

## Highlights of the President's Address, 2024

The President of India, Ms Droupadi Murmu, addressed a joint sitting of both Houses of Parliament on January 31, 2024. She outlined the major policy objectives and achievements of the government in her address. Key highlights of the address include:

### Economy and Finance

- India has emerged as the fastest-growing major economy amidst serious global crisis, and has maintained a growth rate of over 7.5% for two consecutive quarters.
- Inflation was over 8% in the 10 years prior to 2014. In the past decade, it has been at 5%.
- In the past decade, about 25 crore people have been lifted out of poverty.
- India's exports have increased from USD 450 billion to USD 775 billion in the past 10 years. Foreign exchange reserves are currently more than USD 600 billion.
- About 21 crore vehicles have been sold in the past decade, compared to 13 crore in the decade before.
- The number of people who pay GST and file ITR has increased significantly.
- The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code was enacted.
- Non-performing assets of banks, have come down to around 4%, after being in double digits in the past.

### Industry

- Startups have grown from a few hundred to more than four lakh today.
- India is the second largest producer of mobile phones in the world. It has also started exporting toys, instead of importing them like earlier.
- More than 40,000 compliances have been removed or simplified to enable ease of doing business.
- Forest and environment clearances take less than 75 days, as compared to 600 days earlier.
- About 3.5 crore MSMEs are registered on the Udyam and Udyam assist portal. Government guarantee has been provided for MSMEs loans worth nearly five lakh crore rupees. This is over six times what was provided before 2014.
- PLI schemes for 14 sectors such as electronics and pharmaceuticals have been introduced.

### Infrastructure and Transport

- In 10 years, capital expenditure has increased five times to Rs 10 lakh crore.
- National highway length has increased from 90,000 km to 1.46 lakh km. The length of four-lane highways has increased 2.5 times.
- More than 25,000 km of railways tracks were laid. India is close to 100% electrification of Railways. Vande Bharat trains are running on more than 39 routes.
- The cargo handling capacity of major ports has doubled. The number of airports has increased from 74 to 149. Under the UDAN scheme, people have saved nearly Rs 3,000 crore on air tickets.
- Broadband users have increased by 14 times.

### Energy

- In 10 years, non-fossil fuel-based energy capacity has increased from 81 gigawatt to 188 gigawatt.
- India has targeted to achieve 50% installed capacity from non-fossil fuels by 2030.
- Solar capacity has increased by 26 times, while wind capacity has doubled. 10 new nuclear power plans have been approved.
- One crore families will be provided assistance under the new solar rooftop installations scheme.
- One Nation, One Power Grid has improved power transmission in the country.
- Rs 20,000 crore has been saved on electricity bills due to LED Bulb scheme.
- 10 crore gas connections have been provided under Ujjwala. Rs 2.5 lakh crore has been spent on this scheme.
- 10,000 km of gas pipeline has been laid in the country. One Nation, One Gas Grid is boosting gas-based economy.
- About two thousand electric vehicles (EVs) were sold in 2014-15. In comparison, 12 lakh EVs have been sold in 2023-24, as of December 2023.

### Space

- India launched the Aditya Mission. The satellite reached 15 lakh km away from Earth. India has become the first country to hoist its flag on the southern pole of the Moon.
- Space sector has been opened up for start-ups.

## Defence and Internal Security

- Government has ensured participation of the private sector in defence sector.
- A Chief of Defence Staff has been appointed for India's defence forces for the first time.
- Ex-servicemen have received about one lakh crore rupees due to one rank one pension.
- Modern infrastructure is being built along India's border under the Vibrant Village Programme.

## Agriculture and Food Security

- Since the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, 80 crore people are being given free ration. This has been extended for five years.
- Under PM-KISAN, farmers have been provided with Rs 2.8 lakh crore so far.
- Under PM Fasal Bima Yojana, farmers have received claims worth Rs 1.5 lakh crore.
- Farmers have received Rs 18 lakh crore in the past decade, as MSP for paddy and wheat, 2.5 times higher than the payout in 10 years preceding 2014.
- Farmers producing oilseeds and pulses have received over Rs 1.25 lakh crore as MSP.
- In the past decade, Rs 11 lakh crore has been spent to provide affordable fertilisers to farmers.
- Fish production has increased from 95 lakh metric tonnes to 175 lakh metric tonnes. Exports in fisheries have doubled.

## Urban and Rural Development

- Metro network has expanded from 5 to 20 cities.
- 4.1 crore poor families have their own pucca houses, costing about six lakh crore rupees.
- Piped water has reached about 11 crore rural families. Around four lakh crore rupees is being spent on this.
- Construction of 11 crore toilets and elimination of open defecation has prevented many diseases.

## Health

- Free treatment is being provided under Ayushman Bharat scheme, which has helped citizens save nearly Rs 3.5 lakh crore.
- Prices of coronary stents, knee implants, and cancer medicines have been reduced. This is leading to savings for patients about Rs 27,000 crore annually.

- 16 AIIMS, 315 medical colleges, and 157 nursing colleges have been established. MBBS seats have more than doubled.

## Women and Child Development

- The Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam has been enacted to enable greater participation of women in Lok Sabha and Legislative Assemblies.
- About 10 crore women are associated with self-help groups. Bank loans worth eight lakh crore rupees and financial assistance worth Rs 40,000 crore have been disbursed to these groups.
- Maternity leave for women has increased from 12 weeks to 26 weeks, benefitting lakhs of women.

## Education

- Government is working on more than 14,000 PM SHRI schools to provide quality education. Out of these, about 6,000 have started functioning.
- The dropout rate in education has reduced. Enrolment of SC and OBC students has increased by 44%, and ST students by 65%.
- An Act to strengthen research and innovation in the country was passed.

## Labour and Skill Development

- Collateral-free loans worth Rs 10,000 crore have been provided to street vendors under PM SVANidhi Yojana.
- Under PM-Vishvakarma, 84 lakh artisans have received benefits.

## Social Justice

- Reservation has been extended to economically weaker sections of the general category.
- In under-graduate and post-graduate medical colleges, 27% reservation is provided for OBCs.

## Tribal Affairs

- During the past decade, thousands of tribal villages have been provided with electricity and road connectivity. PM JANMAN Yojana focuses on the development of particularly vulnerable tribal groups.
- A national mission has been launched to address sickle cell anaemia among tribal families. So far, 1.4 crore people have been screened.

## External Affairs

- The government has made efforts to secure permanent membership for the African Union at G20. The development of India-Middle East-Europe Corridor was announced at the summit.

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