RAJYA SABHA

Announcing the Address

The House met at 16 minutes past 12 of the clock. Mr. Chairman in the Chair.

The National Anthem was played.

ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING THE LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Chairman: I have to inform Members that the Prime Minister has nominated Shri Sikander Bakht as the Leader of the House in the Rajya Sabha.

ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

Mr. Chairman: I have to inform Members that I have recognised the Indian National Congress [Congress (I)] Party in the Rajya Sabha as the Opposition party and its leader Dr. Manmohan Singh as the Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha.

PRESIDENT’S ADDRESS

Laid on the Table

Secretary-General: Sir, I beg to lay on the table a copy (in English and Hindi) of the President’s Address to both the Houses of Parliament assembled together on the 25th March, 1998. [Placed in Library, See No. LT-2/98] [Text of the Address delivered by the President (Shri K.R. Naryan) in English.] Hon’ble Members,

I have great pleasure in addressing this first session of both Houses of Parliament after the 12th General Election to the Lok Sabha. I extend my warm felicitations to the members of the new Lok Sabha.

I thank the Election Commission of India for conducting the General Election with despatch and efficiency.

The just concluded mid-term election reflected the firm conviction of our people in democratic processes of change. Contrary to forecasts that the turnout would be low, in fact, nearly 62 per cent of the electorate exercised their franchise. The results are indicative of regional aspirations seeking a place in the national perspective. My Government will ensure the fulfillment of these aspirations even while looking after national interests.

Parliamentary arithmetic alone cannot provide the key to good governance. That key lies in the willingness of all to rise above notions of parliamentary majority and minority and work in a spirit of cooperation, conciliation and consensus. My Government, imbued with this spirit, will chart a new course in governance that seeks to unify and not divide: dialogue, debate and discussion will replace the narrow antagonisms of the past.

After the mid-term election, the nation now looks forward to a Government that will get down to business. This is precisely what the Government proposes to do: The most immediate tasks include the passage of the Supplementary Demands for 1997-98 and the Vote on Account for 1998-99. Thereafter, pending matters, including legislative business, will be taken up in right earnest.

Starting now, all our efforts will be directed at building a New India—an India free from the triple-curse of insecurity, hunger and corruption; an India free from illiteracy and disease; an India where more and more people are gainfully employed; an India where every citizen, irrespective of his caste, creed or faith, feels proud to be an Indian.

Secularism is integral to India’s traditions. My Government is unequivocally committed to upholding...
our secular values.

My Government's top priority will be to reach out to the underprivileged and the unempowered. More than one third of our people live below the poverty line. An even larger number does not have access to basic education and health care facilities. This vast multitude must be facilitated to obtain its meaningful share in national prosperity.

Government proposes to accomplish this through the three-fold strategy of ensuring food security to every household by better targeting of the Public Distribution System, accelerating generation of employment opportunities in every sector of the economy and providing shelter to the largest possible number.

One of the weaknesses of socio-economic policies so far has been the less than adequate attention to the social sector. The Government is pledged to investing larger resources in social infrastructure. The commitment to progressively step up spending on education to 6 per cent of GDP will be fulfilled. Every effort shall be made to provide basic health facilities to all. Simultaneously, potable drinking water shall be made available in every village and habitat, within a specified time frame.

Our population growth rate is a matter of grave concern. The Government will soon formulate a National Population Policy which will aim at stabilising the population growth through, among other things, incentives and disincentives.

In a civil society, children are born to be happy. Unfortunately, large numbers of children in our society are born only to toil in factories, workshops and fields. My Government believes that children should be in schools and playgrounds and not toiling away their childhood. Apart from implementing the constitutional provision of free and compulsory primary education, Government will introduce a National Charter for Children which, among other things, will ensure that no child goes to sleep hungry. Children have rights, and these will be upheld.

