

## Highlights of the President's Address 2022

The President of India, Mr. Ram Nath Kovind, addressed a joint sitting of both Houses of Parliament on January 31, 2022. He outlined the major policy achievements and objectives of the government in his address. Key highlights of the address include:

### Health and COVID-19

- India has administered more than 150 crore vaccines in less than a year. More than 90% of adults have received at least one dose of the vaccine, while more than 70% have been fully vaccinated. Further, adolescents aged 15-18 years have been included in the vaccination drive. The precautionary dose for frontline workers and senior citizens (with co-morbidities) has started.
- Eight vaccines have been approved for emergency use in the country. Of these, three have been manufactured in India, and have received approval from the World Health Organisation (WHO) for emergency use.
- The Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission was launched with an outlay of Rs 64,000 crore to improve health infrastructure. More than 80,000 health and wellness care centres have been set up under the scheme. The Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission was launched to provide easy and accessible health services.
- Under the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Yojana, more than 8,000 Janaushadhi Kendras have been set up to provide the poor with affordable medicines.
- India will establish the world's first WHO Global Centre of Traditional Medicine. AYUSH products worth Rs 11,000 crore have been exported from India.

### Economy and Finance

- GST collections have consistently remained over one lakh crore rupees during the last several months.
- Between April and November, 2021, foreign direct investment of USD 48 billion was made in India. Foreign exchange reserves of India exceed USD 630 billion.
- Between April and December 2021, India's goods exports stood at USD 300 billion.
- Through Jan Dhan accounts, Aadhaar, and mobile connectivity, people have benefitted from direct cash transfer during the pandemic.

More than 44 crore people have joined the banking system.

### Agriculture and Food Distribution

- During the pandemic, for 19 months, 80 crore people were provided free ration under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana with an outlay of Rs 2.6 lakh crore. In view of the current situation, the scheme has been extended till March 2022.
- In 2020-21, farmers produced more than 30 crore tonne of food grains and 33 crore tonne of horticulture. The government has procured 433 lakh metric tonne (LMT) of wheat during the rabi season, benefitting around 50 lakh farmers. During kharif season, 900 LMT of paddy was procured, benefitting around 1.3 crore farmers.
- Under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme (PM-KISAN), Rs 1.8 lakh crore has been transferred to more than 11 crore farmer families.
- Under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, more than one lakh crore rupees has been paid as compensation to around eight crore farmers.
- 64 lakh hectares of land has been developed with irrigation facilities under the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana and Atal Bhujal Yojana. The Ken-Betwa link project has been approved at a cost of Rs 45,000 crore to help end the water crisis in Bundelkhand.

### MSMEs, Manufacturing and Job Creation

- To ensure availability of credit for MSMEs, the government started a scheme for guaranteed Collateral Free Loans, with an outlay of rupees three lakh crore. This has benefitted 13.5 lakh MSME units and secured 1.5 crore jobs. In June 2021, the government enhanced the credit guarantee from three lakh crore rupees to Rs 4.5 lakh crore. New definition of MSMEs is helping small industries to expand. Traders (wholesale and retail) and street vendors have been allowed to register on the Udyam portal, to avail benefits of Priority Sector Lending.
- Production Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes worth Rs 1.97 lakh crore have been launched in 14 manufacturing sectors. Due to the PLI scheme in the domestic mobile manufacturing sector, India has emerged as the second largest mobile phone manufacturer in the world.
- To develop the field of electronics and technology hardware, the government announced a Rs 76,000 crore package for

silicon and compound semiconductor fabrication, chip design and related ventures.

- The government has approved seven Mega Integrated Textile Regions and Apparel Parks with an investment of around Rs 4,500 crore.
- Since 2016, 60,000 start-ups have been established in 56 different sectors in the country. In 2021, more than 40 unicorn start-ups have emerged in India, each with a minimum market valuation of Rs 7,400 crore.

### **Labour and employment**

- Under the Pradhan Mantri SVANidhi scheme, more than Rs 2,900 crore has been provided to 28 lakh street vendors.
- e-SHRAM portal was started to protect the interests of labourers. So far, more than 23 crore workers have joined the portal.

### **Skill development**

- Under the Skill India Mission, more than 2.25 crore youth have been skilled through ITIs, Jan Shikshan Sansthan, and Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendras.

### **Infrastructure and Transport**

- The Pradhan Mantri GatiShakti National Master Plan has been launched to accelerate infrastructure development.
- India has more than 1.4 lakh kilometre (km) of national highways. Under the Bharatmala Project, construction of more than 20,000 km of highways is in progress with an outlay of about six lakh crore rupees, including 23 green expressways and green-field corridors. The Delhi-Mumbai Expressway is close to the completion stage.
- During 2014-21, 24,000 km of railways route has been electrified. 11 new metro routes have commenced. The construction of 21 greenfield airports has been approved.

### **Urban and Rural Development**

- Under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), two crore pucca houses have been provided to the poor. Under PMAY-Gramin, 1.17 crore houses have been approved in the last three years. Under the Svamitva scheme, more than 40 lakh property cards have been issued in 27,000 villages to provide property documents to people in rural areas.
- Under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, in 2020-21, 36,500 km of roads were built in rural areas, at a rate of more than 100 km per day. Around six crore rural households have been provided with a tap water connection under the Jal Jeevan Mission.

### **Environment**

- At the COP-26 summit, the government committed to reducing India's carbon emissions by one billion tonne, by 2030. India also committed to becoming a net zero emission economy by 2070.
- India has also taken the initiative of 'Green Grid Initiative: One Sun, One World, One Grid'. This is the first international network of globally interconnected solar power grids.

### **Women and Child Development**

- The Prohibition of Child Marriage (Amendment) Bill, 2021 was introduced to increase the minimum age of marriage for women from 18 years to 21 years.
- In 2021-22, banks have extended financial help of Rs 65,000 crore to more than 28 lakh women self-help groups. The government has also provided training to members of women self-help groups, and made them partner as 'Banking Sakhi' to deliver banking services to rural households.

### **Minority and Tribal Affairs**

- Since 2014, the government has provided scholarships to 4.5 crore students from minority communities
- Ekalavya Residential Model Schools have been expanded to every tribal majority block for the education of tribal youth.

### **Defence and Internal Security**

- In 2020-21, 87% of the approvals for modernisation of armed forces were from the 'Make in India' category. The Armed Forces have issued a list of 209 military equipment, which will not be purchased from abroad. Defence undertakings have issued a list of more than 2,800 defence equipment, which will be manufactured domestically. Ordinance Factories have been reorganised into seven defence PSUs.
- Recently, a settlement was reached between the central government, the state government of Assam and the Karbi groups to end the decades-old conflict in Karbi Anglong. The number of naxal affected districts had declined from 126 to 70.

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