
Sonia Gandhi speaks on 60th Anniversary of the first sitting of Parliament of India

Monday, 14 May 2012

Last Updated Monday, 14 May 2012

Congress President Sonia Gandhi while addressing the Parliament on the occasion of 60th Anniversary of the first sitting of Parliament of India said,

“Sixty five years ago, India awakened to freedom with a bold and ambitious vision. A vision to build legislature on the basis of universal adult franchise. At one stroke millions of our poor and illiterate men and women were given the power to change their destiny. Let us not forget those troubled days and months and the numerous challenges the country faced then. Millions of refugees were homeless, communal tensions were rife, borders were tensed, resources were scarce. The very idea of a democratic India was being ridiculed in many quarters. When far older democracies had achieved universal adult franchise after long decades of struggle, how could it become a reality a nation beset with such problems. These questions were then asked. To their eternal credit and our undying gratitude our founding fathers persisted. The poor and illiterate masses of this country have turned out to be amazingly skilled and sophisticated. Again and again they have voted with wisdom, voted with purpose, sometimes reaffirming their faith in those governments, sometimes voting them out. And if there is one thread running through this past six decades, it is people's power which has been felt at the highest level of governance. The Aam admi has become the heart and the soul of our democracy. India's freedom struggle reinvented the idea of democracy. The notion of democracy said Gandhiji the father of our nation and the leader of our freedom struggle is that under it the weakest should have the same opportunity as the strongest. It is this revolutionary idea that opened the doors of our legislatures and began to transform the Indian society. It has done so in a peaceful and evolutionary manner based on the time tested principles of secularism and social justice.

We can say with pride that India's parliament elected by the largest electorate in the world and reflecting the aspiration of two billion people has grown into great representative of political institution. I pay my deepest tribute to the Mahatma. He was no longer living when this house first met, yet he was a guiding light that made it all possible. Leading a life of simplicity he dedicated himself to the last and the least. He taught us the power of love and compassion. I pay homage to Jawaharlal Nehru, to his comrade in arms, to his political colleagues, who's profound belief and single minded determination gave spirit and substance to the idea, the functioning and the nurturing of our parliament through its formative stage. I pay tribute to the legendary figures who have graced our parliament, they built great parliamentary traditions and endowed the nation with vision and direction. And as long as we keep their words and their examples in mind while facing new challenges we will remain true to our great heritage. We take pride in the extraordinary laws created by our parliament over the last sixty years. They give force to the constitutional vision of change in our society. They created new rights and remedies for all our citizens and have protected the marginalized. Indian social legislation has today emerged as a global benchmark. We also acknowledge the contribution of thousands of hard working staff in parliament who have toiled tirelessly and we pay humble tribute to the memory of those courageous heroes who laid down their lives in 2001 when parliament came under attack.

The journey of our great parliament has not been always very smooth or without challenge. Nor did we expected to be. The integrity and independence of parliament must be preserved and protected at all cost with no room for compromise. Our conduct should rise to the highest standards that were followed and demanded by our founding fathers of our nation. It should be our resolve in the years to come to make sure that this great institution embraces not only the triumphs and joyce but also our sorrows and suffering. This great institution must not only be a source of power but also justice and compassion.

Three simple words spoken by Jawaharlal Nehru encapsulate the mighty mission of this great republic , Swaraj for All. Let each one of us gear our self for the task ahead. Renew and redouble our commitment and our pledge to fulfill our historic duty.”

var switchTo5x=false;

stLight.options({publisher:'0f416c1f-b4ea-495a-8012-fdc0cd520e83'});