

THE IAS AKADEMIA · COMMEMORATIVE EDITION

1947 → 2026

VOICES OF INDIA

Iconic Words of India's Prime Ministers

From Tryst with Destiny to Viksit Bharat

79 YEARS · 15 PRIME MINISTERS · ONE REPUBLIC

THE IAS AKADEMIA

We Are Because You Are.

"At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom."

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU · CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY · 14-15 AUGUST 1947

WORDS THAT BUILT A NATION

This volume tells the story of independent India through the words of the men and one woman who led it. Fifteen individuals have held the office of Prime Minister since 1947. Their politics differed. Their eras differed. The Republic held.

Each entry carries only the passage worth remembering — never more than forty words — with the occasion, the date and the archive that holds it.

HOW THIS VOLUME WAS MADE

Quotations were traced, wherever possible, to primary archives: Constituent Assembly Debates, Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha records, the Prime Ministers' Museum & Library, PMIndia, the Press Information Bureau and All India Radio.

Where a passage could not be confirmed against such a record, no quotation has been set. Those entries appear on page 8 with their offices and their place in the chronology intact.

DIFFERENT PRIME MINISTERS. DIFFERENT ERAS. DIFFERENT IDEOLOGIES.

One India.

Ten Movements of One Republic

Freedom · Nation Building · Food Security · Wars · Democratic Renewal · Reform · Nuclear India · Coalitions · Growth · Viksit Bharat

1947–1964

THE REPUBLIC IS BORN

Jawaharlal Nehru

1964–1966

THE SOLDIER & THE FARMER

Gulzarilal Nanda (Acting) · Lal Bahadur Shastri

1966–1977
1980–1984

SOVEREIGNTY, WAR & UPHEAVAL

Indira Gandhi

1977–1980

DEMOCRACY RETURNS

Morarji Desai · Charan Singh

1984–1989

INDIA LOOKS TO THE 21ST CENTURY

Rajiv Gandhi

1989–1991

THE AGE OF COALITIONS

V. P. Singh · Chandra Shekhar

1991–1996

INDIA OPENS ITS ECONOMY

P. V. Narasimha Rao

1996–2004

COALITION INDIA FINDS ITS VOICE

H. D. Deve Gowda · I. K. Gujral · Atal Bihari Vajpayee

2004–2014

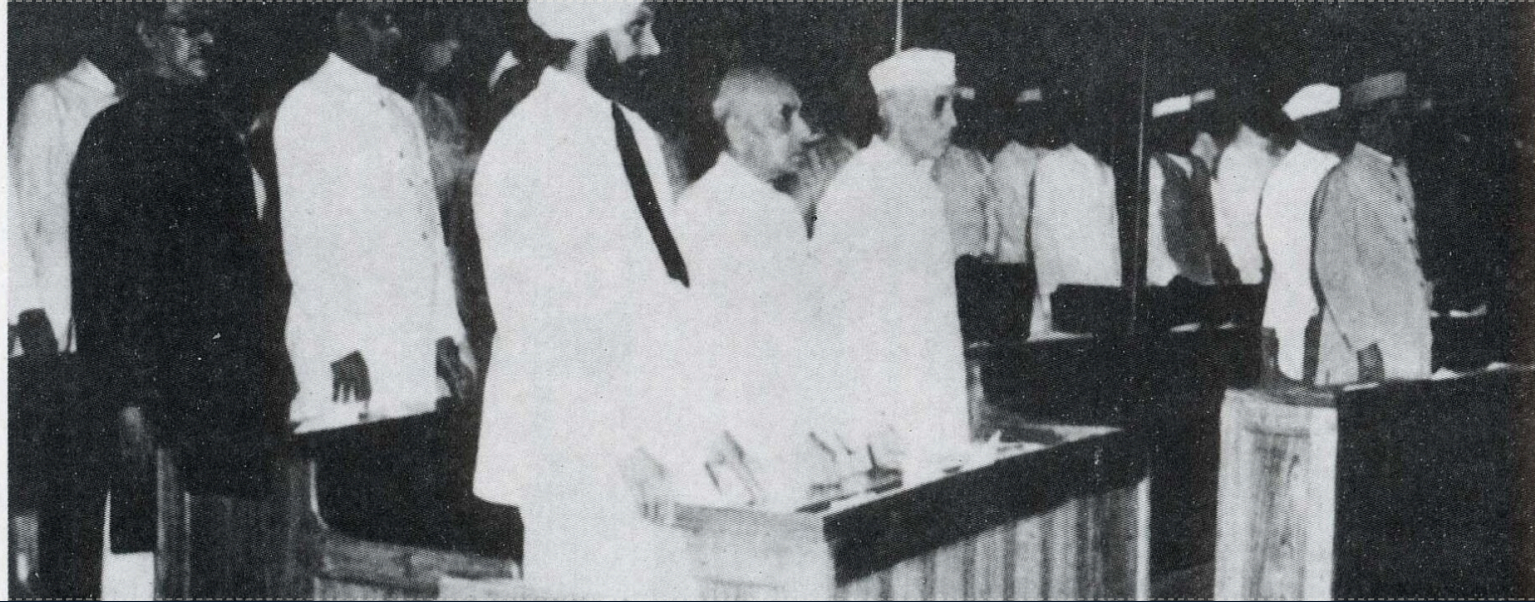
GROWTH WITH INCLUSION

Manmohan Singh

2014–2026

FROM NEW INDIA TO VIKSIT BHARAT

Narendra Modi



THE REPUBLIC IS BORN

FIRST PRIME MINISTER

1947 JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA · 1947–1964

TRYST WITH DESTINY

CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY | NEW DELHI | MIDNIGHT, 14–15 AUGUST 1947

*"Long years ago we made a tryst with destiny...
At the stroke of the midnight hour, when
the world sleeps, India will awake to life
and freedom."*

THE IDEA

Freedom · Responsibility · Nation
Building

INDIA AT THE TIME

A nation of 340 million took charge of itself at midnight,
amid Partition, refugee columns and a Constitution still
being written.

SOURCE: CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY OF INDIA DEBATES, VOLUME IV, 14 AUGUST 1947 · PRIME MINISTERS' MUSEUM & LIBRARY

1965 LAL BAHADUR SHASTRI

PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA · 1964–1966

THE CALL OF THE JAWAN AND THE KISAN

PUBLIC GATHERING, URUWA, ALLAHABAD DISTRICT | 1965

जय जवान, जय किसान

"Hail the soldier, hail the farmer."

TWO FRONTLINES, ONE NATION

India was fighting Pakistan on its western border while importing grain to feed itself. Six words placed the soldier and the farmer on the same footing — and the food self-sufficiency drive that became the Green Revolution followed.

THE IDEA

Dignity of Labour · Self-Reliance · National Morale

AFTERLIFE OF A PHRASE

Extended by Atal Bihari Vajpayee in 1998 to *Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan, Jai Vigyan*.



SOURCE: PRIME MINISTERS' MUSEUM & LIBRARY · MINISTRY OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING COMMEMORATIVE NOTE ON SHASTRI · ARCHIVAL RECORDS PLACE THE CALL AT URUWA, ALLAHABAD, IN OCTOBER 1965; THE EXACT DAY VARIES BETWEEN RECORDS

1971

INDIRA GANDHI

PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA · 1966–1977 AND 1980–1984

BROADCAST TO THE NATION

ALL INDIA RADIO | NEW DELHI | 3 DECEMBER 1971

"I speak to you at a moment of grave peril to our country and our people... Today the war in Bangladesh has become a war on India."

