

Speech on “*Enhancing good governance and empowering communities through inclusivity, trust and opportunities for all*” for the use of the Hon’ble Deputy Chairman Rajya Sabha

Hon’ble Chairperson and Distinguished Delegates:

Empowering people and communities is the very objective of good governance. Our ancient important treatise on statecraft ‘*The Arthashastra*’, underlines the foundation of good governance.

प्रजासुखे सुखं राज्ञः प्रजानां च हिते हितम् ।

नात्मप्रियं हितं राज्ञः प्रजानां तु प्रियं हितम् ॥

Meaning: “*In the happiness of the people lies the happiness of the ruler; in their welfare lies his welfare. The ruler’s interests do not lie in what pleases him personally, but in what benefits the people.*”

This philosophy finds institutional expression in our Constitution through an elected Parliament, an independent Judiciary, an autonomous Election Commission and institutions such as the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) etc.

The guiding principle of *Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas* reflects our commitment to inclusive and good governance.

The 'Good Governance Index'; a set of Right to Services legislation; robust grievance-redressal mechanisms; expanding online delivery of public services and Good Governance Day on 25 December, underscores our commitment to responsive public service.

With our people-centric approach, nearly 250 million people were moved out from the multidimensional poverty. Enhanced rural tap-water coverage, universal sanitation and widened access to healthcare for poor families through our flagship programme *Ayushman Bharat*. Food

security for low income households has been strengthened by providing free foodgrains to over 810 million beneficiaries.

Colleagues, the information and communications technology (ICT) and Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) have expanded access to essential services, strengthened financial inclusion and improved last-mile delivery. Platforms such as Aadhaar for digital identity, the Unified Payment Interface (UPI) for digital payments, and DigiLocker and API Setu for secure data exchange have created inter-operable, scalable and inclusive digital ecosystem.

Our UPI system has emerged as the world's largest digital payment system, empowering millions of individuals and small businesses in rural areas enabling them to make fast, secure and

low-cost digital payments. India is now sharing this digital solution globally, with MoUs signed with 24 countries.

Friends, our Parliament, has remained an epitome of trust, representation and voice of the people. We have enacted the *Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam*, which provides for one-third reservation of seats for women in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies.

The *Mera Yuva Bharat* (MY Bharat) platform provides young citizens with opportunities to contribute to nation-building. We have platforms such as *eGramSwaraj*, *Meri Panchayat* and *Panchayat NIRNAY* which promote transparency by enabling citizens to access information relating to local development plans, public works, etc.

Our Parliament and its Committees, through legislation, financial oversight, and scrutiny of the Executive has been playing a vital role in ensuring inclusive and good governance.

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Guided by the timeless wisdom of “*sarve jan hitay, sarve jan sukhaye*” – meaning: the welfare of all and happiness of all – India remains committed to inclusive growth and providing equal opportunities to all.

As parliamentarians, we must strive to strengthen transparency, uphold accountability and nurture public trust. We have the responsibility not merely to represent, but to serve the people, and make institutions stronger and responsive to the people. Let us pledge our support to these ideals.

Thank you,

Jai Hind !

Jai Bharat !