

Prime Minister Narendra Modi : Valedictory Remarks at the Conclusion of 17th Session of Sixteenth Lok Sabha (13-02-2019)

Speaker Madam, as the Leader of the 16th Lok Sabha, I on behalf of all the members of the House, congratulate you for managing this House with such patience, balance and always with a smile on your face during your entire tenure

You are deeply influenced by Devi Ahilya Ji's life and teachings and you have always tried to apply those teachings and principles. Following the same principles you have often taken tough decisions pertaining to the government in power as well as the opposition from time to time, creating a perfect balance. I believe that these values and ideals will always be used to maintain the best practices of Lok Sabha.

I believe that you have done a noble work for the new members by forming the women's organization. You have played a crucial role in enriching the culture of debate, its content and information.

Speaker madam,

In 2014, I was among the newly elected MPs. I had no idea about the geography of the Parliament or of anything. I was completely new. I used to view everything with a lot of inquisitiveness - what is it, where is it etc. But when I started sitting here, I wondered what that button was for. I tried to understand. So, I noticed one plate here. Prior to me 13 Prime Ministers had assumed responsibilities in the same place. While on the plate, names of only three Prime Ministers were written. What was the reason? The scholars with liberal ideology might delve deeper into it and guide us through this question.

Everything was new to me. I was curious about everything. About three decades later, in 2014, a government has been formed with absolute majority that too without Congress leadership. In this 16th Lok Sabha, 17 sessions had taken place. In eight of these sessions, there was more than 100% work done. If we see, we are departing with an outcome of 85% on an average.

Parliamentary Affairs Ministers have their own responsibilities. Tomarji is taking care of it now. Earlier Venkaiahji was in charge of it. He has done a commendable job. Now he is playing a crucial role as the Vice President and as the Chairman of the Upper House. We can feel the absence of Anant Kumar ji, our vibrant colleague, but I congratulate everyone who has worked.

We can also feel proud of the 16th Lok Sabha as it was in this period that for the first time we had the highest percentage of women MPs. Of them 44 women MPs were the first timers. And during the entire tenure, the participation of the women MPs was the highest. We should register it. I congratulate all the women MPs.

For the first time we had the largest number of women Ministers in the cabinet and for the first time two women Ministers are participating in the security related committee -the Defense Minister and the External Affairs Minister. Even the Speaker is a woman and also the Registrar General and Secretary General. I congratulate the Lok Sabha Secretary General and her entire team as well as everyone managing this entire complex.

In this House, no one should feel that I am standing here to announce the government's achievements. But during the last five years, the entire House has made commendable contributions, people in the opposition as well as in power, everyone has helped in giving strength to our work.

It is a good news for each one of us that during the last four and a half years, during that tenure, India has become the world's sixth largest economy. This has been a great achievement of this tenure and we all are the partners in the same. The policies have directed us towards becoming a trillion dollar economy and the work done by our House has played a major role in helping the nation grow at a faster rate.

Today, India's self-confidence is very high and self-confidence is a great strength to move forward; self-confidence is a great strength to go and win and fight against the challenges. Today the nation is brimming with confidence. This House with unity and good momentum has played a crucial role in generating this confidence and leading these significant processes.

Today, all reputed institutions of the world, continue to express their feelings unanimously in relation to India's bright future without any hesitation. And it has naturally been this period for the country wherein India has made its place in the digital world and has made a lot of achievements.

As the world is talking about global warming, India is leading in terms of energy conservation with International Solar Alliance. Just like there is an organization of countries with petroleum products, that day is not far when the impact of this decision of India will reflect in

the coming decades. The International Solar Alliance has the same power to conserve environment and to fight against global warming. However, I believe that this tenure has played a crucial role in providing an alternate life system to the world. India has secured its place in the field of Space. The maximum number of satellite launches have taken place during this tenure. It has become our strength. Today, India has become a destination as launching pad for the world. It is also becoming a Centre for economic activity. India is taking bold steps towards moving forward with self-reliance in the field of manufacturing and Make in India.

The world is taking India seriously today. People might be under the illusion that India's status has enhanced due to Modi ji and Sushma ji but the reality is different. The reason for the enhancement of this status is a government with absolute majority. The world recognizes a government with absolute majority.

