

## Highlights of the President's Address, 2023

The President of India, Ms Droupadi Murmu, addressed a joint sitting of both Houses of Parliament on January 31, 2023. She outlined the major policy achievements and objectives of the government in her address. Key highlights of the address include:

### Economy and Finance

- India has become the fifth largest economy in the world.
- Through direct benefit transfer, monetary benefits worth more than Rs 27 lakh crore have reached beneficiaries under more than 300 schemes.
- Transparency and accountability has been brought in the income tax system through faceless assessment, in taxation through GST, and in government procurement through Government e-Marketplace (GeM). It is a system for tenders and government procurement. Transactions worth more than three lakh crore rupees have taken place on the GeM.
- The Benami Property Act, 2016 was notified to create a corruption-free ecosystem. The Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, 2018 was passed to confiscate the properties of absconding criminals.

### Agriculture and Food Security

- Under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana, Rs 3.5 lakh crore has been spent to provide free food grains to the poor.
- 11 crore small farmers are on the priority list of the government. Financial assistance of more than Rs 2.25 lakh crore has been provided to them under PM-Kisan Samman Nidhi. About three crore women farmers have been provided Rs 54,000 crore under the scheme.
- Kisan Credit Cards have been extended to cattle bearers and fishermen. Natural farming and farming of traditional millet crops are being encouraged.

### Industry

- India has become a major exporter of mobile phones. Over the last few years, the export of toys has increased by 60%, while imports have decreased by 70%.
- The turnover of khadi and rural industries has crossed one lakh crore rupees, and the sale of khadi has increased by four times over the last few years.
- In the Global Innovation Index, India has moved up from the 81<sup>st</sup> position in 2015 to 40<sup>th</sup> in 2022. Today there are about 90,000 registered start-ups, compared to a few hundred seven years ago.

### Infrastructure and Transport

- The National Logistics Policy was launched in 2022, which seeks to reduce the cost of logistics.
- The PM Gati-Shakti National Master Plan was formulated to reduce delays in infrastructure projects. It is expected to expand multi-modal connectivity in the country.
- The National Highway network has grown by more than 55% during the past eight years. More than 550 districts will be connected by highways under the Bharatmala project. Industrial corridors are expected to increase from six to 50.
- Indian Railways is moving towards becoming the world's largest electric network. Inaccessible areas of the northeast and Jammu and Kashmir are being connected by railways. Indigenous technology such as KAVACH is being utilised for railway safety. Vande Bharat trains are connecting inaccessible areas of the northeast and Jammu and Kashmir.
- The number of airports has increased from 74 in 2014 to 147 in 2022. With the help of the UDAN Yojana, India has become the third largest aviation market.
- In the past seven years, about 2.5 lakh people were connected to broadband every day.

### Urban and Rural Development

- In the past seven years, about 11,000 houses have been built every day under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana. Pucca houses have been provided to more than 3.5 crore poor families in the last few years.
- Under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, the network of rural roads has increased to seven lakh kilometres in 2021-22 from 3.8 lakh kilometres in 2013-14. More than 99% habitations have been connected by road.
- Metro network has increased more than three times in the past eight years, with metro projects underway in 27 cities.
- Under the FAME scheme more than 7,000 electric buses are being added to the public transport fleet.

### Water and Environment

- In the three years since the launch of the Jal Jeevan Mission, about 11 crore families have been provided piped water supply.
- The government approved the Hydrogen Mission, which will attract investment in green energy, and reduce foreign dependence for clean energy and energy security. Progress towards meeting the

target of 20% ethanol blending in petrol is also underway.

- The target of non-fossil fuels accounting for 40% of the electricity generation capacity was achieved nine years ahead of schedule. This will assist in achieving net zero emissions by 2070.
- Solar power capacity has increased by almost 20 times in the past eight years. India ranks fourth in the world in renewable energy capacity.

### Health

- More than 50 crore individuals have received free treatment under the PM Ayushman Bharat Yojana (PMABY). Medicines are being provided at low cost across the country through 9,000 Jan Aushadhi Kendras. These schemes have helped the poor save one lakh crore rupees.
- Within two years, India has administered more than 220 crore vaccine doses.
- The government is building medical colleges in every district. More than 260 medical colleges were opened between 2014 and 2022. The number of seats for graduate and postgraduate medical students has doubled between 2014 and 2022.

### Women and Child Development

- About 50% of beneficiaries of PMABY are women. Maternity leave has been increased from 12 weeks to 26 weeks.
- About nine crore women are associated with 80 lakh self-help groups. 70% of the beneficiaries under the Mudra scheme are women entrepreneurs. In the past seven years, loans of about Rs 700 crore were disbursed every day under this scheme.
- The government has taken several initiatives such as constructing separate toilets and providing sanitary pads in government schools. This has led to a sharp reduction in the dropout rate.
- Under the Sukanya Samridhi Yojana, savings accounts have been opened for crores of girls.
- Recruitment in mining or forward posts in the army have been opened for women.

### Education and Sports

- More than 300 new universities and 5,000 colleges have been set up in the past eight years.
- Schemes like Khelo India and Target Olympic Podium are being implemented to spot and nurture sporting talents from across the country.

### Social Justice and Minority Affairs

- Under the PM SVANidhi scheme, loans have been given to about 40 lakh street vendors.
- Following the success of the Aspirational Districts Programme, 500 blocks in the country are being developed as aspirational blocks.
- The Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan, and one sign language have assisted in the welfare of disabled (divyang) people.

### Tribal Affairs

- Programmes such as Dr. Ambedkar Utsav Dham Yojana, Amrit Jaldhara, and Yuva Udyami Yojana are being run for the socio-economic empowerment of Scheduled Castes. Under the PM Adi Adarsh Gram Yojana, more than 36,000 tribal-dominated villages are being developed. More than 3,000 Van Dhan Vikas Kendras have been opened to provide livelihood opportunities to tribal communities. More than 400 Eklavya Model Schools have been opened in tribal areas of the country.
- The National Commission for Backward Classes has been given constitutional status. A Welfare and Development Board has been constituted for the Banjara, nomadic, and semi-nomadic communities.

### Defence and Internal Security

- Defence exports have grown by six times. The first indigenous aircraft carrier INS Vikrant has been added to the fleet.
- The Agniveer Yojana has been launched to give an opportunity to the youth to serve in the armed forces.
- The Vibrant Villages program has been started to provide better facilities to border villages.
- Left-wing extremism, which was a major threat to security in previous decades has now been confined to a few districts.

### External Affairs

- India has assumed presidency of G-20, and seeks to find collective solutions to global challenges.
- India is chairing the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation this year, and working for peace, stability, and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific as a member of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue.
- For the first time in India, a UNSC-Counter Terrorism Committee meeting was organised in October 2022.

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