

# Not by goli or gaali, but embrace: PM's mantra



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses the gathering during the 71st Independence Day from the ramparts of the historic Red Fort in New Delhi on Tuesday

PTI

## Modi reaches out to Kashmiris, asserts India can face any challenge

SAPNA SINGH/KANIKA MEHTA  
NEW DELHI

Reaching out to the people of violence-torn Jammu & Kashmir, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said the problems in Kashmir cannot be resolved by bullets and invited those wielding guns to "join the mainstream". Modi said his Government is determined to restore in Kashmir its status of "heaven on earth". However, the PM stressed that there was no question of going

soft on terrorism.

Addressing the nation on the 71th Independence Day from the ramparts of historic Red Fort, Modi said, "*Na gaali se samasya sulajhne wali hai, na goli se, samasya suljhegi har Kashmiri ko gale lagane se* (Kashmir problem cannot be resolved by either bullets or by abuses. It can be resolved by embracing all Kashmiris)."

He said only a "handful of separatists" were resorting to different tactics to create problems in the State and asserted that they will be dealt with an iron hand. "Not only the Jammu & Kashmir Government, but the entire country is with the people of the State in helping them realise their dreams of development," said the PM.

He also declared that the violence in the name of faith is

not acceptable and termed casteism and communalism as poison for the Indian society.

Referring to recent incidents of natural calamities in various parts of the country as also death of children at a State-run hospital in Uttar Pradesh, Modi said sympathies of the entire nation are with the affected families. "Many parts of the country faced natural calamities in the recent past. Children died at a hospital. The entire nation is with them," the PM said.

Mentioning the worst flood situations in north-eastern part of the country, the PM said, "While good rains contribute to prosperity of the country, climate change creates problems. Natural calamities have become a big challenge."

Emphasising on the pre-

sent national security scenario, the PM said it is a priority of his Government to ensure the country is capable of defending itself in all spheres.

Referring the last year's surgical strike on terror launch pads across the Line of Control in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, Modi said the world has realised the bravery of our forces. "The stature of India is rising and several countries are cooperating with India in fighting against terrorism," the PM added.

"It is clear that security of our country is our priority. Internal security is our priority. Be it sea, borders, space or cyber threats, India is capable of tackling every security challenge," he said, amid the stand-off with China in Doklam.

"Our Army, our brave hearts, every personnel in uni-

form, and not only the Army, the Navy and the Indian Air Force (IAF) have shown their capability and grit whenever there was a situation. Our heroes never shied away from sacrifices," Modi said.

While invoking Mahatma Gandhi and Lord Buddha, the PM said, "Violence in the name of faith is not acceptable in the country."

"*Bharat Jodo*" (connect India) should be the slogan like "*Bharat chhodo*" (Quit India) was during the freedom struggle, he said.

The PM also referred the "*Chalta hai*" attitude, and said, "Leave this '*chalta hai*' attitude and think of '*badal sakta hai*'."

During his 54-minute-long speech, Modi dwelt upon the contentious triple talaq issue

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and lauded the women fighting the practice of triple talaq and said the entire country is with them in their endeavour to get their rights.

"I pay my regards to the women who had to lead a pitiable life due to 'triple talaq'. They have started a movement which has created an environment in the entire country

against the practice," said the PM said. The Centre has said that it is against the practice of triple talaq. The matter is under consideration of a constitution bench of the Supreme Court.