THE IDEA

Sovereignty · Resolve · A New Map of South Asia

INDIA AT THE TIME

Ten million refugees had crossed into India; thirteen days later the Bangladesh Liberation War ended and a new nation stood on the subcontinent.

THE RECORD
1975–1977

The Emergency, proclaimed on 25 June 1975, suspended fundamental rights and press freedom for twenty-one months. Elections in March 1977 ended it. This volume records the period without praise or condemnation; the Constitution's Forty-second and Forty-fourth Amendments remain its documentary trace.

SOURCE: ALL INDIA RADIO BROADCAST, 3 DECEMBER 1971 · PRASAR BHARATI ARCHIVES · PRIME MINISTERS' MUSEUM & LIBRARY

1985 RAJIV GANDHI

PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA · 1984–1989

ADDRESS AT THE CONGRESS CENTENARY SESSION
BOMBAY | 28 DECEMBER 1985

"...brokers of power and influence, who dispense patronage to convert a mass movement into a feudal oligarchy."

THE IDEA

Accountability · Modernisation · Youth

INDIA AT THE TIME

A forty-one-year-old Prime Minister told his own party, in its hundredth year, that delivery had been captured by intermediaries.

WHAT FOLLOWED

Computers & Telecom

C-DOT, 1984; rural exchanges and the beginnings of an Indian software industry.

Panchayati Raj

The 1989 constitutional attempt that became the 73rd and 74th Amendments in 1992.

Voting Age

Lowered from 21 to 18 by the 61st Amendment, 1988.



SOURCE: SPEECH AT THE CENTENARY SESSION OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS, BOMBAY, 28 DECEMBER 1985 · PRIME MINISTERS' MUSEUM & LIBRARY. THE WIDELY REPEATED "FIFTEEN PAISE IN THE RUPEE" FORMULATION IS NOT REPRODUCED HERE: NO VERBATIM ARCHIVAL TEXT HAS BEEN LOCATED.

Six Offices, Held Briefly

No Prime Minister is omitted from this volume for the brevity of a tenure. For these six, an iconic passage could not be traced to a primary archive in time for this edition. Rather than set a paraphrase in quotation marks, the entries carry the office, the date and the historical act. Verified quotations will be set in the next edition.

Gulzarilal Nanda

ACTING PRIME MINISTER · 1964 AND 1966

Held the office twice for thirteen days each — after Nehru's death and after Shastri's — and demonstrated that the Republic could transfer power without interruption.

Morarji Desai

PRIME MINISTER · 1977–1979

India's first non-Congress Prime Minister. His government's Forty-fourth Amendment (1978) restored constitutional safeguards diluted during the Emergency.

Charan Singh

PRIME MINISTER · 1979–1980

The advocate of the peasant proprietor in Indian economic thought. National Farmers' Day, 23 December, marks his birth anniversary.

V. P. Singh

PRIME MINISTER · 1989–1990

Announced in Parliament on 7 August 1990 the implementation of the Mandal Commission's reservation in central services — a permanent change in Indian social politics.

Chandra Shekhar

PRIME MINISTER · 1990–1991

Governed through the gathering balance-of-payments crisis, taking the first emergency measures that preceded the 1991 reforms. Author of *Meri Jail Diary*, written in Emergency detention.

H. D. Deve Gowda

PRIME MINISTER · 1996–1997

Led the United Front from a state chief ministership to the national office, and addressed the nation from the Red Fort on 15 August 1996 in a coalition era of thirteen parties.

An editorial rule of this volume: a paraphrase is never placed inside quotation marks, and no date is assigned to a passage that an archive does not date.

1991

P. V. NARASIMHA RAO

PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA · 1991–1996

ADDRESS TO THE NATION ON ASSUMING OFFICE

NEW DELHI | SUMMER 1991

"The economy is in a crisis. The balance of payments situation is exceedingly difficult. Inflationary pressures on the price level are considerable."

No promise, no slogan. A Prime Minister told the country the truth of its accounts — and then changed the economic direction of the Republic. The reforms that followed were continued by every government after his.

THE IDEA

Candour · Structural Reform · A New Economic Order

INDIA AT THE TIME

Reserves covered barely a fortnight of imports; the Soviet Union was dissolving; India's Look East policy and its opening to the world began here.



SOURCE: ADDRESS TO THE NATION ON ASSUMING OFFICE, 1991, AS RECORDED BY THE THEN PRINCIPAL INFORMATION OFFICER, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA. THE WORDS ARE RAO'S OWN; THE BUDGET OF JULY 1991 BELONGS TO HIS FINANCE MINISTER AND IS NOT SUBSTITUTED HERE.

*The Prime Ministers of India spoke to a question their era asked of them.
The examination works the same way.*

EMP 2027

Excel Mains through PYQs

Master the syllabus through themes that UPSC actually asks.

THEMES, NOT TOPICS

Post-Independence India,
polity, economy and IR taught
as the recurring questions of
the paper.

WRITTEN, THEN READ

Every theme ends in an
answer you write and a
reviewer reads.

SOURCES THAT HOLD

Answers built on primary
material — debates,
committee reports, official
archives.

THE IAS AKADEMIA

We Are Because You Are.

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1996 ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE

PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA · 1996, 1998–2004

REPLY IN THE CONFIDENCE MOTION DEBATE

LOK SABHA | NEW DELHI | 28 MAY 1996

"सरकारें आएँगी, जाएँगी; पार्टियाँ बनेंगी, बिगड़ेंगी; मगर यह देश रहना चाहिए, इस देश का लोकतंत्र अमर रहना चाहिए।"

"Governments will come and go; parties will be made and unmade; but this country must endure, and the democracy of this country must remain immortal."

THE IDEA

Democracy Above Power · Parliament · Continuity

INDIA AT THE TIME

Thirteen days into office and short of a majority, he resigned rather than face a vote — and said so from the floor of the House.

THE SAME VOICE, OTHER OCCASIONS

Pokhran-II, 1998

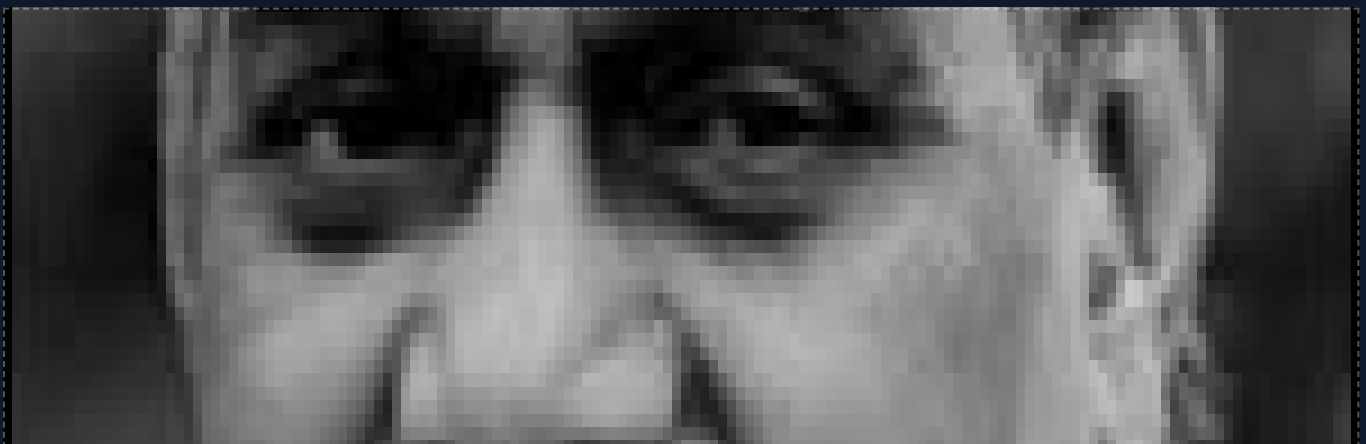
Five tests in May; *Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan, Jai Vigyan* added science to Shastri's call.