Special efforts will be made to remove gender disparities and injustice that exist, especially in access to education, employment opportunities and political representation. Government will provide free education to women up to graduation so that India can become an example of a developing country overcoming the handicap of poor female literacy. By investing in education for women, my Government will be investing in the future generations of Indians.

The pending legislation seeking to reserve 33 per cent seats for women in Parliament and State Assemblies will be taken up immediately. A Development Bank, the first of its kind, will be set up for women entrepreneurs.

By synergising legal, executive and societal efforts, the Government will strive for rapid social, economic and political empowerment and uplift of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Backward Classes and Minorities. My Government will take all appropriate measures to uphold existing percentages of reservation in educational institutions at the State level. In keeping with its belief that governance must seek to unify rather than divide, Government will strive for social harmony and justice in place of social conflict and injustice.

Prosperity and economic well-being cannot be the privilege of a few; it must percolate to the last person in the last row. Hence, my Government will pursue the twin objectives of total eradication of poverty through generation of employment opportunities as well as sustaining a higher GDP growth of 7 to 8 per cent. The Central theme of my Government's national development plan will be "Berozgari Hatao".

Shelter is a basic human necessity. The Government will evolve policies to accelerate the construction of housing units and facilitate the participation of private sector in order to ensure that housing for all becomes a reality.

Urgent measures will be taken to substantially step up investment in the infrastructure sectors, including power, roads and bridges, railways, inland waterways, sea ports, shipping, airports, telecommunications and information technology. Government will evolve a sound framework for fiscal and monetary policies.
The Government believes that India can—and shall—be built by Indians. No country that is largely or entirely dependent on resources from abroad can truly prosper. Hence, efforts will be made to increase national saving to 30 per cent of the GDP over the next five years. Foreign Direct Investment will be encouraged in the core sector of the economy and in physical infrastructure development.

About 40 per cent of our GDP comes from the unincorporated sector, which has so far been neglected. The Government proposes to evolve an appropriate policy framework for facilitating the growth of millions of small enterprises that exist in the country. For meeting the financial requirements of this crucial sector of the economy, which has a very high potential for growth and generation of employment opportunities, Government will consider the setting up of a dedicated Development Bank.

The Government will ensure to make labour an equal partner in national reconstruction. Special care will be taken to look after the interests of agricultural labour who are largely unorganised.

Agriculture has suffered on account of declining investment. Government will halt this decline and earmark up to 60 per cent of Plan funds for this crucial segment of our economy. Subsidies will continue but they will be better targeted. Government is committed to re-establish our farmers as a strong and self-confident community enjoying the fruits of prosperity.

Apart from setting into motion plans for all-round development of rural India, my Government will also cushion farmers from unforeseen natural calamities by introducing effective crop insurance policies. All efforts will be made for rapid rural industrialisation, with special emphasis on agro-based industry.

Since maintenance of ecological balance is crucial for our survival, the Government will initiate institutional measures to ensure that all development programmes are in conformity with the principles of sustainable development. Government firmly believes that science and technology have a vital role to play in the achievement of sustainable development and transforming India into a prosperous, strong and self-confident nation.

On Centre-State relations, my Government will immediately act on the Sarkaria Commission’s recommendations as well as seek ways and means for greater devolution of powers up to the panchayat level. The Governor’s office has often been the centre of unseemly controversy. Raj Bhavans will not be used for securing political objectives.

The Government will set up a Committee to study the feasibility of treating all the 18 languages included in Schedule VIII of the Constitution as official languages.

The Government will attend to the States’ demand for higher allocation of resources. A Backward Areas Commission will be set up to identify those areas which need extra assistance so that they do not lag behind in development.

Government is committed to initiate action to carve out Uttaranchal in Uttar Pradesh, Vananchal in Bihar and Chhatisgarh in Madhya Pradesh. Delhi will be given full Statehood.

A National Water Policy which will provide for effective and prompt settlement of disputes and their time-bound implementation will be evolved.

