

PRESIDENTIAL
ADDRESSES
TO
PARLIAMENT



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI
2015

LARRDIS (LC)/2015

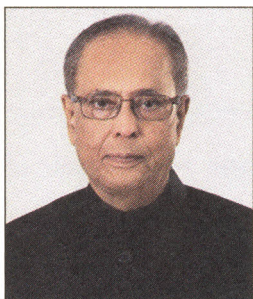
First Edition: 1996

Second Edition: 2015

© 2015, LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT, NEW DELHI

Price : ₹ 1800/-

Published under Rule 382 of the *Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha* (Fifteenth Edition) and printed by M/s. Jainco Art India, 13/10, W.E.A., Karol Bagh, New Delhi-110 005.



राष्ट्रपति
भारत गणतंत्र
PRESIDENT
REPUBLIC OF INDIA

FOREWORD

I am happy to know that Lok Sabha Secretariat is bringing out a publication titled '*Presidential Addresses to Parliament*'.

The efficacy of any democratic system depends on how best it addresses the concerns of the people and fulfils their hopes and aspirations. Parliament of India is the bedrock of our polity. As custodian of the rights and interests of the people, it becomes incumbent upon Members of Parliament to be well-informed of the initiatives, policies and plans of the Government. The founding fathers of our Republic felt that an annual Address to Parliament by the President was best suited to meet this end.

I commend the efforts of the Lok Sabha Secretariat in bringing out this publication. The collection of Presidential Addresses in the publication provide insight into how our country has progressed in the last 67 years and the various policies and programmes initiated by different Governments for the welfare of our people. This compilation is therefore a valuable addition to the corpus of literature available on the parliamentary history of our country.

I am sure the publication will be well-received by parliamentarians, scholars and common people who have an interest in constitutional and parliamentary affairs.

New Delhi;
March 18, 2015

(PRANAB MUKHERJEE)

PREFACE

President's Address to both the Houses of Parliament is the most solemn and important occasion in the working of our democracy. As per article 79 of our Constitution, President is an integral part of the Parliament as it consists of the President and the two Houses known as the Council of States and the House of the People. The Constitution also makes an enabling provision that the President may address either House of Parliament or both Houses of Parliament assembled together, and for that purpose require the attendance of members. At the commencement of the first session after each general election to the House of the People and at the commencement of the first session of each year, it is one of the constitutional functions of the President to address both Houses of Parliament assembled together and inform Parliament of the causes of its summon.

The Address to Parliament is a policy statement of the Government and plays a vital role in informing the Parliament, the elected representatives of the people and the people of our country, about the activities and achievements of the Government as well as of its intent, policies and plans for the ensuing year. The Motion of Thanks on the Address and discussion thereon offer enormous opportunities to the members of Parliament to speak freely on all important national and international concerns including those which are not even specifically mentioned in the Address. Such discussions prove to be of immense value in not only highlighting the vital issues and concerns of the members and drawing the attention of the Government thereon, but also for suggesting improvements in Government policies and actions. President's Addresses are, in fact, a guiding force in ensuring permanence in progress and effecting changes needed to overcome the challenges. These Addresses, in fact, constitute a continuing link in policies, plans and their implementation in the priority areas of national concern and fill the gaps between the two Governments.

I am happy that the Lok Sabha Secretariat has brought out a well-documented Publication on *Presidential Addresses to Parliament*. Presidential Addresses from January 1950 to February 2015 in a single volume makes this a valuable document as it spells out the various initiatives, policies and plans envisaged by successive Governments over a period of time. I express my deep gratitude to the Hon'ble President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee Ji for his illuminating Foreword which has added greatly to the value of the Publication.

(iv)

I recommend this Publication to all those who believe in the ideals of democracy and its institutions.

New Delhi;
June, 2015

SUMITRA MAHAJAN,
Speaker, Lok Sabha

EDITOR'S NOTE

Research and Information Division of the Lok Sabha Secretariat, from time to time, publishes documents of research and reference value. Over the years, these publications have become rich repositories of knowledge and information relating to the various facets and the working of the Parliament.

President's Address to Parliament is an important occasion in our scheme of governance as envisaged by the Constitution. Since the Address is a policy Statement regarding the activities and achievements of the Government, it is important to systematically document all such Addresses, especially for the help of future generations. It is in this context that the Lok Sabha Secretariat has decided to bring out a revised edition of the Publication *Presidential Addresses to Parliament* in order to make available all the 76 Addresses from January 1950 to February 2015 at one place.