Lahore, 1999

The bus to Lahore and the Lahore Declaration of 21 February.

Srinagar, 2003

Insaniyat, Jamhooriyat, Kashmiriyat — the framework he offered for Kashmir.



SOURCE: LOK SABHA DEBATES, 28 MAY 1996 · EPARLIAMENT LIBRARY, PARLIAMENT OF INDIA

1997 I. K. GUJRAL

PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA · 1997–1998

ASPECTS OF INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

BANDARANAIKE CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES | COLOMBO | JANUARY 1997

"With its neighbours... India does not ask for reciprocity, but gives and accommodates what it can in good faith and trust."

THE IDEA

Neighbourhood First · Trust Without Conditions

INDIA AT THE TIME

A Prime Minister who also held the external affairs portfolio set out five principles that outlived his eleven months in office.

THE FIVE PRINCIPLES, AS STATED

One. No demand for reciprocity from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

Three. No interference in another's internal affairs.

Five. All disputes settled through peaceful bilateral negotiation.

Two. No South Asian territory to be used against another country of the region.

Four. Mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty.



SOURCE: "ASPECTS OF INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY", ADDRESS AT THE BANDARANAIKE CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, COLOMBO, JANUARY 1997 · MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS · SELECTED SPEECHES OF PRIME MINISTER I. K. GUJRAL, PARLIAMENT OF INDIA LIBRARY

2014

MANMOHAN SINGH

PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA · 2004–2014

PRESS CONFERENCE AT THE END OF OFFICE

NEW DELHI | 3 JANUARY 2014

"I honestly believe that history will be kinder to me than the contemporary media, or for that matter, the Opposition parties in Parliament."

THE IDEA

Restraint · The Long View · Institutions Over Noise

INDIA AT THE TIME

A decade that averaged high growth, wrote rights into statute — information, education, work, food — and signed the civil nuclear agreement.

THE DECADE IN STATUTE

2005

Right to Information ·
MGNREGA

2008

India-US Civil Nuclear
Agreement

2009

Right to Education

2013

National Food Security
Act



SOURCE: PRIME MINISTER'S PRESS CONFERENCE, NEW DELHI, 3 JANUARY 2014 · PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU · PMINDIA ARCHIVES

Every page of this volume was once a headline. Reading the news as history is the whole skill.

ANTIM ASSURED 100+

Current Affairs Decoded for UPSC

DAILY, BEFORE THE DAY
STARTS

The morning brief that
separates the substantive
from the noisy.

PRELIMS AND MAINS
TOGETHER

MCQs and answer-writing
prompts drawn from the
same event.

PRIMARY SOURCES ONLY

PIB, ministry releases, Sansad
TV, RBI, NITI Aayog —
traced, not repeated.

PHILOSOPHY TARGET 300+

By Vikash Sir

Where Concepts Become Marks.

Telegram · t.me/philosophy_op

NEEB 300+

Live PYQ Answer Writing

Think. Structure. Write. Improve.

Telegram · t.me/theiasakademia

NARENDRA MODI

PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA · 2014–

A tenure long enough to be read as a sequence of national themes. Each Red Fort address named the next one.

2014

Swachh Bharat · Jan Dhan · Make in India

Sanitation, bank accounts and manufacturing named from the ramparts in the first address.

2015

Team India · Start-up India · Skill India

Cooperative federalism and enterprise as the vocabulary of governance.

2020

Atmanirbhar Bharat

Self-reliance declared in the pandemic year, from an empty forecourt.

2021

Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

Seventy-five years of independence framed as a twenty-five-year project.

2022

Panch Pran · Amrit Kaal

Five resolves for the years to 2047: development, no trace of a colonial mindset, pride in heritage, unity, and duty.

2023

Viksit Bharat · G20 Presidency

The developed-nation goal for 2047, and the New Delhi summit of that September.

2024

Demographic dividend · Women-led development · Technology

2025

Semiconductors, space, energy and the workforce as the instruments of the 2047 goal.



SOURCE: INDEPENDENCE DAY ADDRESSES FROM THE RAMPARTS OF THE RED FORT, 2014–2025 · PMINDIA · PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU



THE CLIMAX OF THE CHRONOLOGY

80TH INDEPENDENCE DAY

2026 NARENDRA MODI

RED FORT | NEW DELHI | 15 AUGUST 2026

"समय हमारा है, अवसर हमारा है, संकल्प हमारा है...
आओ, मिलकर विकसित भारत बनाएं।"

"The time is ours, the opportunity is ours, the resolve is ours — come, together let us build a developed India."

THE IDEA

Self-Reliance · Youth · Viksit Bharat by
2047

INDIA AT THE TIME

Seventy-nine years of independence completed; the address set out seven streams of national strength and a target year of 2047.

SAPTDHARA · THE SEVEN STREAMS ANNOUNCED

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| 1 Manufacturing Power | 2 Agriculture & Food Processing | 3 Technology & Innovation | 4 Gati Shakti |
| 5 Defence Shakti | 6 Green & Blue Economy | 7 Soft Power | Announced from the ramparts, 15 August 2026 |

SOURCE: ADDRESS TO THE NATION FROM THE RAMPARTS OF THE RED FORT ON THE OCCASION OF THE 80TH INDEPENDENCE DAY, 15 AUGUST 2026 · PMINDIA · PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU · PRASAR BHARATI BROADCAST

The Words That Entered India's National Vocabulary

Tryst with Destiny	JAWAHARLAL NEHRU	Constituent Assembly, 14–15 August 1947
Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan	LAL BAHADUR SHASTRI	Uruwa, Allahabad, 1965 — war and food scarcity
Garibi Hatao	INDIRA GANDHI	Campaign slogan of the 1971 general election, not a single documented address
India of the 21st Century	RAJIV GANDHI	Recurring formulation across addresses, 1985–1989
Liberalisation	P. V. NARASIMHA RAO	The policy vocabulary of 1991 onwards
Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan, Jai Vigyan	ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE	After the Pokhran-II tests, 1998
Insaniyat, Jamhooriyat, Kashmiriyat	ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE	Kashmir, 2003
Inclusive Growth	MANMOHAN SINGH	Eleventh Five Year Plan era, 2007 onwards
Atmanirbhar Bharat	NARENDRA MODI	Address to the nation, May 2020
Panch Pran · Amrit Kaal	NARENDRA MODI	Red Fort, 15 August 2022
Viksit Bharat · Saptdhara	NARENDRA MODI	Red Fort, 2023 and 15 August 2026

