

ADDRESS TO PARLIAMENT—18 MARCH 1957

Lok Sabha	—	First Lok Sabha
Session	—	First Session of the Year
President of India	—	Dr. Rajendra Prasad
Vice-President of India	—	Dr. S. Radhakrishnan
Prime Minister of India	—	Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru
Speaker, Lok Sabha	—	Shri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT,

I am addressing you today after a full year, a year which has witnessed significant happenings in the world and considerable developments in our own country. We are meeting at a time when general elections are being held all over the country, and a new Parliament is coming into being as a result of these elections. This is the last occasion when I am addressing this Parliament. Some of you will come back to represent your constituencies in the new Parliament and some of you may not return. But I have no doubt that wherever your field of work may lie, it will be dedicated to the great task of building up this country of ours. I wish you success and good fortune in your field of activity.

Since I addressed you last, the world has seen a period of high tensions, particularly in the Middle East, and of conflict ending in the invasion of Egypt. The intervention of the United Nations and the impact of world opinion resulted in the withdrawal of the invading armies from Egypt; but the conflict has not only done great damage to Egypt but has also added to the tensions which were showing signs of relaxation, and has left in its wake many problems to be resolved. Our country, which is deeply involved both on account of her concern for world peace and co-operation and her own interest, has sought to assist in resolving these difficulties. India has accepted greater burdens including participation in the United Nations Emergency Force constituted by the decision of the General Assembly of the United Nations which called for the withdrawal of the invading forces.

In Central Europe, the events in Hungary have disturbed us greatly and here, as elsewhere, we have stood for the withdrawal of foreign forces and against their use against peoples and national movements. At the same

time, we have used our best efforts to assist in finding solutions to the problem at its various stages and extended our sympathy and our token of assistance to the people of Hungary.

The position in the Middle East casts its shadow over the prospects of co-operation and peace and the Suez Canal awaits opening for traffic. The policy of military pacts has divided the nations in this region and brought the apparatus of war more and more into Asia. We must, however, note with relief that the conflict in this region did not grow to greater dimensions.

Our Government and people rejoice in the fact that the former British colony of the Gold Coast, along with the former Trust Territory of Togoland under British administration, has now been constituted into the independent and sovereign State of Ghana and a full member of the Commonwealth of Nations.

We welcome the admission of Sudan, Morocco, Tunisia, Japan and Ghana to the United Nations. The continued exclusion of Mongolia and the denial to the rightful representatives of China of their place in the United Nations, cause us deep concern and we continue to devote our endeavours to remedy this situation.

We hope that Malaya will soon become a free and independent State and this will further limit the sphere of colonialism and extend the area of national freedom in Asia.

In the United Nations, the Indian Delegation, in the Eleventh Session of the General Assembly, has made effective and useful contributions in the prolonged debates on crucial issues in regard to the Middle East, Algeria and Cyprus, and contributed to peaceful solutions and procedures in respect of them. Disarmament has made no progress, but the United Nations unanimously resolved to continue its efforts to consider all proposals before it, including the proposals made by India. The Government of India are happy to have been able to assist in promoting this resolution.

Our country, which was a member of the Preparatory Commission of the International Atomic Energy Agency, can derive satisfaction that the Agency has now been established. May it fulfil the hopes that atomic energy will be harnessed for peaceful uses and also diverted from destructive purposes.

I had the happy privilege of visiting our near neighbour, Nepal; and the Vice-President represented our country at the Coronation of His Majesty King Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah. The endeavours of the Nepal Government and people for economic and social development have our full sympathy, and we are happy that we have been able to extend technical and economic assistance to them in the implementation of their Five Year Plan.

The Buddha Jayanti celebrations in India gave us the opportunity of welcoming in this country the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama, as well as leaders of Buddhism from different parts of the world. These celebrations reminded us and the world afresh of the great message of peace and compassion of the Buddha, which is so much needed in the world today.