In an endeavour to make the document a valuable source of information, a Chapter on '*Presidential Addresses to Parliament - An Introduction*' is an addition. The Chapter explains in brief the origin, historical background, procedures and relevance of President's Address to Parliament. Brief information regarding the then Provisional Parliament/Lok Sabha Session, name of the President; the Vice-President; the Prime Minister and the Lok Sabha Speaker have also been given in boxes at the beginning of each Presidential Address.

I take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation for the dedication and hard work put in by Shri P.K. Misra, Additional Secretary, Shri C.N. Sathyanathan, Director, Km. Manju Jain, Additional Director, Shri Satya Vijay Ram, Joint Director and Smt. Urmila Sharma, Deputy Director in bringing out this Publication. Thanks are also due to the Officers and Staff of the Translation and the Printing Services for their valuable cooperation and contribution.

It is hoped that the publication will be found useful and informative by the law-makers, researchers and those interested in the functioning of the largest democracy of the world.

New Delhi;
June, 2015

ANOOP MISHRA,
Secretary-General

List of Abbreviations

| | |
|---------|---|
| AIBP | Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme |
| AIDS | Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome |
| AIR | All India Radio |
| APDRP | Accelerated Power Development and Reforms Programme |
| APL | Above Poverty Line |
| ASEAN | Association of South-East Asian Nations |
| ASEM | Asia-Europe Meeting |
| ASHAs | Accredited Social Health Activists |
| AYUSH | Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy |
| BALCO | Bharat Aluminium Company Limited |
| BIMSTEC | Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation. |
| BPCL | Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited |
| BPL | Below Poverty Line |
| BRICS | Brazil, Russia, India, China and South-Africa |
| BSNL | Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited |
| CHOGM | Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting |
| CIL | Coal India Limited |
| CMC | Computer Maintenance Corporation |
| CPSEs | Central Public Sector Enterprises |
| CPSU | Communist Party of the Soviet Union |
| CRZ | Coastal Regulation Zone |
| CSIR | Council of Scientific and Industrial Research |
| DDT | Dichloro Diphenyl Trichloroethane |
| DMICDC | Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor Development Corporation |
| DMU | Delivery Monitoring Unit |
| DNA | Deoxyribo Nucleic Acid |
| DRDO | Defence Research Development Organisation |
| DTH | Direct-to-Home |

| | |
|---------|---|
| DVC | Damodar Valley Corporation |
| ECAFE | Economic Commission for Asia and Far East |
| ECS | Electronic Clearing System |
| EDUSAT | Educational Satellite |
| EEC | European Economic Community |
| EPC | Engineering, Procurement and Construction |
| EU | European Union |
| FDI | Foreign Direct Investment |
| FII | Foreign Institutional Investor |
| GATT | General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| GDR | German Democratic Republic |
| GM | Genetically Modified |
| GNP | Gross National Product |
| GRT | Gross Registered Tonnage |
| GSLV | Geo-synchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle |
| GST | Goods and Services Tax |
| GTA | Gorkhaland Territorial Administration |
| HBJ | Hazira-Bijapur-Jagdishpur |
| HIV | Human Immunodeficiency Virus |
| HUDCO | Housing and Urban Development Corporation |
| IBSA | India-Brazil-South Africa |
| ICAR | Indian Council of Agricultural Research |
| ICDS | Integrated Child Development Services |
| ICMR | Indian Council of Medical Research |
| ICT | Information Communication Technology |
| IDBI | Industrial Development Bank of India |
| IETF | International Engineering and Technology Fair |
| IITs | Indian Institutes of Technology |
| ILO | International Labour Organisation |
| IMF | International Monetary Fund |
| INF | Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces |
| INSAT | Indian National Satellite |
| INSPIRE | Innovation in Science Pursuit for Inspired Research |
| IPCL | Indian Petrochemicals Corporation Limited |

