

ADDRESS TO PARLIAMENT—10 FEBRUARY 1964*

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

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT,

I am happy to welcome you once again to your labours in a new session of Parliament.

In the year which has just ended, the Government and the people of India have had to face problems which were vast in magnitude and complex in character. In spite of difficulties and distractions, we have continued to move forward towards our objective of a democratic and socialist order at home and for peace and co-operation in international affairs.

The mid-term appraisal of our Third Five-Year Plan under-taken by the Planning Commission has revealed that the ground to be covered in the remaining two years is considerable and an all-out effort would be required to realise our expectations.

While attention in the re-appraisal has necessarily been focused on the sectors where we seem to be lagging behind the targets which had been set, it is important not to overlook or minimise the progress that has been made and the achievements which are in sight. The upward trend in industrial production has been maintained. The general level of industrial output in 1963-64 is expected to be 7 to 8 per cent higher than in the previous year. Basic industries, like coal and steel, have made further progress and production in the steel plants is running at near capacity. While power shortages have been felt in certain parts of the country, the total availability of power has improved and the transport position is easier. There has been an improvement in export earnings and with continuing external assistance from friendly countries, our foreign exchange reserves and the country's balance of payments position have not been under the same kind of pressure as in the previous year.

* Delivered by Dr. Zakir Husain, Vice-President, discharging the functions of the President of India.

Public sector undertakings have made significant progress. The first Indian-manufactured A.C. electric locomotive rolled out of the Chittaranjan Locomotive Works on 16 November, 1963. The Heavy Electrical Plant at Bhopal has increased its output. The National Mineral Development Corporation has practically completed the development of Kiriburu iron ore mines. The Oil and Natural Gas Commission has established the existence of substantial reserves of oil and gas in Gujarat. The Atomic Energy Establishment at Trombay has begun exporting radio isotopes.

A number of new projects are in various stages of implementation and will add fresh strength to our economy in the years ahead. The expansion schemes of the three public sector steel plants are well under way. Work on the Alloy and Tool Steel Plant at Durgapur is in progress. Action has been initiated for the setting up of the Steel Plant at Bokaro. Agreements have been signed with the United States of America and with Canada for the setting up of atomic power station at Tarapore and Rana Partap Sagar in Rajasthan respectively. With the other plants under construction for which the necessary external assistance has already been secured, we shall not be far short of our Third Plan target and advance action on additional power plants to take care of our needs in the early years of the Fourth Plan has been initiated.

Despite these satisfactory trends, the overall rate of economic growth has lagged behind the Plan target. This is mainly due to the shortage in agricultural production which in 1962-63 showed a fall of 3.3 per cent. There have been successive bad agricultural seasons in the course of the Third Five Year Plan. A steady increase in agricultural production is the most important task before us today.

There has been a steady expansion in the overall agricultural effort during the first two years of the Third Plan. About six million acres of additional area have been brought under irrigation. Efforts are being made to extend irrigation facilities to over 5.5 million acres during the current year. Additional allocations of Rs. 19.15 crore have been made to the States for stepping up minor irrigation, soil conservation and agricultural production.

Shortfalls in the production of foodgrains have had a disturbing effect on price levels. Through larger releases of foodgrains from Government stocks, the setting up of additional fair-price shops wherever feasible and appropriate, regulation of movements, and through credit policies, every effort has been made to prevent prices of foodgrains from shooting up. Control over the ex-factory price and distribution of sugar was reimposed in April, 1963.

In the long run, however, the stability of prices, whether of agricultural or industrial products, can only be achieved through higher production to match the rising level of consumption. I have referred to some of the

measures which we have taken to strengthen the agricultural sector and increase agricultural production. These and other measures, together with the policy of price support for major agricultural crops, should raise the levels of production and productivity in agriculture.

To accelerate the pace of development in industry, various administrative changes have been introduced, procedures are being simplified and certain controls have been relaxed. Finance, both for agriculture and industry, particularly the co-operative sector and small-scale industries, is being made available on an increasing scale.

To improve the tone of administration and to deal effectively and promptly with complaints of corruption or lack of integrity, it has been decided to set up a Central Vigilance Commission which will have a status in its own sphere broadly corresponding to that of the Union Public Service Commission. Its annual reports will be placed before both Houses of Parliament.

Legislative Assemblies with Councils of Ministers were constituted in July, 1963, in the Union Territories of Himachal Pradesh, Manipur, Tripura and Pondicherry and a similar set up was established in the territories of Goa, Daman, and Diu in December last. The State of Nagaland was formed on 1 December, 1963, and elections to the Legislative Assembly were held in January, 1964.

