

SPEECH OF SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY, HON'BLE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PMO AND PERSONNEL, P.G. & PENSION ON THE VALEDICTORY SESSION OF 7TH INTERPOL GLOBAL PROGRAMME ON ANTI CORRUPTION, FINANCIAL CRIME AND ASSET RECOVERY

(FEBRUARY 14, 2014 AT CBI (HQ), NEW DELHI)

It is indeed great pleasure for me to address you on the occasion of conclusion of 7th INTERPOL Global Programme on Anti-Corruption, Financial Crime and Asset Recovery for South Asia. It is gratifying to note that 38 participants from six South Asian nations and 25 participants from India are taking part in this extremely relevant five day Capacity Building Programme focusing on supply side of corruption.

2. India's association with INTERPOL started way back in 1949 when India joined as a member country. Since 1966, CBI, India's premier investigation agency is acting as National Central Bureau with distinction. In the past three years, as many as seven Capacity Building Programmes have been conducted in association with INTERPOL for the benefit of Indian and South Asian Law Enforcement Agencies. I complement the CBI and the Anti-Corruption Sub Directorate of INTERPOL for choosing New Delhi as a venue for their South Asian Training Programmes.

3. India, for that matter entire South Asia, is in the critical phase of development. India is committed to provide the institutional framework to improve governance and ensure that the fruits of development reach the poorest of the poor.

4. To bring about the transformation, a radical law aiming at total transparency, Right to Information Act was enacted by our Government in 2005. We are all witnessing the tremendous potential of active and participative civil society. Amidst such dramatic changes in the landscape of democratic governance, two of our Vigilance and Anti-Corruption agencies, namely Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) and Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) are celebrating Golden Jubilee. I sincerely wish that these two organizations which are vital to good governance rededicate themselves to the changing needs with a renewed vigour in the light of their half a century of experience.

5. Internationally, it is uniform experience that growth requires much better and stronger oversight institutions. Responding to the call of the nation and its teeming millions of youth, Indian Parliament recently enacted Lokpal and Lokayukta Act to bring into existence a national level ombudsman called Lokpal and federal level Ombudsman called Lokayukta. It is the responsibility of each one of us to strengthen these institutions by acting in unison in the spirit of constitutional ideals. The Anti-Corruption and Vigilance agencies, both at central and federal level, should develop such protocols and procedures which isolate them from extraneous influences and improve faith of public in their institutional character.

6. Corruption, defined as the misuse of public office for private gain, has both demand and supply sides to it. In India, the efforts to rein in supply side corruption started in the early years of the millennium with the introduction of Integrity Pacts. The same is gathering momentum with the recently enacted Company Act which has penal

provisions for Corporate Misconduct. Further the Government has also introduced an amendment to the Prevention of Corruption Act to cover this aspect as well.

7. The private sector has its own obligation and it has a lot to contribute in this regard. The basic requirement here lies in modernizing their corporate governance structures and complying with modern governance and business ethics. Most importantly, this should entail a clear commitment to financial and administrative transparency, including the setting of an effective system of internal audit, which is viewed, in fact, as a front line of defense. The role of external auditors and Independent directors is also critical. Even associations like CII, FICCI can contribute immensely by adopting International Best Practices and accelerate the convergence of corporate governance to international standards.

8. The ratification by India of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) in the year 2011 necessitated a review of the existing provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act and the need to amend it so as to fill in gaps in description and coverage of the offence of bribery so as to bring it in line with the current international practice and also to meet more effectively, the country's obligations under the aforesaid Convention. Hence, the Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Bill, has been introduced in Parliament.

9. Further, Article 16 of the UNCAC requires criminalization of the bribery of Foreign Public Officials (FPOs) and Officials of Public International Organisations (OPIOs) in international business transactions, which is not covered under the Prevention of Corruption Act. Hence, the Prevention of Bribery of Foreign Public Officials and Officials of Public International Organisations Bill, was also introduced in the Parliament. Both these Bills adequately cover both passive and active bribery and place them on equal footing.

10. The Whistle Blower Protection Bill, has been introduced and is under consideration of the Parliament to provide statutory protection to whistle blowers and protect them from harassment. Besides Benami Transaction Prevention Bill, is also under consideration of the Parliament which provides a comprehensive framework in confiscating wealth accumulated through corrupt means. In 2013, Money Laundering Act, has been amended incorporating best international practices in line with Financial Action Task Force (FATF) principles.

11. The Public Procurement Bill, seeks to regulate and ensure transparency in procurement by the central government and its entities. The government can prescribe a code of integrity for the officials of procuring entities and the bidders. The Bill empowers the government and procuring entity to debar a bidder under certain circumstances. The Bill mandates publication of all procurement-related information on a Central Public Procurement Portal. The Bill sets Open Competitive Bidding as the preferred procurement method; an entity must provide reasons for using any other method. Thus, we have taken several initiatives aimed a good governance and prevention of corruption.

12. I hope all of you have deliberated on these issues of great importance for Good Governance and have learnt from each other's best practices in the last four days. Capacity Building Programmes of this nature, promote a culture of collaboration and

cooperation which are crucial for fighting this global menace. I hope all of you enjoyed a pleasant stay at New Delhi. I once again complement INTERPOL and CBI for organizing such a useful training programme of contextual relevance.

13. I wish all of you, every success in your endeavours.

Thank you,

Jai Hind.