Security of the nation and its citizens is paramount. My Government will not compromise on this. The nation’s sovereignty and territorial integrity will be protected at all costs. We will not bow to any pressure on this front. My Government joins the country in saluting the bravery of the personnel of our armed forces who are ever prepared to make sacrifices for the defence of the nation.

Every citizen has the right to feel secure and be free from fear. Government will strive to combat the menace of terrorism, subversion and insurgency that has come to haunt the common man. Violence has no place in a democracy. Difference should—and can—be resolved through dialogue and discussion.

My Government re-affirms India’s
commitment to peace among all nations, to the prosperity of the peoples of the world and to enhance its role in the international arena. We will strive for Asian solidarity and enhanced regional cooperation. Renewed efforts will be made to improve bilateral relationships with neighbouring countries without any third party mediation or interference.

One of the urgent issues before the world community is the re-structuring of the United Nations and its organs in order to make it more democratic and more representative of the contemporary world. Our views on the re-structuring of the United Nations have been projected before the world community and we will pursue our objective with vigour. As a founder member of the non-aligned movement, we, along with our fellow members, share the responsibility for ensuring a fair treatment for the developing countries and we will work together to attain this goal. Economic cooperation among developing countries is another priority of the non-aligned movement which we will seek to promote.

The Government will evolve a National Media Policy which will integrate the advances in various visual, audio and print media in order to bring about a cohesiveness of purpose, keeping in view our societal needs and cultural values.

Fifty years after Independence, the time has come to rejuvenate our institutions so that they are strong enough to meet the challenges of the future. The Government proposes to do so, as well as appoint a Commission to review the Constitution and make recommendations so that anomalous experiences of the past are not repeated in the future.

Earlier, I have referred to the Government's solemn commitment to providing the people of India with good governance. This can be possible only when Government rests on the foundation of morality and ethics. All around us today we find increasing cynicism towards morality in politics and ethics in governance. This has severely eroded faith in the State.

The Government proposes to make all those who hold public office accountable by enacting the Lok Pal Bill. The Official Secrets Act will be reviewed so that we can put in place a right to information law that will enable transparency and integrity in decision making without compromising national security.

One of the causes of corruption and corrosion of values in our polity, as well as criminalisation of politics, stems from flaws in the electoral process. To ensure free, fair and fearless elections and to prevent the use of money and muscle power, Government will introduce a comprehensive Electoral Reform Bill for which considerable ground work has already been done.

Consensus-building is an essential part of nation-building. Cooperation for the larger good of society has been the cornerstone of our civilisation. Ours is a multi-party democracy in which constructive dialogue, consultation and cooperation between the ruling and the opposition parties are essential for evolving a broad platform of national consensus.

The Government will, therefore, strive for evolving a consensus mode of governance as far as practicable. Some of the issues on which a national consensus is most urgently called for are electoral reforms; Centre-State relations; population policy; empowerment of women by legislating 33 per cent reservation for them in all elected bodies; resolution of inter-State water disputes; environmental protection and effective institutional guarantees for the welfare of the weaker sections of society while pursuing economic reforms.

Hon'ble Members, you have the rare privilege of contributing constructively
to this process of consensus-building on which the future of our great nation depends critically in the 21st Century and the coming millennium.

This year is significant in more ways than one. It is the Golden Jubilee of our Independence. It also marks the 50th anniversary of the martyrdom of Mahatma Gandhi — one of the greatest men of this Century. We are the inheritors of the fruits of the sacrifices made by the Mahatma and other freedom fighters. We have the responsibility to live up to their dreams and ideals.

My best wishes are with you in this momentous task.