The Prime Ministers of India

1947 – 2026



Jawaharlal Nehru
1947–1964



Gulzarilal Nanda
1964, 1966 · Acting



Lal Bahadur Shastri
1964–1966



Indira Gandhi
1966–1977, 1980–1984



Morarji Deas
1977–1979



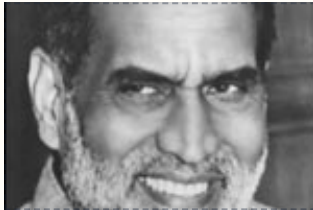
Charan Singh
1979–1980



Rajiv Gandhi
1984–1989



V. P. Singh
1989–1990



Chandra Shekhar
1990–1991



P. V. Narasimha Rao
1991–1996



Atal Bihari Vajpayee
1996, 1998–2004



H. D. Deve Gowda
1996–1997



I. K. Gujral
1997–1998



Manmohan Singh
2004–2014



Narendra Modi
2014–

GULZARILAL NANDA HELD OFFICE IN AN ACTING CAPACITY ON TWO OCCASIONS, FOR THIRTEEN DAYS EACH. TERMS AS RECORDED BY THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE. SOURCE: PMINDIA, FORMER PRIME MINISTERS · LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

THE SPEECH AND THE RECORD

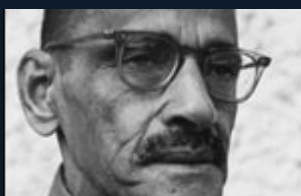
One page for every Prime Minister. On the left, the words at length. On the right, what those words became — the plans, the laws, the institutions, the wars, the treaties.

HOW TO READ THESE PAGES

Part One holds the single line each leader is remembered by. Part Two is the working half of the volume: extended passages, and beside them the policy record an aspirant is examined on — Five Year Plans, models of growth, wars, doctrines, amendments, missions.

A RULE KEPT THROUGHOUT

Quotation marks appear only where an archival transcript exists. Where no transcript could be located, the page carries a block headed *The Position on Record* — the leader's stated position in this volume's own words, never dressed as a quotation.



Gulzarilal Nanda

ACTING PRIME MINISTER · 27 MAY – 9 JUNE 1964 · 11 – 24 JANUARY 1966

Twice the Republic lost a Prime Minister in office and twice the machinery of government did not pause. Nanda, Union Home Minister on both occasions, is remembered less for words than for a constitutional demonstration: in India, continuity of authority is institutional, not personal. Earlier, as Planning Minister, he was closely associated with the Second and Third Plans and with the founding of the Central Bureau of Investigation in 1963.

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

PRIME MINISTER · 1947–1964 · THE REPUBLIC IS BORN



THE SPEECH

TRYST WITH DESTINY · CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY, NEW DELHI · MIDNIGHT, 14–15 AUGUST 1947

"Long years ago we made a tryst with destiny, and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge, not wholly or in full measure, but very substantially. At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom.

A moment comes, which comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new, when an age ends, and when the soul of a nation, long suppressed, finds utterance...

The service of India means the service of the millions who suffer. It means the ending of poverty and ignorance and disease and inequality of opportunity."

The pledge is followed immediately by a definition of what freedom is for. Read as a whole, the address moves from ceremony to obligation in three paragraphs — which is why it reads as a founding text of Indian public duty rather than a celebration.

PROGRAMMES & POLICIES

Planning Commission, 1950 · First Five Year Plan, 1951 (Harrod–Domar, agriculture-led) · Second Plan, 1956, on the Nehru–Mahalanobis model of heavy industry and capital goods · Industrial Policy Resolutions, 1948 and 1956 · Public sector "temples of modern India" — Bhilai, Rourkela, Durgapur, Bhakra–Nangal · Atomic Energy Commission 1948, AEC Act 1962 · IITs from 1951 · CSIR laboratories · Community Development Programme 1952 and Balwantrai Mehta panchayati raj, 1957 · Zamindari abolition and land reform through the States · Hindu Code Bills, 1955–56

EVENTS & TURNING POINTS

Partition and integration of princely states · Kashmir, 1947–48 · Constitution adopted 1949, Republic 1950 · First general election, 1951–52 · Panchsheel with China, 1954 · Bandung, 1955, and Non-Aligned Movement, Belgrade 1961 · States Reorganisation Act, 1956 · Liberation of Goa, 1961 · India–China War, 1962, and the reversal it forced in defence policy · Anti-Hindi agitation and the language question

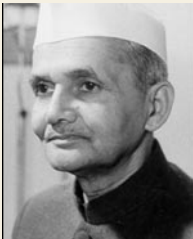
THE THEMES IT SPEAKS TO

Nation-building · planned development · secular state · parliamentary convention · non-alignment and strategic autonomy · the ethics of public service as service to the poorest

SOURCE: CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY OF INDIA DEBATES, VOL. IV, 14 AUGUST 1947 · PLANNING COMMISSION PLAN DOCUMENTS · PRIME MINISTERS' MUSEUM & LIBRARY

LAL BAHADUR SHASTRI

PRIME MINISTER · 1964–1966 · THE SOLDIER & THE FARMER



THE WORDS

PUBLIC GATHERING, URUWA, ALLAHABAD DISTRICT · 1965

"जय जवान, जय किसान"

"Hail the soldier, hail the farmer."

THE POSITION ON RECORD

No archival transcript of an extended Shastri address has been located for this edition, so the following is stated in this volume's own words, not his.

His premiership rested on a single proposition: a country that cannot feed itself cannot defend itself, and a country that cannot defend itself cannot stay free. He therefore treated the ration queue and the forward post as one problem. He appealed to citizens to voluntarily forgo a meal during the food crisis, declined his own salary increase, and refused to accept that food aid could be allowed to become an instrument of pressure on Indian foreign policy. Dignity — of the jawan, of the kisan, of the office he held — was his method as much as his message.

Vajpayee extended the call to *Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan, Jai Vigyan* in 1998; the third term completes the logic of self-reliance the first two began.

PROGRAMMES & POLICIES

Food Corporation of India and the Agricultural Prices Commission, 1965 — the institutional base of minimum support prices and buffer stocks · National Dairy Development Board, 1965, and the Anand co-operative pattern behind the White Revolution · High-yielding variety programme and the groundwork of the Green Revolution · Central Bureau of Investigation strengthened · Prime Minister's Office given its modern secretariat shape

EVENTS & TURNING POINTS

Food scarcity and dependence on PL-480 imports · Anti-Hindi agitation in Madras, 1965, and the three-language settlement · Operation Gibraltar and the India–Pakistan War of 1965; ceasefire 23 September · Tashkent Agreement, 10 January 1966, and his death in Tashkent the following day

THE THEMES IT SPEAKS TO

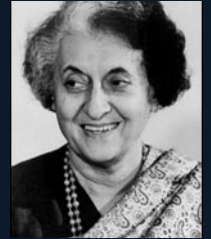
Food security · self-reliance as sovereignty · integrity and simplicity in public life · civil–military morale · federal handling of language

SOURCE: MINISTRY OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING COMMEMORATIVE NOTE · PRIME MINISTERS' MUSEUM & LIBRARY · RECORDS PLACE THE CALL AT URUWA IN OCTOBER 1965; THE EXACT DAY VARIES BETWEEN RECORDS

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INDIRA GANDHI

PRIME MINISTER · 1966–1977, 1980–1984 · SOVEREIGNTY, WAR & UPHEAVAL



THE SPEECH

BROADCAST TO THE NATION, ALL INDIA RADIO · 3 DECEMBER 1971

"I speak to you at a moment of grave peril to our country and our people... Today the war in Bangladesh has become a war on India. I have no doubt that it is the united will of the people that this aggression should be decisively repelled."

