

With Quit India spirit, expel casteism, communalism by 2022, PM exhorts

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: Ahead of the 70th Independence Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday invoked the Quit India Movement and exhorted the countrymen to use the same spirit to expel problems of communalism, casteism, corruption, terrorism, poverty and dirt from the country by 2022.

He asked the people to take a pledge to contribute in some way or the other to create a "New India".

In his monthly radio programme "Mann Ki Baat", Modi referred to the Quit India Movement launched on August 9, 1942 by Mahatma Gandhi and the subsequent developments which resulted in the Britishers leaving India and the country getting freedom on August 15, 1947.

"Just like five years between 1942 and 1947 became the decisive period, I can see another five-year period from 2017 to 2022 to make a resolve to end the problems of our nation," he said.

He identified these problems as communalism, casteism, corruption, terrorism, poverty and dirt and asked people to work for their removal in the same spirit of "Quit India".

"It is 70 years since we got Independence. Governments came and went, systems emerged and developed. Everyone contributed in own way to end the problems, raise employment, remove poverty



and make the country progress. Successes were achieved but the expectations were also raised," the prime minister said.

He said this Independence Day should be celebrated as one of resolve to end the problems in next five years.

"If 125 crore people, remembering August 9, 1942, make a pledge on August 15 to contribute something as an individual, as a citizen, as a family person, as a person from a city or a village, as a member of a government department, there will be crores of pledges," Modi said. He exhorted the citizens to use all kinds of fora to undertake this task, including through the online mode.

The prime minister also sought ideas from the public which could be incorporated in his Independence Day speech that he will deliver from the ramparts of the historic Red Fort.

Interestingly, he said he has heard about "complaints" that his previous Independence Day addresses were long and that he will try to keep it short this

time.

"I will try to finish it in 40-45-50 minutes. I have tried to make a rule for myself. I don't know whether I will be able to do it or not," he added.

He also referred to the upcoming season of festivals like Raksha Bandhan, Janam Ashtami, Ganesh Chaturthi and Diwali and urged the people to use the items made by the poor people of the country as it relates to their economic empowerment.

"Our festivals are not only for celebrations. Our festivals are also an instrument of societal improvement.

Also, it has direct relation to the economic condition of the poor people," Modi said.

"This is the time when the poor people get an opportunity to make an earning," he said.

Giving the example of Diwali, he said the people should use environment-friendly 'diyas' (small oil lamps) only. Such things, he said, will give work to the poor people and help in their empowerment.