—Jai Hind—

[TEXT OF THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS IN HINDI]

महानीति सद्देश्यण,

मुझे लोक समा के 12वें चुनाव के बाद संसद के दोनों सत्तों को संबंधित करते हुए बहुत हर्ष है। मैं इस नई लोक समा के सदस्यों का हार्दिक अभिनंदन करता हूँ।

मैं भारत के निर्वाचन आयोग का भी आम चुनावों को तपासता और निर्धारण से समन्वय करने के लिए ध्यानबद्ध करता हूँ।

हाल ही में समपन हुए महायोगी चुनाव ने बदलाव की प्रजातंत्रिक प्रक्रियाओं में हमारे लोगों के हड़ विश्वास को प्रदर्शित किया है। ऐसा पुरातन रूप में जा रहा था कि इस वर्ष कम मदद गया जबकि लगभग 62 प्रतिशत मददाधीनों ने अपने महान्यकार का इलेक्ट्रोस दिया। चुनाव परिणाम इस बात से होता है कि राष्ट्रीय परिषदें में वोटरों की अधिकता का स्थान मिला बाहर। मैं दुनियाभर करने की योजना हैं जिसकी जरूरत होगी और लोगों के लिए सभी राष्ट्रीय हितों का भी ध्यान रखा जाए।

संसदीय गणित से ही सुरुआत की समाधान का समाधान नहीं हो सकता है। अपितु संसदीय समृद्धि और अल्पमत के माध्यम से उपर उठकर तथा सहयोग, में, संयोग और आम सहमति की माध्यम से कार्य करने की इच्छा से ही इसका समाधान निकाल सकता है। मैं सरकार इसी माध्यम को लेकर शासन में एक नया मार्ग तैयार करनी जिसका उद्देश्य एकता लाना होगा, न कि

कृपया इस संदेश के लुप्त विश्वसनीय स्वाभाविक सम्योजन और नियम के द्वारा परास्त करा।

महायोगी चुनावों के बाद अब राष्ट्र के इसी सरकार को देखना आसान है जो वास्तव में कम करने के दिशाएँ। सरकार के यह काम करने का इरादा रखती है: जब भी जब जरूरत कर्म किया जाना है तो हमें 1997-98 की उपर चौथी और 1998-99 के आयोजनान्तर चर्चा करना साहीत है। इसके बाद तुरंत ही विवादास्पद साहीत शेष निकालित मामलों का दिया जाएगा।

अब आरंभ में, हम इस विश्वास में सभी प्रयास करेंगे जिससे एक नए भारत का निर्माण किया जा सके—जो एक ऐसा भारत हो, जो मध्य, भूकंप और जलवायु के तीनों अभियानों से मुक्त हो, एक ऐसा भारत जो जोड़ निरंतर और रोग का नामीनिशान न रहे, एक ऐसा भारत जहां अवसर आधिकारिक लोगों को लाभ मिले, एक ऐसा भारत जहां प्रदेशों और नगर विकास चाहे, उसकी अग्रणी, नति वा धर्म हो, भारतीय होने का गीता अनुमान करें।

सेनान्तर भारतीय सेवा प्रदत्त अनुमान का उत्तरांग भाया है। मैं इस सरकार देश के सेवकों मुख्यों को वर्तमान रखने के लिए पूरी तरह प्रतिबद्ध हूँ।

मैं सरकार की सांस्कृतिक प्रारूढ़िकता उन लोगों की सहायता करना है जिनके पास सुविधाएं नहीं हैं और जो शक्ति समन्वय नहीं है। यह एक-रिश्वद्ध से अधिक सुविधा देने का नीचे जीवन निर्वाह करने रहे हैं। इससे भी अधिक संगठन उन लोगों की हैं जिनके लिए सुविधाएं उपलब्ध नहीं हैं। हमारे इतिहास जनसमूह को राष्ट्र की समृद्धि में अपना सार्थक हिस्सा मिलाना चाहिए?

