

Prime Minister Narendra Modi : Reply on Motion of Thanks to the President's Address (25-06-2019)

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

After the formation of the 17th Lok Sabha, I am present here to support the Motion of Thanks on Hon'ble President's speech.

The Hon'ble President, in his speech, has tried to draw a blueprint of the things that we want to prioritize and emphasize to fulfill the aspirations of the common man of India. The President's speech is a resonance of the hopes and aspirations of the country with which they have sent us to this House, and therefore the Motion of thanks on his speech in a way is thanking crores of people of the country.

Several great men of our country have dreamt of a powerful, secure, prosperous and an inclusive nation. In order to fulfill that dream, we must move ahead together in a determined way and with greater intensity and speed. This is the need of the hour and India should not lose this opportunity in today's global environment.

We must move ahead together with the same spirit. I believe that we can cross every hurdle in fulfilling the aspirations of the country. Nearly 60 Hon'ble Members of Parliament had participated in this discussion. Those who have been elected for the first time have tried to place their points of view very well and have tried to make the discussion meaningful. Those who are experienced, too, have carried forward this discussion in their own way.

I am grateful to everyone including Mr. AdhirRanjan Chaudhary, Mr. T.R. Balu, Mr. DayanidhiMaran, Mr. SaugatRai, Jaydevji, Ms. MahuaMoirtra, P.V. MidhunReddy, VinayakRaut, Rajeev Ranjan Singh, Pinaki Mishra, Shri NamaNageshwar Rao, Mohammad Azam Khan, AsaduddinOwaisi, Shri Pratap Chandra Sarangi, Dr. HinaGavit for making this discussion meaningful.

It is true that we all are humans and the influence of the last 30 days still lingers. It is difficult to come out of it. Therefore, a little impact of the election speeches was still visible here. Similar stories were heard here. This is the rule of nature. You have run this House on this respectable position and have carried forward the discussion by taking everyone into consideration. You are new to this position. When there are new members, a few people want to put them into trouble right in the beginning.

However, despite these situations, you have worked everything out in a commendable way. I congratulate you all for that. And I am grateful to the House for cooperating with the new Speaker.

Hon'ble Speaker sir,

After several decades, the nation has given out a strong mandate. They have once again voted the same government to power with greater strength. Today in this simple environment, in a vibrant democracy like India, every Indian can feel proud of the fact that our voter is so aware. The voter loves the nation more than himself and takes decision for the nation. This was clearly discernable in this election. Therefore, many congratulations to the voters of the country.

I and my entire team is glad that despite we being completely new and unfamiliar, in 2014, the nation gave us one opportunity as an experiment to come out of the circumstances. But the mandate of 2019 was given out by examining us in every way possible. They have tested us and understood us and only on that basis have once again voted us to power. This is the greatest strength of democracy. Everyone, the winner, the loser or those inside or outside the field had made successful efforts to implement the policies of 'सर्वजनहिताय, सर्वजनसुखाय' (means, 'for the good of all people, for the happiness of all') with hard work for the last five years for the welfare of the people. People have once again given their approval to it and elected to power to serve the country.

Hon'ble Speaker sir,

Nothing is more satisfying than the fact that the people who are a form of god approve one's work. It is not just a game of winning or losing or statistics. It is devotion, commitment, dedication towards the people. It is living and fighting for the people. The result of the five years' of unbroken commitment and dedication is equivalent to a spiritual experience. Therefore, I don't think about winning or losing. My thoughts go beyond it. The hopes, aspirations and dreams of the 130 crore people are always in my mind.

Hon'ble Speaker sir,

In 2014, when the people of my country had given me the opportunity to put forth my viewpoints in the Central Hall for the first time, I had simply said that my government was dedicated to the poor. After those five years, I to my deepest satisfaction can say that the people have expressed their satisfaction by pressing the button of EVM machines. In the beginning of the discussion, the first time MP Shri PratapSarangi and my sister from the tribal community Dr. HinaGavitji have placed all the nuances of the issues. After that I believe, there is no need for me to add anything more.

