

Highlights of the President's Address, 2024

The President of India, Ms. Droupadi Murmu, addressed a joint sitting of both Houses of Parliament on June 27, 2024. She outlined the major policy achievements and objectives of the government in her address. Key highlights of the address include:

Economy and Finance

- In 10 years, India has risen to being the fifth largest economy in the world from being the 11th largest. From 2021 to 2024, India has grown at an average rate of 8% annually.
- India is contributing to 15% of global growth. The government is striving to make India the third largest economy in the world.
- Public sector bank profits crossed Rs 1.4 lakh crore in 2023-24, 35% higher than in 2022-23. Non-performing assets of these banks have reduced. Banking reforms have made India's banking sector one of the strongest in the world.
- In April 2024, GST collection was over two lakh crore rupees for the first time. GST is helping to formalise the economy, and to make business and trade easier. This has also strengthened the financial position of states.

Agriculture and Food Security

- During the COVID-19 pandemic, government started the PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana to provide free ration to 80 crore persons. Benefits under this scheme are also being extended to families that have come out of poverty, to prevent them from slipping back into poverty.
- A large network of Farmer Producer Organisations and co-operative organisations are being created.
- More than Rs 3.2 lakh crore has been disbursed to farmers under the PM-KISAN Samman Nidhi.
- The government has effected a record increase in MSP for Kharif crops.
- Assistance is being provided to farmers to reduce import dependence on pulses and oilseeds.
- Work has commenced to create the world's largest storage capacity in the co-operative sector.

Industry

- PLI schemes and Ease of Doing Business have contributed to increasing investments and employment opportunities on a large scale.
- Sunrise sectors ranging from semiconductors to fighter jets and aircraft carriers are being promoted in mission mode. A semiconductor plant is being set up in Assam at a cost of Rs 27,000 crore. The north-eastern region will be a

hub of Made in India chips.

- India has become the third largest start-up ecosystem in the world.

Infrastructure

- India is the world's third largest domestic aviation market. In the last 10 years, airline routes in India have increased from 209 to 605. This has directly benefited Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities.
- The pace of construction of national highways has more than doubled.
- Feasibility studies will be conducted for bullet train corridors in the northern, southern and eastern regions of the country.
- Government is making continuous efforts to reduce the cost of logistics.

Urban and Rural Development

- In 10 years, more than 3.8 lakh kilometres of village roads have been constructed under the PM Gram Sadak Yojana.
- PM SVANidhi will be expanded to include street vendors in rural and semi-urban areas.
- In 10 years, metros have been built in 21 cities.
- Construction of three crore houses has been approved under PM Awas Yojana.
- The government is committed to making our cities the best living spaces in the world.

Energy and Environment

- Renewable energy capacities are being increased manifold. Climate targets will be achieved ahead of schedule.
- More than one crore families have been registered under the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana and have installed rooftop solar connections. This helps bring the electricity bill of households to zero, and helps them generate income by selling electricity. The government has provided support of up to Rs 78,000 per family for this scheme.

Health

- Free health services are provided to 55 crore beneficiaries under Ayushman Bharat Yojana. All elderly individuals above the age of 70 will be covered under the scheme.
- 25,000 Jan Aushadhi Kendras are being opened at a fast pace.

Education and Sports

- Seven new IITs, seven IIMs, 15 AIIMS, 16 IIITs, 315 medical colleges, and 390 universities have

been established in the last decade. Students can now study engineering in Indian languages.

- Major reforms in examination related bodies are underway. These will include their functioning, and all aspects of examination processes.
- Parliament has enacted a stricter law against unfair means in examinations.
- Nalanda University has been established to help make India a Global Knowledge Hub.
- Programmes like Atal Tinkering Labs, Start-up India and Stand-up India have helped improve the capacity of the country's youth.
- The Indian Olympic Association is preparing to host the 2036 Olympic Games.

Social Justice

- Over the last 10 years, 25 crore Indians have been brought out of poverty.
- PM JANMAN has been allocated more than Rs 24,000 crore. It focuses on the development of backward tribal communities.
- To enable livelihood opportunities, soft loans are being provided to disadvantaged groups through the PM SURAJ portal.
- Affordable assistive devices are being provided to persons with disabilities. PM Divyasha Kendras are being expanded across the country.

Labour and Employment

- The government is creating more opportunities for employment and self-employment.
- The government is integrating all social security schemes for workers.
- Coverage of accident and life insurance is being expanded by using Digital India and post office networks.

Women and Child Development

- Majority of the four crore houses built under the PM Awas Yojana have been allotted to women beneficiaries. Most of the three crore new houses being built will also be allotted to women beneficiaries.
- Over the last decade, 10 crore women have been mobilised into self-help groups (SHGs). 30,000 women belonging to SHGs have been provided with Krishi Sakhi Certificates.

- The government has started a campaign to make three crore women Lakhpati Didis. To achieve this, financial support to SHGs is being increased. The NAMO Drone Didi Scheme will also help achieve this goal. Women from SHGs are being given drones, and being trained as drone pilots.

Defence

- Reforms like the Chief of Defence Staff have helped strengthen defence forces.
- Reforms in ordnance factories have benefitted the defence sector. More than 40 ordnance factories have been restructured into seven Defence Sector Enterprises, thus improving their efficiency.
- India is manufacturing defence equipment worth more than one lakh crore rupees. In the last year, about 70% of defence procurement was sourced from Indian manufacturers. Defence forces have stopped importing over 500 defence items. Defence exports have increased more than 18 times to Rs 21,000 crore.
- Two defence corridors are being developed in Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.
- Rs 1.2 lakh crore has been disbursed under One Rank One Pension.

Home Affairs

- The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita will be enforced from July 1, 2024. The three new criminal laws will help speed up the judicial process.
- The government has started granting citizenship to refugees under the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019.
- AFSPA is being withdrawn from disturbed areas of the north-east in a phased manner.
- In the last 10 years, allocation for development of the north-eastern region has increased four times. The government is working to make the north-east a strategic gateway under the Act East Policy.

External Affairs

- Record number of countries have associated with India on initiatives such as the International Solar Alliance.
- India has been instrumental in giving shape to the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor.

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