

'GST is more than a tax reform, it has started a culture of honesty'

In his *Mann Ki Baat* address, PM urges people to help eradicate social evils and celebrate 15 August this year as the 'Day of Resolve' to take India to newer heights by the 75th year of Independence in 2022

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P rime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday called upon the people to help build a New India and to pledge to free the country of the evils of poverty, terrorism, caste and communalism in the next five years.

Modi said the 2017-22 period was crucial for the country and that all citizens should prepare a roadmap to take the nation to newer heights by the 75th year of Independence.

"1942 to 1947 were decisive years that led to India's freedom. Similarly, 2017-22 are crucial too. In 2017, let us resolve to free the country from social evils like poverty, terrorism, casteism and communalism. Let us all pledge that by 2022, when we celebrate 75 years of Independence, we will take the nation to greater heights of progress," he said in his monthly radio address *Mann Ki Baat*.

He also urged people to celebrate 15 August 2017 as Sankalp Parva or the Day of Resolve. He invited the youth to contribute in the making of new India, saying they should transform this campaign into a people's movement.

"In 2022, when we mark 75 years of freedom, we will certainly transform that resolve into *Siddhi* or attainment. Let's



Modi said 2017-22 will be a crucial period for India like the decisive years of 1942-47. PTI

launch a mega campaign 'Sankalp se Siddhi'—Attainment through Resolve—from the 9th of this August. The slogan in 1942 was Do or Die, but now it is to resolve, to come together and work towards making of new India," he said.

Modi said that the implementation of the goods and service tax (GST) was a step in the direction of building a new India, as it marks the beginning of a new culture of honesty in the country. He also spoke about the positive impact of GST on the economy a month after it was implemented on 1 July and said that the dream of one nation one tax had finally been fulfilled.

"GST is more than a tax reform. GST is an example of the collective strength of India.

It has started a culture of honesty in the country and is like a social reform movement. Successful rollout of GST is a case study. It is also an example of cooperative federalism as all decisions were taken by both the centre and states unanimously. A friendly environment has been created between the government and traders, between government and consumers, and this has played a very significant role in enhancing mutual trust," Modi added.

Speaking about the impact of GST on the transport and logistics sector, Modi said that the movement of trucks has increased and highways have become clutter-free.

"Earlier, because of multiple tax structures, most of the resources of this sector

were used in maintaining paperwork. This 'Good and Simple Tax' has had a positive impact on our economy. The trust of customers for the traders is increasing," he said.

Analysts say that through his address, Modi has tried to tell the nation about his government's agenda to bring about swift and fundamental reforms.

"The agenda of the government is to bring about reform. However, in a federal polity like India, a larger transformation is only possible if everyone participates in it. The radio programme is a smart political move as it allows the Prime Minister to directly communicate with the public and show his dedication towards reforming the country. The nation-wide network of All India Radio along with the push from other media ensures that his message reaches the remotest corner of the country and people get involved in this process of nation-building," said A.K. Verma, Kanpur-based political analyst and political science professor at Christ Church College.

In the course of the radio programme, Modi also talked about the ill-effects of changing climate and the ongoing floods in several parts of the country. "Monsoon is enjoyable but this season also leads to floods. We are doing everything to help in relief and rehabilitation of people," he said.

Congratulating the Indian women's cricket team for their performance in the World Cup final, he said that they may have lost the match but they had won the hearts of 1.25 billion Indians.



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