Hon'ble Speaker sir,

All the great personalities of our country who have guided us in the public life have always talked about one thing - the poorest of the poor and their welfare. Everyone such as Pujya Bapu, Baba SahebAmbedkarji, Lohiaji or DeenDayalUpadhyayji had said the same thing. During the last five years tenure, we have always worked with the spirit that those who have no one have government beside them.

After independence, we have inadvertently accepted a culture and have let it spread wherein the common man had to overcome a lot of hurdles and challenges in the system to avail his rights. I am not accusing anyone. But shouldn't the common man be provided his rights by the system in a hassle-free way? We had assumed that the system was supposed to be like that.

I know changing these things takes a long time. It is difficult to get the states onboard and it is tough to cure the 70 years old diseases in five years. But I am pleased to say that despite all the hurdles, we have not diverted or diluted our commitment and have continued to walk on the same path. This nation tells what is true and what is false. The nation realized that a toilet was not merely a concrete structure or the gas is not merely a means of cooking food. It understood the motive behind it as to why the government came up with those schemes? I never asked for a gas; I spent my entire life without electricity; then why are they doing this? Earlier the question used to be raised - 'why are they not doing it?' Today they have developed a confidence. So they ask, 'Why are they doing it?' The journey from 'why are they not doing?' to 'why are they doing

it?' was quite long. But they had faith and today they are experiencing a new capability within the country. We are trying to carry the same forward.

This is true that when a welfare state is dealing with poverty, the people should be provided with ease of living through different welfare schemes but at the same time the nation should also progress. The poor people should be uplifted and empowered but at the same time modern India should also move forward. Therefore, the stream of development must flow on a path wherein welfare of the common man is the focus on one hand while on the other schemes are being implemented to develop modern infrastructure.

And we have focused upon both. We have to create a modern India with the highways, I-ways, waterways, railways, roads, Airways through the UDAN scheme, start-ups, innovation, tinkering labs and well as the Chandrayaan. We have to fight against all the challenges.

Many new things have been told here. A few harsh things have also been said that reflect the election mood. Everyone has an individual agenda. I won't comment on that. However, we cannot make the mistake of saying that 'no one can demean our power' that was said here. We cannot waste our time demeaning anyone.

You be happy with your loftiness. You are floating so high that you are unable to see the ground and have been detached from the roots. You look down upon the people who are on ground. Therefore, your high headedness is good for me. I hope you remain the same. We have no competition with you in terms of high headedness because our dream is to get rooted and be in close association with the people.

Our dream is to be deeply tied to the roots to strengthen the nation. Therefore, we are not in the competition. Therefore, our best wishes are with you so that your loftiness continues to grow. It is true that a few people are used to being praised and mentioned. Not being mentioned is taken as an insult by them. This shouldn't be the case but it happens.

Prior to 2004 was Atal ji's government. They had ruled from 2004 to 2014. I can challenge that they have not praised Atalji's government or mentioned his good initiatives even for once. Leave Atalji; they haven't even praised about the Narasimha Rao government. Moreover, have they mentioned anything about Dr. Manmohan Singh ji in the speech now? I am nothing compared to those great people! I am an ordinary person. But you can verify; From the Red Fort, I am the first Prime Minister who had said twice that every central and state government since independence has made essential contribution to the country's development.

I have said the same thing several times even in this House. I would like to reiterate the same. Yes, they might have different expectations. But I would like to give you an example depicting our character, mindset and thinking.

I had got the opportunity to work as Gujarat's Chief Minister for a long period. It was Golden Jubilee for Gujarat. So, that year, several events were organized taking everyone together. But today I want to mention about one important work. I informed that all the speeches of the Hon'ble Governors during the last 50 years should be compiled in a book and it should be recorded in history. Now tell me, Governors of the last 50 years belonged to which government's tenure?

It was in a way, a compilation of accomplishments of the governments of that time. Those were not our party's governments. However, this is a part of our mindset wherein the contribution of everyone in the system who had played a role in carrying the nation forward is recognized. It was a positive exercise. It was a compilation not of newspaper editorials but of Governors' speeches. It is still available.