PUBLIC MEETING, BHUBANESWAR · 30 OCTOBER 1984 · HER LAST ADDRESS

"I am alive today, I may not be there tomorrow... I shall continue to serve until my last breath, and when I die, every drop of my blood will invigorate India and strengthen it."

Thirteen years separate the two passages: the first is the voice of the state at war, the second of a leader speaking of her own mortality the day before her assassination. Both address the nation as one body.

PROGRAMMES & POLICIES

Green Revolution and high-yielding varieties; food self-sufficiency by the mid-1970s · Nationalisation of fourteen banks, 1969, and general insurance, 1972 · Abolition of privy purses, 1971 · *Garibi Hatao* and the Twenty-Point Programme · MRTP Act 1969, FERA 1973, coal nationalisation 1973 · Wildlife Protection Act 1972, Project Tiger 1973, Water Act 1974, Air Act 1981, Forest Conservation Act 1980 · Space and atomic programmes expanded; Aryabhata 1975, Rakesh Sharma's flight 1984

EVENTS & TURNING POINTS

Congress split, 1969 · Indo-Soviet Treaty, August 1971 · Bangladesh Liberation War, December 1971; Simla Agreement, 1972 · Pokhran-I, 18 May 1974 · Sikkim's accession, 1975 · Emergency, 25 June 1975 – 21 March 1977; 42nd Amendment, 1976 · Return to office, 1980 · Asian Games, 1982 · Operation Blue Star and her assassination, 1984

THE THEMES IT SPEAKS TO

Sovereignty and decisive statecraft · centralisation and its constitutional limits · basic structure doctrine, Kesavananda 1973 · environment enters Indian law · poverty as electoral mandate

SOURCE: ALL INDIA RADIO BROADCAST, 3 DECEMBER 1971 · ADDRESS AT BHUBANESWAR, 30 OCTOBER 1984 · PRASAR BHARATI AND PMML ARCHIVES

MORARJI DESAI

PRIME MINISTER · 1977–1979 · DEMOCRACY RETURNS



THE POSITION ON RECORD

FIRST NON-CONGRESS PRIME MINISTER · STATED IN THIS VOLUME'S WORDS, NOT HIS

He took office at the head of a government elected to end an Emergency, and treated that mandate as an instruction to repair the Constitution rather than to use it. The task he set was narrow and hard: make a second Emergency more difficult to declare than the first had been.

Hence the Forty-fourth Amendment — internal disturbance replaced by armed rebellion as a ground of proclamation, written Cabinet advice required, parliamentary approval tightened, Articles 20 and 21 placed beyond suspension, the right to property moved out of the fundamental rights. He held, further, that austerity in the ruler is a condition of credibility in the state, and applied it to himself with an insistence his contemporaries found uncomfortable.

He resigned in July 1979 rather than face a divided House — the first demonstration that Indian voters could change a government without disturbing the constitutional order.

PROGRAMMES & POLICIES

Constitution (Forty-fourth Amendment) Act, 1978 — the principal legal legacy of the period · Repeal of MISA, 1977 · Shah Commission of Inquiry into Emergency excesses · Rolling Plan in place of the Fifth Plan; Antyodaya and rural-first budgeting · Emphasis on cottage and small-scale industry, Gandhian in framing · Restoration of press freedom · Public sector discipline and prohibition pursued as national policy

EVENTS & TURNING POINTS

General election of March 1977; first non-Congress government at the Centre · Emergency detainees released · Article 356 dissolutions of 1977 and the federal controversy they caused · Thaw with China and Pakistan; Nishan-e-Pakistan conferred on him · Janata Party's internal collapse and his resignation, July 1979

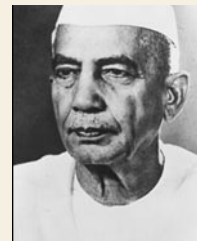
THE THEMES IT SPEAKS TO

Emergency provisions and constitutional safeguards · alternation of power as democratic maturity · coalition arithmetic · probity in public office

SOURCE: CONSTITUTION (FORTY-FOURTH AMENDMENT) ACT, 1978 · LOK SABHA DEBATES, 1977–79 · SHAH COMMISSION REPORT · PMINDIA, FORMER PRIME MINISTERS

CHARAN SINGH

PRIME MINISTER · 1979–1980 · THE PEASANT PROPRIETOR



THE POSITION ON RECORD

STATED IN THIS VOLUME'S WORDS, NOT HIS · WRITINGS HELD BY THE CHARAN SINGH ARCHIVES

He is the one Prime Minister who arrived with a completed economic theory of his own, and it inverted the consensus of his time. India, on his reading, was a country of small cultivators, and a development strategy that taxed the village to build heavy industry in the city would produce neither prosperity nor employment.

His prescriptions followed from that: investment moved towards agriculture, irrigation, rural credit and remunerative prices; land ceilings enforced and tenancy secured so that the tiller owned what he worked; small and cottage industry preferred over capital-intensive plants because it employed more people per rupee. He argued this against Nehru inside the Congress long before he governed, and it remains the sharpest critique of the Mahalanobis model produced by an Indian politician.

His tenure lasted 170 days and he never faced the House. The argument outlived the government: National Farmers' Day is observed on his birth anniversary, 23 December.

PROGRAMMES & POLICIES

As Prime Minister and earlier as Union Finance Minister: rural and agricultural priority in budgetary allocation · As architect of Uttar Pradesh land reform — Zamindari Abolition Act 1950 and the Land Holding Act 1960 fixing ceilings · Advocacy of remunerative prices, cheap institutional credit and debt relief for cultivators · Preference for labour-intensive small industry; scepticism of large-scale mechanisation displacing farm labour · Writings: *India's Poverty and Its Solution*, *India's Economic Policy: The Gandhian Blueprint*

EVENTS & TURNING POINTS

Split of the Janata Party and formation of the Janata Party (Secular) · Sworn in 28 July 1979; resigned 20 August 1979 without facing a confidence vote, remaining caretaker until January 1980 · The 1980 general election and Congress's return · Rise of an organised farmers' movement in north India that drew directly on his politics

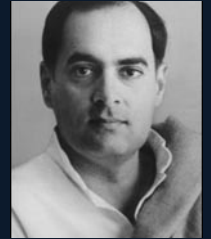
THE THEMES IT SPEAKS TO

Agrarian political economy · land reform and tenancy · rural–urban terms of trade · Gandhian economics against the industrial-first model · caretaker conventions and the confidence of the House

SOURCE: CHARAN SINGH ARCHIVES · UP ZAMINDARI ABOLITION ACT, 1950 · LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT RECORDS OF OFFICE

RAJIV GANDHI

PRIME MINISTER · 1984–1989 · INDIA LOOKS TO THE 21ST CENTURY



THE SPEECH

CENTENARY SESSION OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS, BOMBAY · 28 DECEMBER 1985

"Millions of ordinary Congress workers throughout the country are full of enthusiasm for the Congress policies and programmes. But they are handicapped, for on their backs ride the brokers of power and influence, who dispense patronage to convert a mass movement into a feudal oligarchy..."

"We talk of the high principles and lofty ideals needed to build a strong and prosperous India. But we obey no discipline, no rule, follow no principle of public morality, are self-perpetuating and appropriate to ourselves the products of others' labour..."

A serving Prime Minister described the machinery of his own party as an obstacle between the state and the citizen. Read beside the delivery reforms of the next decade, it is the earliest official statement of the leakage problem that direct benefit transfer was later built to solve.