| | |
|---------|---|
| IRDP | Integrated Rural Development Programme |
| IRS | Indian Remote Sensing |
| ISI | Indian Statistical Institute |
| ISI | Inter-Services Intelligence |
| ISO | International Organisation for Standardization |
| ISRO | Indian Space Research Organisation |
| IT | Information Technology |
| ITDC | India Tourism Development Corporation |
| ITI | Industrial Training Institute |
| JNNURM | Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission |
| KITSAT | Korea Institute of Technology Satellite |
| KVIC | Khadi and Village Industries Commission |
| LoC | Line of Control |
| LPG | Liquefied Petroleum Gas |
| LTTE | Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam |
| MCA | Ministry of Corporate Affairs |
| MBBS | Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery |
| METSAT | Meteorological Satellite |
| MFA | Multi-Fiber Agreement |
| MGNREGS | Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme |
| MISA | Maintenance of Internal Security Act |
| MLA | Member of Legislative Assembly |
| MoDVAT | Modified Value Added Tax |
| MPLADS | Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme |
| MSMEs | Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises |
| MSP | Minimum Support Price |
| MTNL | Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited |
| MTPA | Million Tonnes Per Annum |
| NABARD | National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development |
| NAM | Non-Aligned Movement |
| NCMP | National Common Minimum Programme |
| NDC | National Development Council |
| NEC | North-Eastern Council |
| NEFA | North-East Frontier Agency |

(x)

| | |
|----------|--|
| NELP | New Exploration Licensing Policy |
| NGOs | Non-Governmental Organisations |
| NHAI | National Highways Authority of India |
| NHDP | National Highways Development Project |
| NPE | National Policy on Education |
| NREGA | National Rural Employment Guarantee Act |
| NREP | National Rural Employment Programme |
| NRIs | Non-Resident Indians |
| NSS | National Service Scheme |
| NTC | National Textile Corporation |
| OBCs | Other Backward Classes |
| OCI | Overseas Citizenship of India |
| ONGC | Oil and Natural Gas Commission |
| PAHAL | Pratyaksh Hastantarit Labh |
| PDS | Public Distribution System |
| PIO | Persons of Indian Origin |
| PLO | Palestine Liberation Organisation |
| POTA | Prevention of Terrorism Act |
| PPP | Public-Private Partnership |
| PSLV | Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle |
| PSUs | Public Sector Undertakings |
| PURA | Provision of Urban Amenities in Rural Areas |
| R&D | Research and Development |
| RBI | Reserve Bank of India |
| RLEGP | Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme |
| RTE | Right to Education |
| S&T | Science & Technology |
| SAARC | South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation |
| SAFTA | South Asian Free Trade Area |
| SARDP-NE | Special Accelerated Road Development Programme in North-East |
| SCs | Scheduled Castes |
| SDR | Special Drawing Right |
| SEATO | Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation |
| SEBI | Securities and Exchange Board of India |

| | |
|--------|--|
| SEBs | State Electricity Boards |
| SEZs | Special Economic Zones |
| SHG | Self-Help Group |
| SIT | Special Investigation Team |
| SMS | Short Message Services |
| SSI | Small Scale Industries |
| START | Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty |
| STD | Subscriber Trunk Dialing |
| STs | Scheduled Tribes |
| SWAPO | South-West Africa People's Organisation |
| TB | Tuberculosis |
| TDS | Tax Deducted at Source |
| TPDS | Targeted Public Distribution System |
| TRAI | Telecom Regulatory Authority of India |
| TRIFED | Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Limited |
| TRYSEM | Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment |
| TUBSAT | Technical University of Berlin Satellite |
| UAR | United Arab Republic |
| UGC | University Grants Commission |
| UK | United Kingdom |
| ULFA | United Liberation Front of Assam |
| UMPPs | Ultra Mega Power Projects |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation |
| UPSC | Union Public Service Commission |
| USA | United States of America |
| USSR | United States of Soviet Socialist Republic |
| VAT | Value Added Tax |
| VRS | Voluntary Retirement Scheme |
| VSNL | Videsh Sanchaar Nigam Limited |
| WTO | World Trade Organisation |

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS TO PARLIAMENT— AN INTRODUCTION

The Founding Fathers of the Constitution of India have crafted a futuristic document setting out an institutional structure for governance of the country. The Preamble to the Constitution explicitly constitutes India into a Republic, making its people the source of all authority. It is an elected President who is at the head of the executive power. The Constitution has made the President of India a representative of the nation as well as the people by providing that the President shall be elected by an electoral college consisting of the elected members of both Houses of Parliament and the elected members of the Legislative Assemblies of the States.