So, those who themselves have never recognized other's work, have no right to nag us or say that we didn't recognize previous governments' work. Narasimha Raoji should have received Bharat Ratna award during his tenure; Dr. Manmohan Singhji should have received Bharat Ratna award after his first term.

But people outside the family never receive anything. But we are different. We have never worried about the party to which Pranab da belonged or for which party he had worked. Our decision to confer Bharat Ratna award on him was purely on the basis of his contribution to the nation. Therefore, kindly don't keep us nagging. Thus far and no further!

We don't reject anyone's contribution. And when I say that 125 crores Indians have taken the country forward, everyone is included in them. Therefore, kindly don't demean the discussion.

Hon'ble Speaker sir,

They have raised many slogans of 'who did it?' Today is 25th June. Many people don't know the significance of 25th June. They are asking their neighbours. The nation's soul was crushed at the night of 25th June. Democracy in India was not born out of the pages of our Constitution. Democracy has been the soul of our nation since ages. The soul was crushed. Country's media was gagged. The great personalities of the nation were put behind the bars. Entire India was turned into a prison just to save someone's seat or power. That is a living example of dishonoring the Judiciary and its judgment.

Today, on 25th June, once again we have to express our devotion and resolve towards democracy with greater intensity. No one can forget the sin of talking about the Constitution on one hand and squashing the Constitution on the other. All those who were party to this sin must remember that this slur is indelible. This should be reminded time and again so that no other person is born who would commit such a sin again. This is to remind not to abuse.

This is just to remind the significance of devotion towards democracy. At that time when the media was gagged, and everyone was living under the fear of getting arrested, they gave out their verdict after elections. They voted for democracy and re-established democracy. This is the strength of my nation's voters. Once again, keeping caste, creed, sect, language aside the nation has voted only for a brighter future for the country.

Hon'ble Speaker sir,

The President has mentioned about two important events in his speech - Gandhi 150 and independence⁷⁵. Be it the life of an individual, or of a family or community, few dates arouse a new zeal. It makes life exciting and arouses a feeling of fulfilling our resolutions. There is no greater inspiration for India than Pujya Bapu. Today there are memories of the brave-hearts sacrificing their lives for the nation. We should not lose this opportunity.

Commemorating those who laid down their lives for the Nation, who spent their youth in serving Mother India, and commemorating Pujya Bapu who successfully led the freedom movement, and also making these dates as an opportunity, we can create a new spirit within the nation. This cannot be an agenda of the government or of any party. This is an agenda of the entire nation. There are no parties but only nation. The President has reiterated the same. This is the time for fulfilling resolutions. You can argue amongst each other in the election field but let us hold this opportunity. Before independence, people used to die for the nation but on the 75th year of independence now we have an opportunity to live for the nation.

I have a request for all the representatives of the House. Let us come forward to follow the President's order, expectations and desires. And to build New India, let us try to link these two important opportunities with the common man.

The period of colonization was long for India but there was no occasion in that period when people didn't revolt or the people hadn't laid down their lives for freedom from some part of the country or the other. An organized group emerged during 1857 but Mahatma Gandhi had made a major contribution. He had turned the common man into a freedom fighter. If he was sweeping, it was for freedom; if he was teaching students, it was for freedom; if he wore Khadi clothes, it was for freedom.

Respectable Bapu had created such an environment in the entire country. And the entire nation was engaged in the 1942 Quit India Movement. 1942-1947 is an important turning point of the freedom struggle. Can we come forward to free the nation from troubles, to emphasize upon our responsibilities and to inspire the nation to fulfill our responsibilities with that spirit of Gandhi-150 and freedom75?

I believe that the President has placed this before us in a very significant way. And when freedom was being demanded, people used to be surprised and used to wonder how would we run the nation. They used to mock at it. But the freedom fighters had a determination. Those sacrificing their lives for freedom had a different spirit of arousing that vigor in those living for freedom. This leadership has the caliber.

I mean this for everyone. It's not just for me or my party. We can achieve this together. And it is not for my personal gains. I do not have such limited thinking. I never think small. Moreover, if I want to live the dreams of 125 crore Indians, I have no right to think small.