PROGRAMMES & POLICIES

C-DOT, 1984, and rural telephone exchanges; MTNL and VSNL, 1986 · Technology Missions on drinking water, literacy, immunisation, telecom, oilseeds, dairy · National Education Policy 1986; Navodaya Vidyalayas; Operation Blackboard · Jawahar Rozgar Yojana, 1989 · Licence liberalisation, import of technology, lower tax rates in the 1985 budget · 52nd Amendment (anti-defection), 1985; 61st Amendment lowering the voting age to 18, 1988 · Panchayati Raj Bill, 1989 — the direct ancestor of the 73rd and 74th Amendments

EVENTS & TURNING POINTS

Sworn in on the day of his mother's assassination, 1984 · Anti-Sikh violence of November 1984 · Bhopal gas disaster, December 1984 · Assam and Punjab accords, 1985; Mizo Accord, 1986 · Shah Bano and the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986 · IPKF in Sri Lanka, 1987 · Bofors controversy · Defeat in the 1989 election; assassination in 1991

THE THEMES IT SPEAKS TO

Technology and governance · leakage and last-mile delivery · decentralisation · accords as conflict resolution · youth and the demographic argument · ethics of intra-party democracy

SOURCE: ADDRESS AT THE CENTENARY SESSION OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS, BOMBAY, 28 DECEMBER 1985 · PMML · LOK SABHA DEBATES

V. P. SINGH

PRIME MINISTER · 1989–1990 · THE AGE OF COALITIONS



THE POSITION ON RECORD

ANNOUNCEMENT OF MANDAL IMPLEMENTATION, PARLIAMENT · 7 AUGUST 1990 · STATED IN THIS VOLUME'S WORDS

His case was that formal equality before the law had not dislodged inequality of opportunity, and that a state which recruits from a narrow social base cannot claim to represent the whole. Reservation for the Other Backward Classes in central services was therefore not charity but a correction of representation.

The announcement of 7 August 1990 turned a decade-old report into policy overnight and reorganised Indian politics around social justice, at the cost of his own government. He accepted that cost. What followed — protest, litigation, and the Supreme Court's *Indra Sawhney* judgment of 1992 upholding the quota while capping total reservation and excluding the affluent — settled the constitutional frame within which every later commission has worked.

He also insisted that a minority government must live or die by the floor of the House, and lost office there in November 1990 on a confidence motion.

PROGRAMMES & POLICIES

Implementation of the Mandal Commission's 27 per cent reservation for OBCs in central government services, 1990 · 65th Amendment, 1990, creating the National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes as a constitutional body · Panchayati Raj and Nagarpalika legislation revived, later enacted as the 73rd and 74th Amendments · Bharat Ratna conferred on Dr B. R. Ambedkar, 1990 · Farm debt relief scheme · Restoration of the National Front's commitment to a non-centralising federal practice

EVENTS & TURNING POINTS

National Front government supported from outside by both the BJP and the Left · Kashmir insurgency and the Rubaiya Sayeed kidnapping, December 1989 · Anti-Mandal agitation, 1990 · Ram Rath Yatra and the withdrawal of BJP support · Defeat on a confidence motion, 7 November 1990 · *Indra Sawhney v. Union of India*, 1992

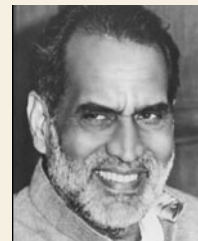
THE THEMES IT SPEAKS TO

Social justice and Articles 15(4) and 16(4) · creamy layer and the 50 per cent ceiling · representation as a democratic value · coalition governance and outside support · ethics of a decision taken against one's own survival

SOURCE: LOK SABHA DEBATES, 7 AUGUST 1990 · OFFICE MEMORANDUM, DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL & TRAINING, 13 AUGUST 1990 · *INDRA SAWHNEY V. UNION OF INDIA* (1992)

CHANDRA SHEKHAR

PRIME MINISTER · 1990–1991 · GOVERNING ON THE BRINK



THE POSITION ON RECORD

STATED IN THIS VOLUME'S WORDS, NOT HIS · AUTHOR OF *MERI JAIL DIARY*, WRITTEN IN EMERGENCY DETENTION

He led a government of fifty-four members of Parliament, dependent on the party it had just displaced, through the worst external payments crisis in the Republic's history — and refused to pretend the position was other than it was.

The gold reserves pledged abroad in 1991, the emergency arrangements with the International Monetary Fund and the first steps to stop the slide were taken under his government; the reform Budget that followed in July was written by his successors on that foundation. His premiership is the clearest instance in Indian history of a caretaker administration doing necessary and unpopular work without the authority to claim credit for it. He resigned in March 1991 when support was withdrawn, and did not attempt to cling on.

A socialist by formation, he had walked from Kanyakumari to Delhi in 1983 and kept a prison diary in the Emergency; he judged governments by their conduct in adversity rather than their majorities.

PROGRAMMES & POLICIES

Emergency management of the balance of payments: pledging of gold, approach to the IMF, import compression · Vote on account rather than a full Budget, February 1991 · Continuation of Mandal implementation · Efforts at a negotiated settlement in Punjab and Assam · Refuelling facilities to US aircraft during the Gulf War — an early, contested move away from reflexive non-alignment

EVENTS & TURNING POINTS

Sworn in 10 November 1990 with Congress support from outside · Gulf War of 1990–91 and the oil shock; evacuation of Indians from Kuwait · Reserves down to about a fortnight of imports · Withdrawal of Congress support, March 1991 · Rajiv Gandhi's assassination during the election that followed

THE THEMES IT SPEAKS TO

Balance of payments and external vulnerability · caretaker government and constitutional propriety · coalition instability of 1989–91 · strategic autonomy under pressure · integrity in office without power

SOURCE: LOK SABHA DEBATES, 1990–91 · RESERVE BANK OF INDIA, ANNUAL REPORT 1990–91 · PMINDIA, FORMER PRIME MINISTERS

P. V. NARASIMHA RAO

PRIME MINISTER · 1991–1996 · INDIA OPENS ITS ECONOMY



THE SPEECH

ADDRESS TO THE NATION ON ASSUMING OFFICE · NEW DELHI · 1991

"The economy is in a crisis. The balance of payments situation is exceedingly difficult. Inflationary pressures on the price level are considerable."

THE POSITION ON RECORD

He held that the crisis was not an accident of oil prices but the exhaustion of a model, and that a country which had to mortgage gold to pay for a fortnight of imports had lost the freedom of manoeuvre independence was supposed to secure. Reform, on his argument, was therefore continuous with 1947 rather than a break from it.

His method was deliberately undramatic — no announcement of an ideology, only a sequence of decisions: devalue, delicense, open, and let each step establish the constituency for the next. Abroad he applied the same logic, opening to Israel and to East Asia and settling India's post-Soviet bearings without a doctrine.

Every government since has continued the direction he set. That, rather than any phrase, is the measure of the tenure.