The Chinese threat has continued throughout the year, though there has been no actual fighting along our borders. China still maintains its intransigent attitude on the Colombo proposals and Chinese military build-up along our borders has increased.

Dedicated as we are to peace and to the policy of peaceful settlement of all international disputes, we cannot afford to neglect our defences. During the course of the year, many steps were taken to improve and expand our Army and Air Force. The response to our demand for recruits to the Armed Forces has been satisfactory in all branches, but we are facing a dearth of qualified personnel for our Technical Services. The conditions of service of armed personnel have been improved in many ways. The more important measures include revision in the rates of pension of Commissioned Officers, liberalisation of pensionary benefits to widows and other dependents of deceased personnel below officer rank and *ad hoc* increases in small pensions.

In the matter of equipping our Forces, appreciable assistance has already been received from the Governments of the United States, the United Kingdom and a number of Commonwealth countries and further assistance is on its way. The Government of the U.S.S.R. have supplied us with a number of transport aircraft and other equipment and are assisting us in

establishing a supersonic aircraft factory in the country. We are grateful to all these countries for the help they have extended to us.

To keep our Defence Forces well-equipped, we are anxious to rely on domestic production to the maximum possible extent. We are trying to secure a strengthening of our production base for strategic industries by getting the necessary plant and machinery under the external assistance provided for our Defence. Production in the Ordnance Factories in 1963-64 is expected to exceed Rs. 100 crore as compared with Rs. 63 crore in 1962-63 and Rs. 41.45 crore in 1961-62.

In accordance with our declared policy, we have continued to seek friendly and co-operative relations with all countries in the world and we have been adhering to the policy of non-alignment and peaceful co-existence, which is receiving growing support and appreciation at a number of international gatherings and from the countries of West Asia and North Africa.

Our President had the privilege and pleasure of visiting the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Nepal, Afghanistan and Iran and of receiving the warm and generous welcome of their Governments and peoples. With a view to further promoting goodwill and friendship, I visited Ethiopia, Sudan and the United Arab Republic. In addition, a number of our Ministers and other high personalities visited various countries of the world, with the same end in view.

Our Government had the privilege of welcoming in this country as our honoured guests during the years: His Majesty the King of Laos; Their Majesties the King and the Queen of Nepal; His Majesty the King of Jordan; the Vice-President of the Republic of Cyprus; the President of the Executive Council of the United Arab Republic; the Prime Minister of the Somali Republic; the Premier of the Northern Region of the Federal Republic of Nigeria; the Premier of New South Wales; the U.S. Secretary of State; Earl Mountbatten of Burma; H.R.H. Crown Princess Margrethe of Denmark; and the Soviet cosmonaut Valentina Tereshkova Nikilaeva and her two colleagues.

We were shocked and grieved to learn of the assassination of President Kennedy. In his death, India lost a genuine friend and, the world, a great champion of peace and amity. We welcome the declaration made by President Johnson that he would continue the policies of the late President Kennedy in the great and difficult task of reducing tensions and maintaining world peace, as well as contributing to the economic development of the less-developed countries of the world.

One of the most encouraging developments in international affairs has been the acceptance by the United States and the Soviet Union of the principle, subsequently adopted by the United Nations, of banning nuclear

weapons from outer space. This and the Test Ban Agreement are significant first steps on the road to disarmament and genuine peace, which can be achieved only in a climate of mutual confidence and co-operative co-existence. We broadly agree with the principle underlying the proposal for an international agreement renouncing the use of force in settling territorial or border disputes made by Chairman Khrushchev, and hope that the principal power concerned will be able, in a spirit of mutual confidence, to work out a satisfactory and acceptable agreement on this important suggestion.

Our relations with Nepal are most cordial and friendly and there is full understanding and sympathy in each country for the problems and aspirations of the other. We are continuing to extend assistance for Bhutan's economic and social development.

Members of Parliament are aware of the tragic loss that both India and Sikkim have sustained by the death of the late Maharaja of Sikkim. His son, His Highness Palden Thondup Namgyal, acceded to the "Gaddi" in December, 1963.

We are happy that Kuwait has now secured her rightful place in the United Nations. We rejoice in the independence of Kenya and Uganda and the early advent of freedom and independence to other territories in Africa. We look forward to developing closer relations with all these countries and to co-operating with them in tackling the many tasks of development which freedom brings in its wake.