We have been privileged to receive in our country many distinguished visitors to whom my Government and the people of India have extended their traditional hospitality. Among these eminent guests of ours have been their Imperial Majesties the Shahenshah and the Empress of Iran, His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of Ethiopia, President Shukri El-Kuwatly of Syria, His Royal Highness Prince Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia, Prime Ministers of Burma*, Ceylon**, Indonesia, China, Nepal and Denmark, the Vice-Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, the Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister of the Soviet Union, the Deputy Prime Minister of Sudan and the Foreign Ministers of the United States, France and the United Kingdom. The President of the United Nations General Assembly for 1956, Dr. Jose Maza, and the Secretary-General of the United Nations were also among our distinguished visitors. Parliamentary, cultural, trade and other goodwill delegations from Burma*, China, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Germany, Indonesia, Japan, Norway, Poland, Sweden, Syria, and Uganda have also visited our country.

The Vice-President paid visits to the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, East Africa, the Central African Federation, Indonesia and Japan and received a very warm welcome everywhere.

My Prime Minister visited the United States at the invitation of President Eisenhower. The visit and the talks between the President of the United States and my Prime Minister have assisted in the promotion of understanding between our two countries and greater appreciation of each other's point of view. My Government feel confident that it will lead to increasing co-operation in all fields on the basis of mutual respect and understanding.

My Prime Minister also visited Canada at the invitation of Mr. Louis St. Laurent, the Prime Minister of Canada. His visit has helped to further enrich the relations between Canada and our country, which have always been very friendly and close.

My Government regret that no progress has been made in regard to the solution of the problem of 'apartheid' and discrimination against Africans and people of Indian origin in South Africa. This problem once again received the consideration of the United Nations at the instance of my Government. A further appeal to the Governments concerned to find a solution by negotiations has been made by the United Nations. The Government of India, as in the past, has readily subscribed to this resolution.

* Now known as Myanmar.

** Now known as Sri Lanka.

My Government deeply regret that Goa still continues to be an unhappy colonial outpost of the Portuguese Government, where every kind of liberty is suppressed and economic stagnation prevails. It is the firm policy of my Government that Goa should become free from colonial domination and should share in the freedom of the rest of India.

My Government regret that its relations with Pakistan continue to present difficulties and there has been no abatement in Pakistan of the campaigns of hatred and 'jihad'. The policy of the Government of India and the general approach of our people have been that we shall not respond to these with hatred, but shall continue our endeavours to promote friendly relations while defending our land and our legitimate interests. The exodus of people from East Pakistan* to India continued throughout this past year and assumed alarming proportions. Altogether, over four million people have come from East Pakistan* to India, and these persons have cast a heavy burden on our country and, more especially, on the State of West Bengal.

The problem of Kashmir was considered by the Security Council of the United Nations once again, at the request of the Government of Pakistan. The Government of India's position has been stated in clear and unambiguous terms, that the Jammu and Kashmir State is and has been a constituent State of the Indian Union since October 1947, like other States which acceded to the Union. The present situation in Kashmir has arisen from aggression and on illegal occupation of union territory by Pakistan in violation of international law and agreements and engagements reached in pursuance of United Nations resolutions. The Security Council has resolved last month to send its then President to Pakistan and India to confer with the two Governments. The Government of India, in accordance with its general policy, has agreed to receive and extend hospitality to Mr. Jarring of Sweden who is expected to arrive here soon.

The world situation as a whole, which was beginning to show some signs of improvement, gives us cause for less optimism at present. Our own country, however, continues to have friendly relations with all countries, but the deterioration in the world situation has adverse results on the development of peaceful relations and co-operation and economic development in our part of the world also. More particularly, the policy of military pacts based upon the balance of power, mutual suspicion and fear, has increased tensions in Asia and has led to the increase of armaments and extended the area of cold war. It continues to be the firm belief of my Government that only by a peaceful approach and agreed settlements can be found the right and hopeful way for solutions of the world's problems.

