

## RAJYA SABHA

*Thursday, the 12th February, 2009/23 Magha, 1930 (Saka)*

The House met at fifty minutes past twelve of the clock,  
MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

(The National Anthem, "*Jana Gana Mana*" was played.)

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## MEMBER SWORN

Shri Narendra Singh Tomer (Madhya Pradesh)

## PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS – LAID ON THE TABLE

SECRETARY-GENERAL : Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy (in English and Hindi) of the President's Address to both the Houses of Parliament assembled together on the 12th February, 2009 [Placed in Library. See No. L.T. 10444/09]

[Text of the Address delivered by the President (Shrimati Pratibha Devisingh Patil)]

Honourable Members,

I convey my good wishes to you and to all our people. On behalf of all of us, let me greet Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. We are happy that he is recuperating fast. We wish him a speedy recovery for continuing with his onerous responsibilities. I also convey my special greetings to members of our security forces keeping vigil to protect us. We have been through an eventful year – a year that challenged our open society and our open economy. A year that tested by fire the principles that our country has always lived by – communal amity, tolerance, compassion, justice and peaceful coexistence.

Looking back, we see hope. We have not only withstood the challenges but also emerged stronger. The spirit of ordinary people rising together as one overcame the challenge to our nation from terrorist violence. The calibrated and prudent economic reform pursued by our Government is helping us to weather the extreme adversities of the global economic meltdown.

In both these disruptive events, it was our abiding commitment to the principles of democracy that has been our strength. Our economic reform was catalyzed through our deliberative democracy. Challenges to our nationhood were again thwarted by our functioning democracy. The record turnout of people in Jammu and Kashmir to cast their votes in the elections to the State Assembly in a peaceful atmosphere was a resounding affirmation of their faith in democracy and a rejection of terrorism and violence. The elections have brought new hope to the people of that state.

Our functioning democracy has set for my Government exacting standards to judge its performance. People measure government not on the basis of what it says but on the basis of what it