the other countries. Even after strengthening it I continued to bear your lies. Today I want to inform the country that you have looted the country - from 18 Lakh crores to 52 Lakh crores. Today, this increase in figure is the interest on the money what you squandered away. These are your sins. This is not the money given by our government. The country will never forgive you for this sin. One day you will have to pay for your sins.

This is a hit and run politics. Throw mud and run away. Do whatever you wish to. The more you throw mud, the more will the Lotus bloom. Now I want to reveal something but without any accusations. Let the country decide. You had signed a 20 year contract with Qatar. We have talked to Qatar and put forth our stand. India is committed and so we had to finish the job started by you. This is a compulsion of every government. I am satisfied to inform my countrymen standing in the pristine House that we have renegotiated with Qatar and have saved about 8000 crore rupees in the purchase of gas.

You had paid an extra 8000 crore rupees. Questions of why and how was it given may be raised. The country will decide that. I don't want to say anything more regarding it. Similarly, I would like to say that a deal was signed by the Indian government with Australia for gas. We used to purchase gas from them. We have renegotiated with them too. We have extended the term and in the process saved 4000 crore rupees. The country will ask you questions such as why, how, where and when this money of the public was spent. They will demand answers to these questions.

LED bulbs- what was the reason that during your period an LED bulb used to be sold at 300-350 rupees? The Indian government used to purchase at 300-350 Rupees. What is the reason that the same bulb with the same technology, the same quality and sold by the same companies is now being sold at 40 Rupees? You have to answer this! What is the reason that in your time per unit of solar energy used to cost 13 or 14 or 15 rupees? You were looting the country. You wanted to gain by looting the country. This was the Mantra followed by you. What is the reason that today solar energy is available at Rs.2 and 3. Yet we won't accuse of corruption. If the country wants it will accuse you. I don't want to cross the limits. But this is the truth and therefore the prestige of our country has increased.

Today the strength of the Indian passport is tremendous in the world. Anyone abroad meeting a person carrying an Indian passport looks up to him with great pride. Are you not ashamed of the fact that you are presenting the flaws of the country in a wrong way abroad? During the Doklam stand-off you were talking to the Chinese. You should not forget the rules of a democracy and you should be aware of what a responsible Opposition is? When Indira Gandhi ji had signed the Shimla Agreement with Benazir Bhutto, our party was the single major opposition. Atal Bihari Bajpayee ji had requested for Indira ji's time and had gone to meet her. He had warned her that the decision was going in the wrong direction. Thereafter, we had saved the country from any damage. This is our responsibility for the welfare of the country. When our army had conducted a surgical strike you started questioning the move. I believe that even today people have several questions in their minds regarding the Commonwealth Games. This government had arranged India-Africa Summit with 54 countries. BRICS summit and FIFA under 17 world cup were also organised. Several big initiatives were taken. On 26th January, 10 leaders of ASEAN had visited our country and my tricolour was waving in the sky. During my oath taking ceremony leaders of SAARC nations were invited. You are wondering at that time that how come you didn't think of such a thing? A small mind cannot think of great things.

Madam Speaker,

We want to develop the country with our idea of a New India. Mahatma Gandhi had talked about a 'Young India', Swami Vivekananda ji had talked about 'New India' and our former President Pranab Mukherjee ji had also talked about a 'New India'. Come, let us pledge for fulfilling the dream of making our country a 'New India'. Criticisms in a democracy are the strength of a democracy. This is a must as only then we can churn the nectar out of it. However, democracy doesn't allow imposition of false accusations. You do not have the right to demoralise the people of the country for gaining political brownie points. So, I hope that those who were criticizing the President's speech should read it again. If you don't get it in the first reading then kindly read it again. If the language is not clear then get the help from someone. But whatever is written is the truth. You cannot deny it. I congratulate all the Hon'ble Members who have expressed their

views on the President's address. I would like to say that we accept the President's address unanimously. Thank you very much for your precious time. With this expectation, thanks!