

For Cong, defence sector only about brokering deals: PM

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FACING OPPOSITION attack on the Rafale deal, Prime Minister Narendra Modi hit back on Sunday, saying that for the Congress, the defence sector was only about "brokering deals and helping their own set of friends".

Addressing a rally in Tirupur, he said: "From the seas to the skies, the Congress has several scams associated with defence, and, in the process, the party did



'Opposition misleading farmers, youth.' *PTI*

not allow the modernisation of defence forces for the long years that they were in power... Every middleman caught had a link with some Congress leader or other... Those who got the opportunity to rule the nation for years

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defence... (where) our forces have all possible support they require in keeping our nation safe... It is our government that made two defence corridors, including one in Tamil Nadu. Such corridors will bring investments and job opportunities," said Modi.

He said the Congress spares "no opportunity to belittle our Army".

Modi said social justice was never just a mathematical equation for the NDA. "For a long time, the Opposition has been spreading panic on this issue. I dare them to give one instance when BJP altered the social justice system... On the contrary, it was the Third Front government, both DMK and Congress, who partnered to remove reservations in promotion for SC and ST communities. It was the Vajpayee government that passed a constitutional amendment to safeguard the interests of SC and ST communities. The strongest amendment in the SC and ST Act was made by the current NDA government," he said.

Accusing the Opposition parties of forming an "adulterated alliance of rich people to promote their dynasties", he said neither do they understand poverty, nor do they have a vision to serve the poor. "Time and again, they have tried to mislead farmers, workers and youth... Whenever an election is coming, they will talk of some loan waiver, which neither helps a poor farmer nor ends their burden. For the first time in India's history, our government spoke about doubling the income of farmers," Modi said.

"When those in power genuinely care for the middle-class, it is seen in the policies. I want to take you back to UPA's time, there was a very wise minister from Tamil Nadu, you know who I am talking about? The Recounting Minister," Modi said, apparently referring to former finance minister and senior Congress leader P Chidambaram, who won the 2009 Lok Sabha polls from Sivaganga after re-counting.

"This man thinks all the knowledge in the world resides only in his brain. In his typical arrogance, he would say why is the middle-class so worried about price rise, that they purchase ice creams and mineral water. Mr Recounting Minister, the middle-class does not need thoughts by you and the Congress. They have rejected you," said Modi.

PM on Cong

did not bother about India's defence sector. For them, this sector was only about brokering deals and helping their own set of friends."

He said the NDA government's approach to national security is different. "We dream of an India which is self-sufficient in