PROGRAMMES & POLICIES

New Industrial Policy, 24 July 1991 — licensing abolished for most industries, public-sector monopoly narrowed, FDI liberalised · Two-step devaluation, July 1991; LERMS 1992 and current account convertibility 1994 · Trade reform: import licensing dismantled, tariffs cut · SEBI Act 1992; National Stock Exchange 1992 · Narasimham Committee banking reforms · Tax reform on the Chelliah Committee's lines · 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments, 1992, giving panchayats and municipalities constitutional status · Look East Policy; diplomatic relations with Israel, 1992 · Mid-Day Meal scheme, 1995

EVENTS & TURNING POINTS

Minority government formed after Rajiv Gandhi's assassination · Gold pledged to the Bank of England; IMF standby arrangement · Demolition of the Babri Masjid, 6 December 1992, and the violence that followed · Latur earthquake, 1993 · Dunkel Draft debate and India's accession to the WTO, 1995 · Punjab militancy brought to an end · Nuclear restraint maintained under external pressure

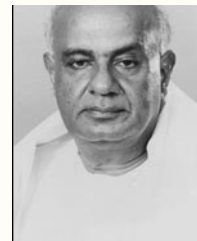
THE THEMES IT SPEAKS TO

LPG reforms and their sequencing · federalism and local self-government · post-Cold War foreign policy · state capacity in crisis · minority governments and coalition management

SOURCE: ADDRESS TO THE NATION, 1991, AS RECORDED BY THE THEN PRINCIPAL INFORMATION OFFICER · NEW INDUSTRIAL POLICY, 24 JULY 1991 · CONSTITUTION (73RD AND 74TH AMENDMENT) ACTS, 1992

H. D. DEVE GOWDA

PRIME MINISTER · 1996–1997 · THE UNITED FRONT



THE POSITION ON RECORD

RED FORT ADDRESS, 15 AUGUST 1996 · STATED IN THIS VOLUME'S WORDS, NOT HIS

He arrived from a state chief ministership at the head of thirteen parties, and made the case that a coalition of regions was not a weakness of the Republic but its federal character finally reflected at the Centre. A farmer's son who described himself as such, he asked to be judged on water, irrigation and the price the cultivator received.

His practical proposition was that States were not petitioners. He convened Chief Ministers to negotiate a common approach to Centre–State finance and to inter-State river disputes, and gave the Inter-State Council a working role. On Kashmir he restored the elected assembly in 1996 after seven years of central rule — a decision defended as a matter of democratic principle rather than of security calculation.

His government fell in April 1997 when the Congress withdrew support — not on a policy, but on the arithmetic of outside support.

PROGRAMMES & POLICIES

United Front Common Minimum Programme, 1996 — federalism, social justice and continuity of economic reform in one document · Inter-State Council convened and Chief Ministers' conferences on Centre–State fiscal relations · Irrigation and drinking-water priority; special assistance to backward districts · Continuation of liberalisation with a rural emphasis; the 1997 "dream budget" prepared under his government · Ganga water-sharing negotiations with Bangladesh concluded December 1996 · Restoration of the elected assembly in Jammu & Kashmir, 1996

EVENTS & TURNING POINTS

Hung Parliament of 1996; the thirteen-day Vajpayee government preceding his own · United Front sworn in 1 June 1996 with Congress support from outside · India's refusal to sign the CTBT, 1996 · Assembly elections held in Jammu & Kashmir · Withdrawal of Congress support and his resignation, April 1997

THE THEMES IT SPEAKS TO

Coalition federalism and the rise of regional parties · Centre–State fiscal relations and the Inter-State Council · inter-State river water disputes · restoration of democratic process in a disturbed State · continuity of reform across governments

SOURCE: UNITED FRONT COMMON MINIMUM PROGRAMME, 1996 · INDEPENDENCE DAY ADDRESS, 15 AUGUST 1996 · GANGA WATER SHARING TREATY, 12 DECEMBER 1996 · PMINDIA, FORMER PRIME MINISTERS

I. K. GUJRAL

PRIME MINISTER · 1997–1998 · THE NEIGHBOURHOOD DOCTRINE



THE SPEECH

"ASPECTS OF INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY" · BANDARANAIKE
CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, COLOMBO · JANUARY
1997

"This is a view based on five points with the inherently simple premise of non-interference in the affairs of our neighbours and respect for their sovereignty.

The 'Gujral Doctrine', if I may call it so, states that, first, with its neighbours like Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka, India does not ask for reciprocity, but gives and accommodates what it can in good faith and trust... Second, no South Asian country should allow its territory to be used against the interests of another country of the region...

These five principles, scrupulously observed, will recast South Asia's regional relationships in a friendly, cooperative mould."

The asymmetry is deliberate: the largest state in the region gives first and does not keep accounts. Twenty-five years of neighbourhood policy have argued with this premise without displacing it.

PROGRAMMES & POLICIES

The Gujral Doctrine's five principles as declared policy towards neighbours · Ganga Water Sharing Treaty with Bangladesh, thirty years, December 1996, negotiated as External Affairs Minister · Mahakali Treaty and trade concessions to Nepal; transit and market access for landlocked neighbours · Refusal to sign the CTBT without disarmament commitments, 1996 · Confidence-building measures with China, 1996 · Composite dialogue with Pakistan resumed; identification of the eight-subject framework · Continuation of the United Front's Common Minimum Programme

EVENTS & TURNING POINTS

Sworn in 21 April 1997, retaining the external affairs portfolio · Golden Jubilee of Independence, 1997, and the special midnight session of Parliament · Meeting with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif at the SAARC summit, Male, 1997 · Withdrawal of Congress support over the Jain Commission report and his resignation, November 1997; general election of 1998

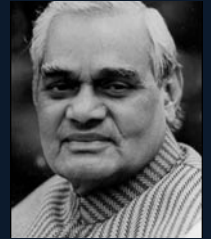
THE THEMES IT SPEAKS TO

Neighbourhood First and non-reciprocity · asymmetry in regional relations · water diplomacy and shared rivers · strategic autonomy on nuclear commitments · coalition foreign policy

SOURCE: "ASPECTS OF INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY", COLOMBO, JANUARY 1997 · MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS · SELECTED SPEECHES OF PRIME MINISTER I. K. GUJRAL, PARLIAMENT OF INDIA LIBRARY

ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE

PRIME MINISTER · 1996, 1998–2004 · COALITION INDIA FINDS ITS VOICE



THE SPEECH

REPLY IN THE CONFIDENCE MOTION DEBATE · LOK SABHA · 28 MAY 1996

"सत्ता का खेल तो चलेगा, सरकारें आएँगी, जाएँगी; पार्टियाँ बनेंगी, बिगड़ेंगी; मगर यह देश रहना चाहिए, इस देश का लोकतंत्र अमर रहना चाहिए।"

"The game of power will go on. Governments will come and go; parties will be made and unmade; but this country must endure, and the democracy of this country must remain immortal."

TWO YEARS LATER · POKHRAN-II, MAY 1998

He announced the tests, accepted the sanctions, declared a voluntary moratorium and a no-first-use posture, and extended Shastri's call to *Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan, Jai Vigyan*. Ten months after that he crossed to Lahore by bus.

Thirteen days in office, and he chose to resign rather than divide the House. It is the most quoted passage in the record of the Indian Parliament because it separates the office from the man holding it.