जब हौसला बना लिया ऊँची उड़ान का

फिर देखना फिज़ूल है कद आसमान का।

We must move ahead with this spirit and a new determination. It has been only three weeks after the formation of the new government. But there is a saying- पुत्र के लक्षण पालने में।

We too could have celebrated our victory. But we did not choose that path. We could have thought of resting for a while after six months of election preparedness, but we don't like that.

We don't choose that path. We have come to live for the nation. This government has taken several important decisions within three weeks. Every second was utilized and after 60 years the decision regarding pension for small shopkeepers, farmers and farm laborers was taken.

We had promised that all the farmers will be brought under the PM Kisan *Samridhhi Yojana*. It has been fulfilled. We have not only raised the scholarship of children of army-men but also have provided benefits to the children of police personnel; the police who is responsible for the security of the society. We have finished the preparations for tabling important human rights related laws in the Parliament. Just within three weeks, we have initiated all possible work ranging from calling meeting of Chief Ministers, organizing all-party meeting, all-party meeting of the Presidents and so on for fulfilling the dream of the year 2022. We I start counting then it might come out to be on an average three tasks per day. Therefore respected Speaker sir, the President has mentioned the same in his speech. I never said that the previous governments didn't do any work.

A discussion on construction of various dams was going on. It would have been better if the name of Baba Saheb Ambedkar was also mentioned. All the water related initiatives within India were taken under the leadership of Baba Saheb Ambedkar. However, beyond a height people cannot see the ground. Baba Saheb used to talk about central waterways, irrigation and navigation. I believe that Baba Saheb's instructions are still valid and useful for us today. He used to say, 'Man suffers more from the lack of water than from access to it.' I think Baba Saheb expressed this concern. We must think of something on those lines.

Of all the discussions pertaining to dams, the Sardar Sarovar dam too was discussed. I wish to take some time Hon'ble Speaker sir. Sometimes rumors are spread. As per their ecosystem, they enjoy doing that. They never allow the truth to come out. There is no guarantee that the truth will come out even after I make clarifications today. It will remain here. Yet I would be content to follow my duty.

Pandit Nehru had laid the foundation stone of the Sardar Sarovar dam in 1961. It was the dream of Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel but the foundation stone was laid in 1961. However, it wasn't approved for several decades. The foundation stone was laid without permission. At that time the project was worth Rs. 6000 crores. The cost rose to Rs.60,000-70,000 crores by its completion.

What service did it do to the nation? Moreover, attempts were made to stop the project during the UPA regime. Between 1986-87, the cost of the project was Rs.6000 crores that reached Rs.62,000 crores. We came and completed the project. I had to sit on a hunger strike. I was the Chief Minister. Everything was stopped. Now the project is complete. Before I became the Prime Minister, I removed all these blockages within 15 days.

Today almost 4 crore people are getting access to water supply. Clean drinking water is now reaching seven metro cities, 107 municipalities and 9 thousand villages. The people of Rajasthan and Gujarat have known the scarcity of water. Therefore, we have formed a separate Jal Shakti Ministry. We have to consider the water related issue seriously. We must save as much water as possible in this season.

I request the Hon'ble Members and the NGOs to increase the abundance of water in the country, working out of the government realm. We can save the lives of the common man by saving water. Water related issues affect two kinds of people the most - the poor and especially the mothers and sisters.

I am not sure what happened to our socialist friends but Lohiaji used to insist that women in the country have two problems viz. water and sanitation. Lohia Ji used to constantly insist upon getting the mothers and sisters rid of these problems. We have diligently worked towards fulfilling Lohia ji's dream of paying respect to mothers and sisters by constructing toilets and getting rid of the problem of sanitation. And we have moved ahead with the mantra of 'water to every household'.

I know this is a big and tedious task. Probably someone might judge it and fail me in my effort. They might give Modi 50 out of 100 marks instead of 70. But someone has to start it and we did it. I was talking about the Jal Shakti Ministry. After water conservation, water irrigation is the next responsibility. It has been proven in the world that micro-irrigation is beneficial for sugarcane cultivation. Who would make this understand to the farmers? Who would tell them about the benefits of micro-irrigation? With the government's scheme, funds will be received and water can be saved. There are several such things. We have to carry our nation forward by saving every drop of water.

