

# President highlights progress in ease of doing business

Pranab's speech at the joint session of Parliament showcases Make in India, Start-Up India

## OUR BUREAU

New Delhi, February 23

Painting a rosy picture of the economy, the President Pranab Mukherjee on Tuesday highlighted the rapid strides made on the economic front including the rise in 12 ranks in the World Bank's ease of doing business list.

Notably, the Make in India initiative has achieved a 39 per cent increase in foreign direct investment (FDI) inflow despite an adverse global investment climate, Mukherjee said in his address to joint sitting of Parliament on the first day of the Budget session.

He also highlighted that the ruling dispensation at the Centre has fostered "competitive cooperation" among various

States to enhance Ease of Doing Business.

"State governments are being encouraged and supported to simplify procedures, introduce e-enabled processes and invest in infrastructure to improve the investment climate," he said.

Procedures have been simplified to enhance ease of approvals/clearances.

A series of reforms have been initiated to help convert job seekers into job creators. The Start Up India campaign, which was launched recently, would deepen, expand and support the innovation eco system in the country, he said.

## Electricity

Mukherjee also said that the



**Upbeat mood** President Pranab Mukherjee with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Lok Sabha Speaker Sumitra Mahajan, and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Venkaiah Naidu at Parliament House on Tuesday KAMAL NARANG

Centre was committed to providing electricity to all the census villages by May 2018.

Since the NDA assumed office,

energy shortages have been reduced from 4 to 2.3 per cent. In 2015 India witnessed the highest ever generation of electricity.

Mukherjee also said that the Centre was committed to providing electricity to all the census villages by May 2018.

Mukherjee also said that a landmark agreement with Japan will make the Mumbai-Ahmedabad high speed rail corridor a reality.

The Centre has also awarded two mega projects for setting up diesel and electric locomotive factories at Marhaura and Madhepura respectively.

By March 2019, under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, 1,78,000 rural habitations will be connected with all weather roads, he said.

A majority of the 73 stalled road projects have been revived; 7,200 km of highways construction have been completed, Mukherjee said.

As many as 12,900 km of highway projects have been awarded. This is the highest ever number of new highway kilometres awarded.

## Governance

Stating that significant steps have been taken to reform institutions, simplify procedures and repeal obsolete laws, Mukherjee said that close to 1,800 obsolete legislations are at various stages of repeal.

"While on the one hand, my government has taken measures to eliminate the scope for corruption, on the other hand, it has been unsparing in punishing those who are found guilty of corruption," Mukherjee said.

Stringent amendments to the Prevention of Corruption Act are also on the anvil to address the perceived gaps in the anti-corruption law, he said.