

Modi govt. divested twice as much as UPA

₹2.1 lakh crore stake sale done in the last four years alone, data show

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NEW DELHI

The NDA government, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, accounts for a whopping 58% of all the disinvestment that has taken place since 1991, an analysis by *The Hindu* of data released by the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management showed.

The data showed that disinvestment worth ₹3.63 lakh crore had taken place since 1991, out of which about ₹2.1 lakh crore came in the last four years alone, with five months still left in this financial year. The disinvestment done by the current govern-

ment so far is already almost twice that done by the UPA government over both its terms in power.

In the number of deals too, the current NDA administration seems ahead with 75, compared with 33 in UPA-II. Further, the government has set a target of ₹80,000 crore of disinvestments for this financial year, of which it has so far achieved only ₹15,247.11 crore. If it does manage to meet its target, the present government's share in total disinvestment since 1991 will go up to nearly 65%.

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Gathering **pace**

The quantum of disinvestments carried out by the current government so far is almost twice that done by the UPA over both its terms in power. In the number of deals too, NDA-II is ahead with 75 deals

GOVERNMENT	DISINVESTMENT PROCEEDS (₹ CRORE)	PROPORTION OF TOTAL
Congress (1991-1996)	9,961.83	2.75
United Front (1996-98)	1,289.67	0.36
NDA - I (1998-2004)	33,655.59	9.28
UPA - I (2004-09)	8,515.94	2.35
UPA - II (2009-14)	99,367.46	27.40
NDA - II (2014-19)*	2,09,896.11	57.87
Total	3,62,686.60	100

Note: * NDA - II figures up to November 8, 2018

Source: Department of Investment Promotion and Asset Management, Ministry of Finance

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Last year, the government had set a disinvestment target of ₹72,500 crore, which it overshot significantly by collecting ₹1,00,056.91 crore.

“The government needs all the revenue it can get to meet its fiscal deficit target,” an economist working closely with the government said on the condition of anonymity.

“Most of the disinvestment needs to take place. These are loss-making companies. But the manner in which it is getting the disinvestment proceeds in some cases is problematic. Take the ONGC-HPCL deal, where ONGC bought some ₹36,000 crore worth of

HPCL shares from the government. How is that disinvestment, if ONGC is a government-owned company itself?”

ONGC had in January 2018 bought 51.1% of BPCL for ₹36,915 crore from the government, which went towards meeting that fiscal year’s disinvestment target.

The government is also reportedly considering ordering several public sector oil companies to buy back shares from the government amounting to about ₹10,000-₹20,000 crore.

Another deal in the making is BPCL and IOC buying 26% each in GAIL, which would give the government another ₹20,000 crore.