We extend our full sympathy and support to the African people who are still under Portuguese colonial rule in their struggle for freedom and independence and in the efforts being made by all people of Africa and other countries of the world to put an end to the policies of apartheid and racial discrimination practised by the Government of South Africa.

As regards our relations with Pakistan, I regret to say that there has been no desire on the part of Pakistan to reach any settlement. The Minister-level discussions on "Kashmir and other related matters" that began in December, 1962, broke up after five rounds of talks on May 16, 1963, on an acrimonious note. Hopes for the success of these talks were, in fact, shattered by Pakistan concluding a border agreement with China, ceding to China a large area of Kashmir which was under Pakistan's military occupation. In spite of this and other acts of collusion with China against India, our Government patiently pursued the negotiations, but the five rounds of talks clearly showed that Pakistan has no intention to reach a settlement on a rational and realistic basis and that its sole object in entering into these bilateral discussions was to gain propaganda advantage against India.

Despite these unfortunate developments, India continued to seek avenues for peaceful solution of Indo-Pakistan problems and to ignore, as far as was possible, the "Hate India" campaign that had been mounted in Pakistan.

A renewed call was made by our Prime Minister for a, “No War Declaration” between India and Pakistan, and for simultaneous efforts to solve Indo-Pakistan differences through peaceful methods. The Prime Minister’s appeal was disregarded and the year ended with Indo-Pakistan relations in a far worse condition than during 1962.

The heinous sacrilege committed by some anti-social elements in Kashmir who stole the holy relic from the Hazratbal shrine in the last week of December, 1963, caused serious concern to all people in Kashmir as well as the rest of India. The prompt action taken by our Government in assisting the local authorities in Kashmir in the investigations resulted in the recovery of the holy relic which was a matter of great joy and satisfaction to people all over India. The Pakistan authorities, however, exploited this incident to fan anti-Indian and communal feelings in Pakistan which led to serious disturbances and complete breakdown of law and order in various areas of East Pakistan including Dacca itself, resulting in the loss of several hundreds of lives of the minority community in East Pakistan* and considerable loss of property belonging to the minority community. These incidents had repercussions in Calcutta® and certain areas of West Bengal and Government took prompt and firm action against the miscreants and gave full protection to the life and property of all citizens of India, irrespective of their caste or creed. Our President also made a proposal for a joint appeal by the Presidents of India and Pakistan to restore peace and harmony amongst the various communities living in the two countries and suggested certain practical steps to follow up this appeal. Pakistani response to these proposals has so far been negative. The disturbances in East Pakistan* have taken a heavy toll of the lives and properties of the members of the minority community in various areas of East Pakistan*. As a result, we are faced with a large influx of the members of the minority community from East Pakistan* into India.

Members of Parliament, I have placed before you an account of our main achievements and problems of the past year. I have also given you a brief picture of the tasks and burdens that face us. They need your dedicated attention, understanding and co-operation in increasing measure. It will continue to be the endeavour of our Government, in all possible ways, to uphold the dignity and independence of our land and people, to promote our unity and well-being and to build a democratic and socialistic society in which progress is sought and attained by peaceful means and by consent.

Fifty-eight Bills were passed by Parliament during 1963. Nineteen Bills are pending before you. Among the Bills that will be placed before you for your consideration will be:—

- (1) The Companies (Amendment) Bill.
- (2) The Indian Crop Insurance Bill.

* Now known as Bangladesh.

® Now known as Kolkata.

- (3) The Standards of Weights & Measures (Amendment) Bill.
- (4) The Indian Railways (Second Amendment) Bill.
- (5) Bill to repeal the Bombay Co-operative Societies Act, 1925, as applicable to the Union Territory of Delhi and to extend the Punjab Co-operative Societies Act, 1961, with certain modifications, to Delhi.
- (6) The Foreign Exchange Regulation (Amendment) Bill.
- (7) The Constitution (Eighteenth Amendment) Bill.
- (8) The Banaras Hindu University (Amendment) Bill.
- (9) The Aligarh Muslim University (Amendment) Bill.

A statement of the estimated receipts and expenditure of the Government of India for the financial year 1964-65 will be laid before you.

Members of Parliament, I wish you success in your labours. I earnestly trust that wisdom and tolerance and a spirit of co-operative effort will guide you. May your endeavours bring increasing prosperity and contentment to our people, stability and security to our Motherland and assist in promoting peace and co-operation in the world.