सरकार बेहतर सार्वजनिक वितरण ग्राहकों की व्यवस्था कर प्रत्येक परिषद के लिए खाद्यान्वण सुनिश्चित करने, जलवायुवश्य के प्रत्येक क्षेत्र में रोजगार के अवधारणाओं में लेते हैं। हमारा स्वाभाविक उपलब्ध और अधिक धन लाभ की प्रतिष्ठा करती है। शिक्षा पर व्यय को उपरेंदृढ़ स्तर के 4% प्रतिशत तक ले जाने की प्रतिबद्धता को
Address
सरकार राज्यों द्वारा संस्थानों के और अधिक आवंत की मांग पर ध्यान दें। एक रिहाय्षा क्षेत्र आयोग बनाया जाएगा जो उन क्षेत्रों की पहचान करेगा जहां अतिरिक्त साहाय्य की आवश्यकता है ताकि वे क्षेत्र विकास में पीछे न रहें।

सरकार उत्तर प्रदेश में से उत्तराञ्चल, बिहार में से बिहार एवं मध्य प्रदेश में से छत्तीसगढ़ राज्य बनाने के लिए जरूरी है। दिल्ली के पूरे राज्य का दर्जा दिया जाएगा।

एक राष्ट्रीय जल नीति तैयार की जाएगी, जिसमें विवादों को शीघ्र और धार्मिक संगठनों से निपटाने और समयमीलन करारन्य के प्रबंधन रहेगा।

राज्य और इसके नागरिकों की सुरक्षा समूहित है। मेरी सरकार इस मामले में कोई समझौता नहीं करेगी। राज्य की संस्थापना और जनसरकारी कल्याण की सुरक्षा हर कोई भी कर्ता है। इस बारे में किसी दिशा में आने वाले को इसका निर्देश करेगी। मेरी सरकार राज्य के साथ मिलकर हमारी सहजता संबंधों के कार्यों की मीडिया को नमस्कार करेगी है जो केवल देश के सत्ताओं को प्रायोगिक उदाहरण देने के लिए सहयोग देने रहेगी।

प्रत्येक नागरिक को सुरक्षित महसूस करने और मध्य मुख्य रहने का अधिकार है। आज आदर्श पर जो आश्वासन, नीति-पॉलिसी और प्रतिकृतियों का खतरा छाया हुआ है, सरकार उसका मुक्तिकल सहन करेगी। रोकतंत्र में हिस्सा का कोई नाम नहीं है। संस्थान के संसाधन बातचीत और बच्चों से फिर जा सकता है और फिर जा निश्चित है।

मेरी सरकार सभी राज्यों के भीतर शासनिक, विशेष में सभी लोगों की सूची और अन्तरराष्ट्रीय क्षेत्र में भारत द्वारा अपनी अधिक घृंटीकरण का निवारण करने के लिए प्रति अपनी प्रतिविद्युत का पुन: पुरी करती है। हम इस विषय के केवल तथा अधिक देशीय सहयोग के लिए प्रायोगिक करेंगे। विवादों की किसी दिशा में व्यापार का अंत सिद्ध है। स्वस्थ और उच्च शिक्षा के प्राङ्गण के पहले देश के साथ दिशाप्रदेश संबंधों को सुधारने के लिए किर से प्रसार किए जाएंगे।

विश संस्थान के संगठन एक महान संयुक्त राष्ट्र संघ और इसके घटकों को पुरालंबत करना है जिससे उन्हें और अधिक प्रभावित बनाया जा सके तथा जो संस्थानीय विश्व का आदर्श भी अधिक

प्रतिबिंबित कर सके। संयुक्त राष्ट्र संघ के पुरालंबत के बाद में हमारे अपने विश्व विवाद संस्थान के साथ रख दिया हैं और हम अपने उदेश्य के लिए उत्तराहंस्वरूप जुटे रहे जाएं।
Obituary

[RAJYA SABHA]

References 16

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members,

I refer with profound sorrow to the passing away of Shrimati Vimal Punjabin Deshmukh, Shri T.V. Kamlaswamy, former Members of the Rajya Sabha, Shri Tridib Chaudhuri, a sitting member of this House,