As per article 53(1) of the Constitution, the executive power of the Union is vested in the President of India and is exercised by him either directly or through officers subordinate to him in accordance with the Constitution. All executive action of the Government of India shall be expressed to be taken in the name of the President under article 77(1). In consonance with the said position, article 74(1) has made a provision that there shall be a Council of Ministers with the Prime Minister at the head to aid and advise the President who shall, in the exercise of his functions, act in accordance with such advice. And according to article 75 of the Constitution, the Council of Ministers shall be collectively responsible to the House of the People.

As the executive power of the Union is co-extensive with the legislative power of Parliament, the President of India is also a constituent part of Parliament. Article 79 of the Constitution of India provides that there shall be a Parliament for the Union which shall consist of the President and two Houses to be known respectively as the Council of States (Rajya Sabha) and the House of the People (Lok Sabha). Thus, in terms of the Constitution, the President represents a real fusion of the highest executive and legislative authorities. In this context, President's Address to Parliament assumes great significance as it brings together the three constituent parts of Parliament: the President, the House/Houses of Parliament and the Executive.

President's Address in India: Historical Background

In India, the provision for Address by the Head of State to Parliament goes back to the year 1921 when the Central Legislature was set up for

the first time under the Government of India Act, 1919. The Act provided for the Address by the Governor-General in his discretion to either House of the Central Legislature. Though there was no specific provision in the Act for the Governor-General's Address to both the Houses assembled together, in practice during the year 1921 to 1946 the Governor-General addressed the Lower House separately as well as both the Houses assembled together on a number of occasions.

Till August 1947, the Address by the Governor-General was governed by the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1919. After Independence in 1947, the Government of India Act, 1935, as adapted, provided that the Governor-General may address the Dominion Legislature and for that purpose require the attendance of members, but actually the Governor-General did not address the Constituent Assembly (Legislative) on any occasion during its existence from November 1947 to January 1950. During the year 1950, when the Constitution came into force, three sessions of the Provisional Parliament were held. It was felt that to have President's Address as many as three times in a year involved repetitions and expenditure of time on discussions of the Address. Besides, such a procedure involved some administrative difficulties¹. Hence, the Constitution was amended by the Constitution (First Amendment) Act, 1951 so as to provide for the President's Address only at the first session after each general election to the House of the People (Lok Sabha) and at the commencement of the first session each year².

Practice in UK: A Source of Origin

In Commonwealth realms, the practice of the Speech from the Throne marking the opening of Parliament and its sessions originated in the United Kingdom. President's Opening Address in India is used for the purposes similar to those for which the 'Speech from the Throne' is used in the United Kingdom, viz., to announce the programme of the Cabinet for the session and to raise a debate as to the political outlook and matters of general policy or administration³.

The State Opening in the United Kingdom is a royal ceremony⁴ of great antiquity - well-established by the late fourteenth century - which marks the start of a parliamentary year after there has been a general election and once assembled, a Speaker has been chosen by the

¹ M.N. Kaul and S.L. Shakhder: Practice & Procedure of Parliament, 6th Edition, Lok Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi, 2009, pp. 203-204.

² *Vide* Section 7 of the Constitution (First Amendment) Act, 1951.

³ Dr. Durga Das Basu: Introduction to the Constitution of India, 20th Edition, Nagpur, 2010, p. 184.

⁴ In the United Kingdom, both Houses assemble on the day and immediately before the hour appointed for the delivery of the Queen's (Throne) Speech. When the Queen meets Parliament in person, she proceeds in state to the House of Lords, -where, seated on the

House of Commons⁵.

In every session but the first of a Parliament, as there is no election of a Speaker, nor any general swearing of Members, the session is opened at once by the Queen's (Throne) speech, without any preliminary proceedings in either House. Until the causes of summons are declared by the Queen (Throne), either in person, or by Commission, neither House can proceed with any public business: but the causes of summons, as declared from the Throne, do not bind Parliament to consider them alone, or to proceed at once to the consideration of any of them⁶.

When the Queen's speech has been read, an address in answer to it is moved in both Houses. Two Members in each House are selected by the Government for moving and seconding the Address, which is moved in the form of a resolution expressing thanks to the Sovereign for the most gracious speech addressed to both Houses of Parliament, and amendments by way of additions to the resolution may be moved.