The period of 30 years in between had resulted in a loss due to a lack of such government. This is because when a leader with complete support meets another leader of a nation, he/she knows that the former has a mandate. This has a separate weight. I have experienced for all the five years that the credit for the position that India has secured today goes not to Modi or Sushma ji but to the decision of 125 crore Indians in 2014.

Similarly, India got a place in several international organizations during this tenure. We also resolved the land dispute with Bangladesh during this period. It was major task. After India was divided and Bangladesh was formed, the disputes emerged but it was resolved by this House. And I believe we had a special characteristics that we had worked together and the message of consensus has been given out to the world. Today I express my gratitude to the House as well as all the parties.

Similarly, a new aspect of our Foreign Policy has emerged. It is as if Human rights and human values is a responsibility of just one part of the world and no one else is concerned with it. And we are being blamed for human rights violations. Such an image has been created for us even though this is the country that talks of humanity and '*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*'. Yet I don't know why such an image has been created. But if you look at the last five years, we have provided aid during the Nepal earthquake, or water crisis in Maldives, or after the cyclones hit Fiji and Sri Lanka or during the refugee crisis in Bangladesh due to Myanmar. We had rescued people stuck in foreign lands, like Yemen. We have rescued 80 people in Nepal and sent them back safely.

India has made a great contribution towards humanity. Yoga has become our pride in the entire world. Out of all the resolutions passed in the UN till date, the resolution related to yoga has been passed in the shortest time and with the consent of maximum members. UN has celebrated the 125th birth anniversary of Baba Saheb Ambedkar and 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. One could never imagine that the song '*Vaishnava Jana to tene re kahiyee*' that runs in our veins was sung by famous singers from 150 nations on the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi and homage was paid to him in this way. That is, we are realizing today how soft power can be taken to the world.

We must have seen that on 26th January, all the states keeping Gandhi at the center had presented him in a unique way. That is, commemorating Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary. We have celebrated the Constitution Day during this tenure. We had organized a special discussion for the 125th birth anniversary of Baba Saheb in this House. We, in this House, have given time to the UN's sustainable development goal during this tenure and had discussed together on the sustainable development goal; these new things have been possible under the leadership of this House during this tenure and therefore I congratulate all the members of the House. I express my gratitude to each member of this House.

About 219 bills were introduced and 203 bills were passed. And whenever the MPs of this House will ever write or tell anyone about the 16th Lok Sabha or their life during or after elections, they must definitely include the fact that when they were a part of this House during this tenure, they had formulated a tough law against black money and corruption. Such laws that couldn't be made before, have been formulated by this House. And the most important law against the black money accumulated abroad was framed in this House.

This House has framed the IBC law associated with the bankrupt companies as well as law related to the Benami properties. The same House has also framed laws against the economic offenders.

I believe that during the 5 years of the House's tenure, the House has served the coming century of the country by passing the best laws against black money and corruption and enhancing the legal system for fighting against the same so that there is a strength of our law in the international platform. So, many congratulations to this House and your leadership. Even the future generations will congratulate you on this. The same House had passed the GST bill. A joint session had been summoned at 12 midnight. Without taking credit, the GST was passed through the previous Finance Minister and the then President so that everyone got the rights and we could walk on our mantra of '*Sabka Sath Sabka Vikas*'.

Similarly, the same House had provided a legal strength to the Aadhaar bill. Aadhaar is a wonder for the world. The world can see that this nation has done such a major task and is trying to understand this process. This has been a major accomplishment in the world.

The nation became independent. However, what was the mindset that prevented us from taking decisions on enemy property? The enemy property bill was passed rigidly.

This House will continue to impact the society with social justice for a long period of time - reservation for the poor section of the society that belongs to the upper caste. Without any bitterness, confusion, doubt or fear in anyone's mind, the voice of that oppressed section of the society was heard by passing the law. All the MPs from all the parties of both the Houses deserve appreciation. The 10% reservation was an important task.