Agriculture is the backbone of our country's economy. It is the backbone of our rural economy. However, we have to come out of the outdated processes and systems. We have to ensure lowering of input cost. The experiments on zero budgeting are becoming successful. There is no reduction in the yield. In the era of holistic healthcare, quality is being improved.

We have worked without getting involved in politics and without considering any event as a government event. We have to work together for the welfare of the country's farmers. We must do hand-holding of the farmers. There is no investment of the corporate world in agriculture. We must encourage them. We must frame some rules and laws for them. Otherwise, someone believes that providing a tractor is investment. But we require investment of corporate world in food processing and building warehouses and cold storage. This is the need of the hour and we must work to boost the same.

A system must be built from seed to the market by providing maximum opportunity to the farmers with the help of APOs. This will create immense possibilities in exports in the agriculture sector. We must emphasize upon those sectors.

Last time in 2014, the price of pulses had become an issue. But look at the spirit of the farmers. I had made a simple request to them to come forward for pulse cultivation. And my farmers worked hard to provide pulse requirement of the nation. After pulses, we need to encourage the farmers for oilseeds. The nation should not have any need for import of oil, edible oil.

I believe that the country's farmers can be inspired. With a futuristic vision, we can work by dovetailing rural economy with the farmer's strength and country's needs. We must move ahead in that direction.

Hon'ble Speaker sir,

This is true that statistics can be used in every manner for criticism. Fulfillment of the nation's dreams at one time period is something to cheer about but the same achievement in the other time period becomes an unacceptable thing. In the same House, when India had risen up from 13th to 11th position in terms of economy, there was a great enthusiasm and benches were tapped. It was projected as a great achievement. But now as India has improved to 6th position, the enthusiasm was lost. The country is the same and we are the people of the same nation. If improvement to 11th place makes us happy, it should make us happier when we reached 6th place.

How long will be so lofty that we are unable to see the ground? Why shouldn't a 5 trillion dollars economy be the dream of all of us? Who will lose if all of us together carry the nation towards 5 trillion economy? Everyone will benefit. And I believe that we all must work hard for it. We must move ahead with that dream. The 'Make in India' scheme was mocked at but can anyone deny its role within the country?

Hon'ble Speaker sir,

I am not here to criticize anyone and I don't want to waste my time either. I have a lot of things to do. But it is important to inform the nation about a few things. Our nation has an experience of 200-225 years in manufacturing metal. After independence, we had 18 factories that manufactured metal while China was in zero position. China had no experience. Today China is exporting defence goods around the world while we are the number one importer. We need to pull the country out of this truth. What will you do by mocking 'Make in India'? Probably you will get a good night's sleep but it will not do any good to the nation.

Hon'ble Speaker sir,

I am really grateful to you as well as to the House for giving me the opportunity to speak. We need to find ways whereby India can enter the group of top five economies, exports are increased, Make in India is promoted further and the youngsters in the realm of start-ups are encouraged. We need to promote 'Jai Jawan Jai Kisan Jai Vigyan and Jai Anusandhan. We need to ensure employment opportunities for the youth. There is immense possibility in the tourism sector of our country. But we have created such an impression for our country that we failed to attract the pride of the world for our nation.

The sanitation campaign has given us the strength. We can emphasize upon tourism. And the possibility of employment can rise in the country. We can create a new identity of the nation in terms of tourism before the world. We must take these things forward. We must take the nation forward towards infrastructure in the coming days. Even Rs.100 lakh crores will be a small amount as compared to the requirement of the country.

But we must take this huge dream forward and we must utilize the aid and the arrangements provided by the world. Our dream of New India, Modern India and Ease of Living lies behind it. We must ensure that the common man has access to comfortable life and all the means to fulfil his dreams. We have to develop such systems. We must provide equal opportunity to everyone, be it a village or a city.

Today we talk of demographic dividend. The nation possesses youth power. But are we able to prepare our youth in accordance with the world's requirements? We need to do a lot of things. We have to raise the scale of skill development and have to capture every scope. The Hon'ble President has told us how we can move towards modernity.