The importance of the State Opening is social as well as political. While worded as if it's the Sovereign's own policy, the Speech is, in fact, entirely drafted by the Government ministers and sets out the Government's agenda and key legislative proposals for the session⁷.

Constitution of India and Provisions regarding President's Address

Under article 86 (1) of the Constitution, the President of India has been vested with the right to address either House of Parliament or both Houses assembled together, and for that purpose require the attendance of members⁸. Article 87 of the Constitution makes it incumbent upon the President to address both Houses of Parliament assembled together at the commencement of the first session after each general election to the House of the People (Lok Sabha) and at the commencement of the first

Throne, adorned with her Crown and regal ornaments, and attended by her officers of State (all the Lords being in their robes, and standing until Her Majesty Commands them to be seated), she commands Black Rod, through the Lord Great Chamberlain, to let the Commons know 'it is Her Majesty's pleasure they attend her immediately, in this House'. Once the command of Her Majesty is received through the Black Rod, the Speaker, accompanied by the Clerk and followed by Members of the House, immediately goes up to the Bar of the House of Lords; upon which the Queen reads her speech to both Houses of Parliament, from a printed copy, which is delivered into her hands by the Lord Chancellor, kneeling upon one knee. When the Queen is not personally present, the causes of summons are declared by the Lords Commissioners. (Erskine May Parliamentary Practice, 24th Edition, Lexis Nexis, United Kingdom, 2011, pp.157-158).

⁵ www.parliament.uk

⁶ Erskine May Parliamentary Practice, 24th Edition, Lexis Nexis, United Kingdom, 2011, p.157.

⁷ www.parliament.uk

⁸ Art. 86(1). This provision is analogous to that provided in ss. 63A(2) and 63B(3) as set out in the Ninth Schedule to the Government of India Act, 1935. However, since the commencement of the Constitution, the President has not so far addressed either House or both Houses assembled together under the provision of this article.

session of each year and inform Parliament of the causes of its summons⁹. It also provides that provision shall be made by the rules regulating the procedure of either House for allotment of time for discussion of the matters referred to in such address.

Contents of President's Address

President's Address is the statement of policy of the Government and it is as such drafted by the Government. The Address consists of several paragraphs prepared on the basis of material supplied by different Ministries and Departments of the Government. Few months prior to the Address, the Prime Minister's Office requests all Secretaries to the Government of India to supply material on matters in respect of their Ministries/Departments for incorporation in the Address. Therefore, it is not the President but the Government which is responsible for the contents of the Address¹⁰. The Address contains a review of the activities and achievements of the Government during the previous year and sets out policies which it wishes to pursue with regard to important national and international issues. It also contains a brief account of the programmes of the Government business and indicates the main items of legislative business which are proposed to be brought before Parliament during the sessions to be held that year.

⁹ When a general election to Lok Sabha takes place, the President of India addresses both the Houses assembled together at the commencement of the first session after the general election as well as at the commencement of the first session of the new Lok Sabha in the same year. In 1952, the President addressed both Houses assembled together on 5 February and again after the General Election to the Lok Sabha on 16 May. Similarly in 1957, the President addressed both Houses assembled together on 18 March and again after the General Election to the Lok Sabha on 13 May. In 1962 also, the President addressed both Houses assembled together on 12 March and again after the General Election to the Lok Sabha on 18 April. However in 1967 and also in 1971, the President addressed both the Houses assembled together only once, *i.e.* on 18 March 1967 and 23 March 1971, respectively, as there was no session of the outgoing Lok Sabha after the commencement of the calendar year. In 1977, Lok Sabha was dissolved on 18 January. The first session of Rajya Sabha in that year was held on 28 February, but there was no Address by the President. After the General Election, Lok Sabha was constituted on 23 March 1977. The Vice-President (Shri B.D. Jatti) acting as President, addressed both the Houses assembled together on 28 March 1977. In 1980 and 1985, the President addressed both the Houses of Parliament assembled together only once *i.e.* on 23 January 1980 and 17 January 1985, respectively. However in 1989, the President addressed the Parliament on 21 February and again on 20 December. Similarly in 1991, the President addressed the Parliament on 21 February and again on 11 July; in 1996, the President addressed the Parliament on 26 February and again on 24 May; in 1999, the President addressed the Parliament on 22 February and again on 25 October; and in 2009, the President addressed the Parliament on 12 February and again on 4 June. However in 2014 as the Lok Sabha was adjourned *sine die* on 18 December 2013 but was not prorogued by the President as per the provisions of article 85 of the Constitution and the Second Part of the session was reconvened on 5 February 2014, the President addressed both the Houses assembled together only once, *i.e.* on 9 June 2014 after the General Election to the Lok Sabha.