During the past year, the reorganisation of the States was completed, and this great task which had unfortunately roused much passion in some parts of the country, was accomplished. During the past year also, the First

* Now known as Bangladesh.

Five Year Plan was successfully completed and Second Five Year Plan begun. This Plan, while continuing to lay stress on greater food production, emphasises the need for industrial development, more especially in regard to heavy industry. The Community Projects and the National Extension Service have been extended with phenomenal rapidity over our rural areas and now cover two hundred and twenty thousand villages and a rural population of one hundred and twenty nine million. In the community development scheme, special stress is being laid on the development of small scale and cottage industries.

Mineral surveys have yielded promising discoveries of oil, and many new deposits of uranium ore have been located in Rajasthan and Bihar. The finds of thorium and uranium minerals in large quantities have more than doubled our known reserves of these minerals. The work of our Atomic Energy Department has made great progress, and India's first atomic reactor began operations last year. This is the first reactor to go into operation in Asia, outside the Soviet Union.

We are about to complete the first year of the Second Five Year Plan. Certain stresses and strains have emerged in the course of this year. Prices of certain commodities have risen and there has been a substantial drain on the foreign exchange resources of the country. These factors reflect the growing tempo of development in the country, in the public as well as in the private sectors. The growth of internal demand for consumption and for investment is a concomitant of rapid development and, up to a point, the emergence of such pressures is a sign that the resources of the country are being stretched in the interests of development. It is, however, essential to ensure that these pressures do not go too far. Government are determined to take appropriate measures to restrain the rise in prices and to reduce the drain on foreign exchange resources.

The major problem before the country in this context is that of conserving and increasing its foreign exchange resources. For a country which starts with insufficient facilities for producing machinery and equipment, a plan of industrialisation necessarily involves heavy foreign exchange expenditure. Since it is difficult in the short run to enlarge foreign exchange earnings substantially, developing economies require an inflow of external resources in the initial stages. It is, however, incumbent on the country concerned to earn the maximum foreign exchange it can and to exercise the utmost economy in the matter of imports. The recent agreement with the United States Government, under which large quantities of wheat, rice and cotton will be available to us on credit terms, will help in checking the rise in prices and will contribute to the furtherance of the Plan. Considerable external finance will, we expect, be forthcoming from international agencies like the World Bank and from friendly countries.

Nevertheless, the bulk of the resources required for development must come from within the country and the community has to be organised for a big production effort to make this possible.

The Second Plan gives high priority to industrialisation and to the diversification of the economic structure. This, in turn, requires a substantial increase in the production of basic necessities like food and cloth and of raw materials required for the developing industries. The Plan calls for more investment, and one of its principal aims is to enlarge employment opportunities. New incomes created by investment and employment are mostly spent on food and cloth and it is only if their supplies can be increased rapidly that the Plan can go forward without creating an inflationary situation. An increase in agricultural production thus constitutes the pivot of developmental effort and for this we need the fullest co-operation of every section of the community.

A statement of the estimated receipts and expenditure of the Government of India for the financial year 1957-58 will be laid before you for the purpose of passing votes on account authorising expenditure for a part of that year. In addition, a similar statement in respect of the Kerala State will also be laid before you for passing a vote on account for a part of the year for that State.

This session of Parliament will be a brief one and no major or controversial legislation will be taken up during this session. Some Ordinances which have been promulgated since the last session will be placed before Parliament.

Five years ago this Parliament came into existence representing the vast electorate of this great country, and it has laboured for the well-being and advancement of India and for peace and co-operation in the world. These labours have produced substantial results which we see all round us in the country, and I wish to offer you, Members of Parliament, my congratulations on the great tasks that have been accomplished. But there is no resting place for any of us and the great story of the building up of a new and prosperous India will continue to unfold itself, bringing happiness to all our people and serving the cause of world peace and co-operation.

I earnestly trust that the message of the Buddha, whose anniversary we recently celebrated, will ever guide us, and the spirit of the Father of the Nation will continue to inspire us.