The government has come up with GeM for the market. I would like all the state governments; irrespective of the party they belong to, to use the GeM portal. A huge amount of money will be saved and it will benefit many. Any person can sell his product to the government. I request all to work towards it.

We will continue with our fight against corruption. We are being rebuked for not putting a few people in jail. This is not an emergency period that we will put anyone in prison. This is democracy. The Judiciary is there to do this task. We work lawfully. One can enjoy if they get bail. One shouldn't work with a feeling of revenge. But we will continue with our fight against corruption. Whatever we do we will be doing it with honesty. We will not do anything with bitter feelings against anyone. The nation has provided a lot to us. Hence, we need not walk on the wrong path. Technology can be utilized at a greater rate.

Hon'ble Speaker sir,

Why should there be a difference of opinion with regard to terrorism? It is a big threat to humanity. It is a challenge for humanity. Whoever believes in humanity must gather and fight against it.

Congress had several opportunities for ensuring women empowerment. But they are so lofty that they are unable to see a few things. The Uniform Civil Code was being discussed in the 50s decade. Congress had the opportunity but it missed it. And they started with the Hindu Code Bill.

35 years later, Congress had the second opportunity. The Supreme Court had helped Shah Bano completely. A favorable environment for gender equality was created in the country. But they refused to see the things below from that height and consequently missed the opportunity. 35 years later, today, once again the Congress has this opportunity. We have come up with the bill. It is not necessary that we link the pride of the country's women to any religion or sect.

A few ministers during the Shah Bano case had given shocking statements in a TV interview. I don't have ways to verify it but I am telling you what I have heard. One of the Ministers from Congress, during the Shah Bano case, had said that ensuring the welfare of the Muslims was not the responsibility of the Congress. It is something serious. "If they want to lie in the gutter, let them". You will get it on YouTube. I will send you the link.

Hon'ble Speaker sir,

I won't take long but with respect to Gandhi-150 and independence-75 mentioned by the Hon'ble President, I would say, for some reason everything was centered around rights. Everyone was concerned with rights. This is an opportunity whereby we can ensure a paradigm shift within the country by carrying it towards duties from rights. The responsibility of the people's representatives is also to awaken the people's conscience and to lead the way. Most of us have heard about the power of duties.

Mahatma Gandhi used to say - every right carries with it a corresponding duty ! Lohiaji used to say - nobody looks at a loss while doing one's duty. I want to throw some light on this quote. It's a very old saying. "India has taught the world that duties come first here. Rights emanate from these duties. In today's modern materialist world where conflicts are seen everywhere, everyone talks about their rights and convenience; one rarely talks about the duties. This is the reason for the conflicts. This is the reality. We fight for rights and facilities only, but if we forget the duties in doing so, then these rights and facilities will not be left to us. "

It is our responsibility to commemorate that great personality who had said these words and was forgotten. Can we take these ideas forward? That great personality has said these words on 14th July 1951 when the Congress manifesto was released before the elections. At that time, the great personality, Pandit Nehru had read this one paragraph during the announcement.

Can we move ahead with the dream of Pandit Nehru of 1951 and ensure its fulfillment? Let us decide together and try to move forward.

In the history of our country, while Mahatma Gandhi had appealed to the youngsters to leave books and join the freedom struggle, people had come forward for the same; while Gandhiji had asked to boycott the foreign goods and embrace the Indian goods, people had obliged. When Lal Bahadur Shastriji had appealed to the people to leave one meal per day and help in increasing the productivity, people had obliged. While a small person like me had requested the people to give up the gas subsidy, people gave up. That is, the country is ready.

Come let us move beyond the boundaries of politics for building a New India and a modern India. The nation is bigger than politics. The nation is bigger than any political party. There are hopes and aspirations of crores of people of the country. Welcoming and thanking the Hon'ble President for the guidance and direction shown by him for fulfilling those aspirations, I not only thank him for the speech but also hope that we do something in the spirit of that speech for the welfare of the nation.

With this expectation, I end my speech while honouring the Hon'ble Members who enrich all this discussion.

I also thank you, Speaker sir!