¹⁰ Rajya Sabha Secretariat: Rajya Sabha At Work, New Delhi, 2006, p. 191.

Fixation of Date for President's Address

In Indian parliamentary system, in the case of the first session after each general election to Lok Sabha, the President Addresses both Houses of Parliament assembled together after the members have made and subscribed the oath or affirmation and the Speaker has been elected. It generally takes two to three days to complete these preliminaries. No other business is transacted till the President has addressed both Houses assembled together. This is done in order to give precedence to the President's Address over all other business. For the same reason, in the case of the first session each year, the President's Address takes place at the time and date notified for commencement of the session of both the Houses of Parliament.

While forwarding to the Speaker the proposal regarding commencement of the first session of a new Lok Sabha or the first session of the year, the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs (or the Leader of the House, in case the Prime Minister is not the Leader of the House) also suggests the date and time at which the President may address both Houses of Parliament assembled together¹¹. The President's order summoning either House of Parliament does not make any mention of the Address by the President nor is the information regarding the Address contained in the summons issued to members. Members are informed about the date, time and venue of the President's Address through a paragraph in the Bulletin.

President's Address: The Most Solemn Act

In Indian parliamentary democracy, President's Address to both Houses of Parliament assembled together is the most solemn and formal act under the Constitution¹². Members of both Houses of Parliament assemble together in the Central Hall of the Parliament House where the President delivers the Address. Utmost dignity and decorum befitting the occasion are required to be maintained.

A few days before the Address, members are informed through Bulletin about the ceremonies and rules to be observed on that occasion. They are also requested to take their seats five minutes before the President arrives in the Central Hall and remain in their seats till the President leaves the Central Hall after the conclusion of the Address.

The President arrives at the Parliament House in the State coach or Limousine car and is received by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha, the Prime Minister, the Speaker, Lok Sabha, the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and the Secretaries-General of the two Houses. Thereafter, the President is conducted to the Central Hall in a procession. As soon as the Presidential

¹¹M.N. Kaul and S.L. Shakhder, op.cit., pp. 205-206.

¹²*Ibid.*, pp. 206-211.

procession enters the Central Hall, the Marshal announces the arrival of the President. Simultaneously, two trumpeters positioned in the Gallery above the dais sound the fanfare till the President reaches his seat on the dais. All the members then rise in their places and remain standing until the President has taken his seat. Immediately thereafter, the National Anthem is played by the band of Rashtrapati Bhavan which is positioned in one of the Lobbies of the Central Hall. The President then reads the printed Address in Hindi or English followed by reading of the Address in the other version, if necessary, by the Chairman, Rajya Sabha. After the conclusion of the Address, the National Anthem is played again. The President, thereafter, leaves the Central Hall in a procession which is formed in the same manner as at the time of arrival. The members remain standing till the procession leaves the Central Hall.

Laying a copy of President's Address on the Table - Procedure

The procedure of laying¹³ on the Table a copy of President's Address was adopted for the first time in 1952 when the President addressed both Houses of Parliament on 16 May 1952 after the first General Elections. Prior to that, President's Address to the Provisional Parliament or the Governor-General's Address to the Central Legislative Assembly or both Houses of Central Legislature was printed in the Debates without its having been laid on the Table of the House.

When the members of two Houses of Parliament assemble together to hear the President's Address, it does not constitute a sitting of Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha or a joint sitting of the two Houses. A sitting of Lok Sabha or a joint sitting is duly constituted only when it is presided over by the Speaker or any other member competent to preside over under the Constitution or the Rules. Likewise, a sitting of Rajya Sabha is duly constituted when it is presided over by the Chairman or a member competent to preside over. Therefore, in order that the Address delivered by the President forms part of, and is incorporated in the proceedings of the Houses, both the Houses meet separately in their respective Chambers half-an-hour after the conclusion of the President's Address when a copy each of the Hindi and the English version of the Address duly authenticated by the President is laid on the Table by the respective Secretaries-General. The authenticated copy is handed over to the two Secretariats by the Military Secretary to the President on the day when the President delivers the Address¹⁴.