PROGRAMMES & POLICIES

National Highways Development Project — Golden Quadrilateral and North–South, East–West corridors · Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, 2000 · Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, 2001, and the 86th Amendment, 2002, making education a fundamental right · Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act, 2003 · Telecom reform: New Telecom Policy 1999, TRAI strengthened, tariffs collapse · Disinvestment Ministry; VSNL, Maruti, Hindustan Zinc · Antyodaya Anna Yojana, 2000 · Three new States, 2000: Chhattisgarh, Uttaranchal, Jharkhand · Kelkar tax reforms and the road to VAT · Delhi Metro; river-linking studies; Kisan Credit Card expansion

EVENTS & TURNING POINTS

Pokhran-II, 11 and 13 May 1998; sanctions and the Jaswant Singh–Talbot talks · Lahore Declaration, 21 February 1999 · Kargil War, 1999, fought without crossing the Line of Control · IC-814 hijacking, 1999 · Agra Summit, 2001 · Attack on Parliament, 13 December 2001 · Gujarat violence, 2002 · Srinagar, April 2003 — *Insaniyat, Jamhooriyat, Kashmiriyat* · Ceasefire on the LoC, 2003; India–ASEAN and Look East deepened

THE THEMES IT SPEAKS TO

Coalition dharma and stable multi-party government · nuclear doctrine, credible minimum deterrence and no first use · infrastructure-led growth · fiscal rules · restraint in war as a strategic asset

SOURCE: LOK SABHA DEBATES, 28 MAY 1996 ·
EPARLIAMENT LIBRARY · PIB RELEASES, MAY 1998 ·
LAHORE DECLARATION, 1999

MANMOHAN SINGH

PRIME MINISTER · 2004–2014 · GROWTH WITH INCLUSION



THE SPEECH

PRESS CONFERENCE AT THE END OF OFFICE · NEW DELHI · 3 JANUARY 2014

"I honestly believe that history will be kinder to me than the contemporary media, or for that matter, the Opposition parties in Parliament."

THE POSITION ON RECORD

His argument through the decade was that high growth is not an end but a means, and that its legitimacy depends on whether the poorest can claim a share of it as a right rather than receive it as a favour. Hence a decade in which entitlements were written into statute — information, employment, education, forest rights, food — while the economy ran at its fastest sustained rate.

On the civil nuclear agreement he staked his government's survival on the floor of the House in July 2008, holding that ending India's nuclear isolation without surrendering its weapons programme was worth the risk of office.

An economist who had opened the economy in 1991 as Finance Minister returned to govern it, and chose to be remembered by the record rather than by the argument about it.

PROGRAMMES & POLICIES

Right to Information Act, 2005 · National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 (MGNREGA) · Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 · Forest Rights Act, 2006 · National Food Security Act, 2013 · Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 · Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013 · National Rural Health Mission, 2005; JNNURM, 2005; Bharat Nirman · Aadhaar and the UIDAI, 2009; Direct Benefit Transfer pilots · Companies Act 2013; Competition Act enforcement; FDI in retail, 2012 · Farm loan waiver, 2008; Sixth Pay Commission

EVENTS & TURNING POINTS

India–US Civil Nuclear Agreement, 2005–2008; NSG waiver and the confidence vote of July 2008 · Global financial crisis, 2008, weathered with fiscal stimulus · 26/11 Mumbai attacks, 2008; NIA established · Nearly nine per cent growth in the mid-decade; taper-driven currency pressure, 2013 · Anti-corruption movement, 2011, and the 2G and coal allocation controversies · Telangana's creation legislated, 2014

THE THEMES IT SPEAKS TO

Rights-based welfare and the entitlement state · inclusive growth and the fiscal cost of rights · transparency and accountability legislation · strategic partnership with the United States and end of nuclear isolation · coalition government and the confidence of the House

SOURCE: PRIME MINISTER'S PRESS CONFERENCE, 3 JANUARY 2014 · PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU · LOK SABHA DEBATES, 22 JULY 2008 · ACTS OF PARLIAMENT AS CITED

NARENDRA MODI

PRIME MINISTER · 2014– · FROM NEW INDIA TO VIKSIT BHARAT



THE SPEECH

80TH INDEPENDENCE DAY ADDRESS, RED FORT, NEW DELHI · 15 AUGUST 2026

"Any nation becomes great and achieves its goals when it moves forward on the strength of its dreams and resolutions... When the resolution is firm, the capability to find ways through disasters emerges by itself."

"With the hard work of 140 crore countrymen, we will make a Viksit Bharat by the 100th year of independence... Sectors once seen as 'No-Go Areas' are now 'Go-Ahead Areas!'."

"समय हमारा है, अवसर हमारा है, संकल्प हमारा है... आओ, मिलकर विकसित भारत बनाएं।"

The address is built as a report and a target in one: twelve years of measured output, then Saptdhara — seven streams of national strength — and a single date, 2047, against which all of it is to be judged.

PROGRAMMES & POLICIES

Jan Dhan–Aadhaar–Mobile and Direct Benefit Transfer · Swachh Bharat, 2014; Make in India; Skill India; Start-up India · GST, 2017; Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016; demonetisation, 2016 · Ayushman Bharat, 2018; PM-KISAN, 2019; Ujjwala; Jal Jeevan Mission; PM Awas Yojana · National Education Policy, 2020 · Atmanirbhar Bharat and Production Linked Incentive schemes; India Semiconductor Mission · UPI and Digital Public Infrastructure · Panch Pran and Amrit Kaal, 2022; Viksit Bharat 2047 · Announced 15 August 2026: AI skilling for one crore youth, 7–8 new semiconductor plants, 100 GW nuclear by 2047, National Critical Minerals Mission, free online coaching, nationwide sports talent hunt, modern Civil Defence network

EVENTS & TURNING POINTS

Abrogation of Article 370, 2019 · COVID-19 pandemic and the vaccination programme, 2020–22 · Chandrayaan-3, 2023 · G20 Presidency and the New Delhi Declaration, 2023 · New Parliament House, 2023 · Vande Mataram at 150 years and the first Digital Census, 2026 · Saptdhara announced from the Red Fort, 2026

THE THEMES IT SPEAKS TO

Self-reliance and supply-chain security · digital public infrastructure and welfare delivery · energy transition and critical minerals · demographic dividend and skilling · India's claim to a larger role in global governance

SOURCE: ADDRESS FROM THE RAMPARTS OF THE RED FORT, 80TH INDEPENDENCE DAY, 15 AUGUST 2026 · PMINDIA · PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU · PRASAR BHARATI

Speeches, and What They Set in Motion

1947

Independence

1950

The Republic; the Constitution in force

1965

War, food scarcity, *Jai Jawan Jai Kisan*

1971

Bangladesh Liberation War

1974

Pokhran-I

1978

44th Amendment; constitutional safeguards restored

1980s

Telecom, computing, modernisation

1991

Economic reforms

1998

Pokhran-II

2005

Right to Information; MGNREGA

2008

India-US Civil Nuclear Agreement

2014

Swachh Bharat, Jan Dhan, Make in India

2020

Atmanirbhar Bharat

2022

Amrit Kaal · Panch Pran

2023

G20 Presidency; Viksit Bharat named

2026

80th Independence Day; Saptdhara

THE INDIA IDEA

Eleven commitments recur across every tenure in this volume, whatever the government of the day. Reading the speeches against each other is how the continuity becomes visible.

Constitution

Democracy

Secularism

Federalism

Development

Self-Reliance

Social Justice

National Security

Economic Reform

Technology

Strategic Autonomy

1947 → 2026 → 2047

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National Archives of India.

Ministry of External Affairs, documents and speeches.

Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, commemorative note on Lal Bahadur Shastri.

Charan Singh Archives, for the record of his writings.

1947 → 2026 → 2047

A NATION SPEAKS. A GENERATION LISTENS. THE JOURNEY CONTINUES.

— — —

Their words built India.
Your words may shape its next chapter.

*From studying those who led India, to preparing those who will
serve India.*

**PREPARE DIFFERENTLY.
THINK LIKE A CIVIL SERVANT.**

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