

‘India has moved from the Fragile Five to a multi-billion-dollar investment destination’

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NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Wednesday took credit for India becoming the world’s sixth largest economy and said the country would power global growth over the next three decades. Economic and social policies and structural reforms implemented by the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government had pulled 50 million people out of poverty in the last two years alone, Modi said in his Independence Day speech.

“A sleeping elephant has started running,” he said, quoting a recent observation made by the International Monetary Fund chief for India, Ranil Salgado.

With the general election due next year, the Prime Minister, in his speech, compared the performance of his government with the economic conditions in 2013.

As per the World Bank data from last month, India has become the world’s sixth largest economy by overtaking France. India only trails the US, China, Japan, Germany and the UK.

Modi said, “India is feeling the

change of these four years. Earlier, international institutions used to see India as a risk. Now they say India’s reform measures are going to strengthen its fundamentals. From ‘Fragile Five’, we have become a multi-billion-dollar investment destination.”

‘Fragile Five’ was a term coined by a Morgan Stanley analyst in 2013 to collectively describe India, Indonesia, Brazil, South Africa and Turkey when the rupee had plunged amid turmoil in emerging market economies. The rupee is again under pressure after contagion spread

from Turkey, engaged in a trade war with the US, to other emerging markets.

But, stressing that the growth wouldn’t come at the cost of welfare, he announced launch of the ‘Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Abhiyaan’ (people’s health programme) on September 25.

In a year that has seen farmers’ protests, Modi reiterated his government’s resolve to double farmers’ incomes by 2022, adding that his government had taken a bold step to increase the minimum support price for crops to 1.5 times the cost to production.