¹³*Ibid.*, pp. 211-212.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, and Rajya Sabha Secretariat, op.cit., pp. 191-192.

As a matter of convention, printed copies of the Address, received from the President's Secretariat, are distributed to members and others only after a copy thereof has been laid on the Table. A copy each of the Hindi and the English version of the Address is distributed to members in the lobby of the Houses¹⁵.

In case certain corrections are made by the President in the copy of the Address authenticated by him and if these corrections have not been incorporated in other printed copies, a corrigendum is issued by the respective Secretariats before distribution of copies to members. If any error is detected by a Ministry in the Address after it has been delivered by the President and a copy thereof is laid on the Table, the procedure for correcting the error is that the Ministry concerned brings it to the notice of the President. On his approving of the correction being made, the President may send a message to the two Houses, which, when announced and laid on the Table, is incorporated in the proceedings and official records.

Motion of Thanks and Discussion on President's Address

There was no provision either in the Government of India Act, 1919, or in the Government of India Act, 1935, for discussion on the Governor-General's Address to the Central Legislature. However, after Independence, article 87(2) of the Constitution, as originally enacted, provided that provision be made by rules regulating the procedure of either House for the allotment of time for discussion of the matters referred to in the President's Address and for the precedence of such discussion over other business of the House. Accordingly, discussion on the Address commenced, during the three sessions of the Provisional Parliament in 1950, on the day following the delivery of the Address by the President. It was, however, felt that a discussion on the Address immediately after it had been delivered did not give sufficient time to members to study the Address and prepare themselves for the discussion and also to give notices of amendments. The words "and for the precedence of such discussion over other business of the House" were, therefore, omitted by the Constitution (First Amendment) Act, 1951¹⁶.

The Speaker, in consultation with the Leader of the House, allots time for the discussion of the matters referred to in the President's Address under Rule 16 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in

¹⁵*Ibid.*

¹⁶*Vide* Section 7 of the Constitution (First Amendment) Act, 1951.

Lok Sabha¹⁷. For this purpose, about a week before the President's Address, the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs (or the Leader of the House in case the Prime Minister is not the Leader of the House) suggests the provisional programme of dates for discussion on the Address. The actual allocation of time for discussion on the Address is, however, made by the House on the recommendation of the Business Advisory Committee. Generally three days are allotted for the discussion.

Under Rule 17 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, discussion on matters referred to in the President's Address takes place on a Motion of Thanks moved by a member and seconded by another member.

The form of the Motion is:—

“That the Members of Lok Sabha assembled in this session are deeply grateful to the President for the Address which she/he has been pleased to deliver to both the Houses of Parliament assembled together on [] date.”

The notice of the Motion, given by a member and seconded by another, is received through the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs (and through the Leader of the House in case the Prime Minister is not the Leader of the House), and after it is admitted by the Speaker, the Motion is published in the Bulletin and the List of Business.

Likewise, in Rajya Sabha, Rules 14 to 21 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business¹⁸ provide for the procedure to be followed for Motion of Thanks and discussion on President's Address, which is similar in nature to that of Lok Sabha.

The scope of discussion on the Address is very wide and the members are free to speak on all issues relating to governmental activities. Even matters which are not specifically mentioned in the Address are brought into discussion through amendments to the Motion of Thanks. The only limitations are that members cannot refer to matters which are not the direct responsibility of the Central Government and that the name of the President cannot be brought in during the debate since the Government and not the President is responsible for the contents of the Address¹⁹.

¹⁷Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, 15th Edition, Lok Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi, 2014.

¹⁸Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States, 8th Edition, Rajya Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi, 2013.

¹⁹M.N. Kaul and S.L. Shakdher, op.cit., pp. 213-214.

Amendments to the Motion of Thanks

Notices of amendments to Motion of Thanks on the President's Address can be tabled after the President has delivered the Address²⁰. Notices of amendments to the Motion of Thanks are tabled by members with reference to matters referred to in the Address as well as to matters which in the opinion of the movers thereof, the Address had failed to mention.