Similarly, the formation of the OBC commission and clearing out the misunderstanding related to the SC/ST Act after the Supreme Court decision was done by this House. The world is surprised about the fact that Maternity leaves have been increased from 12 weeks to 26 weeks by amending the maternity benefit act. The world today is considering India to be a nation with progressive mindset. This House has accomplished it.

The House frames laws but the nation and the world will also remember this tenure for not only making laws but also ending certain outdated laws. The Members of this very House have ended more than 1400 laws. A forest of laws had grown and this House has found new roads by clearing out those laws. Even after ending 1400 laws, I say that this is the beginning. There is still a lot left and Mulayam Singh ji has given us his blessings for that.

Such a great task! But I feel that we could not take it to the nation, the way we should have. There was always a slur on all of us, the MPs that we decided our own salary; we kept on increasing it as per our whims and never cared for the nation. The day the salary of the MPs increased, all kinds of abuses were hurled at us from all over. This had been going on for the past 50 years.

For the first time, all the MPs together have found out a solution to get rid of this criticism and have created such a constitutional system under which everyone will have same salary. They won't have to decide it themselves. The MPs have now been liberated from this criticism. For the last 50 years, several senior MPs had to face criticisms and take the abuses. But this House has now liberated them all. Our Jitendra ji had provided us good quality food, but we could hear criticisms outside that canteen had low funds and food was expensive outside. Why do these MPs act in this way?

I am glad that Jitendraji's committee had accepted my request and even Speaker Madam had accepted it. The prices of the food items in canteen is no longer cheap. I know it might be pinching your pockets but we have taken steps in dealing with that issue too. I believe that we will resolve this issue completely in the coming days.

Likewise, this House will be pleased to know a few more things. We used to hear that there will be an earthquake in the House. However, the five year term is going to complete but nothing has happened. The power of democracy and the dignity of Lok Sabha are such that those things never happened. On certain occasions there used to be heated exchanges, at times from that side and sometimes from this side too. Sometimes certain words were used that shouldn't have been used be it from the ruling side or the opposition side. However, as the Leader of this House, I would say - **मिक्षामी दुखमः**: these words have a strong message and I express that feeling of apology.

Similar things used to happen between Mallikarjun ji and us. I wish his throat was okay today. We could have benefitted from his words. Sometimes when I was not able to hear him, I used to watch the entire detail later and it was necessary too. His words were really useful to arouse my consciousness and decision making. In fact, most of the time I could get the content of my speech from there. So, I am really grateful to Kharge ji for that. Advani ji used to sit in the House for a long time and even Kharge ji used to sit for the entire time. This is something that we Parliamentarians should learn. It has been almost 50 years of his representation. This is not a small thing. You have fulfilled your responsibility in a commendable way. With due respect, I congratulate you.

When I came to this House for the first time, I got to know a lot of new things. For example, for the first time I got to know the difference between hugging someone and hounding someone. For the first time I could see what anger is in the eyes. I could see the game played by the expressions of eyes. The foreign media too enjoyed it. As a Parliamentarian, it is our responsibility to maintain the dignity of the Parliament and we have tried our best.

This time we could witness the talent of our MPs. One day while I was delivering a speech, I could hear the MPs guffaw at the President in this House. The people from the entertainment industry require such guffaws. Even the greatest of the artists wouldn't have such guffaws that I got to hear here.

Similarly, different attires! Our TDP colleague is not here but Naramalli Sivaprasad of TDP used to wear such extraordinary costumes! Tension used to turn into attention. Our tenure has been spent with a lot of joy!

A new MP like me has learnt a lot from all of you. Despite being a newcomer, you all have always helped me and have never let me feel out of place. I am extremely grateful to you for all the support, guidance and leadership that you have given me in the beginning of the first innings. I am especially grateful to the respected Mulayam Singh Ji whose affection is very valuable to us as well as everyone. The contribution of all the senior members is very valuable. Once again I congratulate you from the bottom of my heart.

I congratulate all the staff associated with this House who have taken care of all the MPs and have made the necessary arrangements. And my best wishes to all the Parliamentarians so that we are able to carry forward a healthy democracy and a healthy competition to strengthen the democracy further.

With these best wishes and spirit, I end my speech. Once again, bowing my head, I offer my gratitude to all the Parliamentarians from the core of my heart.

Thank you.