Under Rule 18 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, the amendments to the Motion of Thanks may be moved by members in such form as may be considered appropriate by the Speaker. The amendments tabled by members are examined in the Secretariat and such of them as are *prima facie* in order are circulated to members. The amendments which are inconsistent with the provisions of the Constitution or refer discourteously to a friendly foreign Government or Head of State or cast reflection on the conduct of the President and Vice-President or relate to matters under control of the Speaker, are disallowed. If separate time has been allotted during the same session for discussion of a particular subject referred to in the Address, amendments pertaining to the subject are disallowed.

Discussion on the Motion is initiated by the proposer of the Motion, who is followed by the seconder. The members who have tabled amendments are then asked to indicate their intention to move the amendments standing in their names and such of the amendments as are selected by members are taken as moved and an announcement to that effect is made by the Speaker. Even at this stage the Speaker has the discretion to rule any amendment out of order even though it had been circulated to the members. Those members who do not move the amendments at this stage are not permitted to do so later when the discussion has started. In rare cases, however, where the Speaker is satisfied with the explanation of the member for not moving his amendment at the appropriate stage, the Speaker may permit the member to move the amendment at a later stage.

Under Rule 21 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, the Speaker may prescribe a time limit for speeches after taking the sense of the House. For this purpose, on the opening day of the discussion, the Speaker makes an announcement fixing the time limit which does not ordinarily exceed 30 minutes for the Leaders of Groups and 15 minutes for other members. The Prime Minister, when replying to the debate on behalf of the Government is, however, allowed more time.

²⁰Lok Sabh Secretariat: Parliamentary Procedure Abstract Series No. 1 'President's Address and Motion of Thanks', New Delhi, 2014.

Discussion on the Address is generally not interrupted during the course of the sitting of the House by any other business. However, under Rule 19 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, notwithstanding that a day has been allotted for discussion on the President's Address, a motion or motions for leave to introduce a Bill or Bills may be made and a Bill or Bills may be introduced on such day; and other business of a formal character may be transacted on such day before the House commences or continues the discussion on the Address. Further, the discussion on the Address may be postponed in favour of a Government Bill or other Government business on a motion being made that the discussion on the Address be adjourned to a subsequent day to be appointed by the Speaker. The Speaker shall forthwith put the question, no amendment or debate being allowed. Besides, the discussion on the Address shall be interrupted in the course of a sitting by an adjournment motion under Rule 61 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha.

At the end, the Prime Minister or any other Minister, whether previously taken part in the discussion or not, shall on behalf of the Government has a general right of explaining the position of the Government²¹. On some occasions, however, Ministers have participated in, or replied to, the debate on points concerning their respective Ministries and the Prime Minister has reviewed the position on matters of national and international importance²². After the Prime Minister has replied to the debate, the amendments that had been moved are disposed of and the Motion of Thanks put to the House and adopted.

There have been instances when amendments have been made to the Motion of Thanks to the Presidents' Address in the Rajya Sabha²³. On one occasion, the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address became infructuous because while concluding his reply to the Motion of Thanks on 6 March 1991 on the President's Address, which was delivered on 21 February 1991, the Prime Minister informed that the Council of Minister had decided to tender their resignation and that he would be meeting the President immediately to convey to him their decision. In view of the decision of the Council of Ministers to resign, the Speaker observed that the Motion of Thanks had become infructuous²⁴.

²¹ Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, *op.cit.*, Rule 20 and Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States, *op.cit.*, Rule 18.

²² M.N. Kaul and S.L. Shakhder, *op.cit.*, pp. 215-216.

²³ In 1980, 1989, 2001 and 2015, amendments to the Motion of Thanks were made in the Rajya Sabha (Rajya Sabha Secretariat: Rajya Sabha At Work, *op.cit.*, p. 201 and Rajya Sabha Bulletin Part-1, No. 5173, 3 March, 2015).

²⁴ M.N. Kaul and S.L. Shakhder, *op.cit.*, pp. 214-216.

Motion of Thanks conveyed to the President and Message from the President thereon

After the Motion of Thanks is adopted in the respective Houses, it is conveyed to the President through letters by the Chairman in the case of Rajya Sabha and by the Speaker in the case of Lok Sabha. In reply to the Chairman's and the Speaker's letters, the President acknowledges the receipt of the Motion of Thanks through a message. This message is read out to the respective Houses by the Chairman and the Speaker²⁵.

²⁵ *Ibid*, p. 218 and Rajya Sabha Secretariat, *op.cit.*, pp. 200-201.