

1. **address** (noun) – a formal speech, discourse, oration.
2. **flesh out** (phrasal verb) – expand, add detail to, augment/refine.
3. **set out** (phrasal verb) – arrange, present, describe.
4. **rupture** (noun) – fragmentation, separation, division/break-up.
5. **characterise** (verb) – identify, specify, describe.
6. **pointedly** (adverb) – directly, unambiguously, unquestionably.
7. **harness** (verb) – put to use, utilize/exploit, make use of.
8. **emphasise** (verb) – draw attention to, highlight, make a point of.
9. **spirit** (noun) – ethos, morale/ethics, essence/principles.
10. **uplift** (verb) – elevate, raise, stimulate.
11. **dwell on** (phrasal verb) – linger over, think about, mull over.
12. **elaboration** (noun) – the act of adding more information to existing information to create a more complex, emergent whole.
13. **objective** (noun) – aim, intention, purpose.
14. **unfailing** (adjective) – never-ending, infinite, unbounded.
15. **secularism** (noun) – the belief that religion should not have a strong influence in education or other public parts of society.
16. **pluralism** (noun) – (of people) the practice exist in harmony irrespective of various differences.
17. **sustainable** (adjective) – reliable, dependable, acceptable.
18. **departure** (noun) – deviation, divergence, change.
19. **ambiguity** (noun) – inexactness, doubtfulness, obscurity/opacity.
20. **strike a chord** (phrase) – cause/arouse someone to feel emotion/sympathy.
21. **notion** (noun) – idea, belief, conception.
22. **non-sectarian** (adjective) – universal, all-embracing, all-inclusive.
23. **impervious** to (adjective) – unaffected by, invulnerable to, resistant/unresponsive to.
24. **identity politics** (plural noun) – it is also called as identitarian politics, refers to political positions based on the interests and perspectives of social groups with which people identify.
25. **evangelical** (adjective) – fundamentalist, orthodox; missionary/propagandist.
26. **fervour** (noun) – passion, eagerness; dedication/zeal.
27. **drive** (verb) – prompt, propel, spur.
28. **laudable** (adjective) – commendable, admirable, praiseworthy.
29. **triumphalism** (noun) – an attitude or a belief that a particular doctrine, religion, culture, social system is superior to and should triumph all over others.
30. **deflect** (verb) – deviate, divert, distract/change.
31. **dispensation** (noun) – administration; system, organization.
32. **intellectual curiosity** (noun) – curiosity that leads to an acquisition of general knowledge. this is a term used to describe one's desire to invest time and energy into learning more about a person, place, thing or concept.
33. **curiosity** (noun) – strong desire, interest.
34. **academic integrity** (noun) – the moral code or ethical policy of academia. (**academia** (noun) – the community related to the education, research, etc).
35. **integrity** (noun) – principles, ethics, morals.
36. **protracted** (adjective) – very long, lengthy, prolonged.
37. **(go) off the rails** (phrase) – out of control, insane; behave in an abnormal way that causes damage.
38. **self-inflicted** (adjective) – cause suffering to oneself on his/her own.

39. material (adjective) – relevant, applicable, pertinent.  
40. pursuit (noun) – aspiration for, quest for, search for.

## A new course: on President Ram Nath Kovind's address

### President's address should have fleshed out PM Modi's agenda of winning the trust of all

President Ram Nath Kovind's address to the joint sitting of Parliament set out the philosophy and priorities of the Narendra Modi government that has been re-elected. It outlined the rupture that has come to characterise Mr. Modi's politics, marked by his 2014 victory, and pointedly ignored the progress India had made during earlier years. The President said his government was "committed to that very idea of nation-building, the foundation for which was laid in 2014." Harnessing the thoughts of social reformer Sree Narayana Guru and Rabindranath Tagore to emphasise brotherhood among all sections and the celebration of the human spirit would have been uplifting if only the rest of the speech dwelt on those ideas in some detail and with force. In the absence of elaboration, such grand intent in the initial paragraphs was not reassuring. The Prime Minister's newly added objective of winning the trust of all governed, *Sabka vishwas*, was not fleshed out meaningfully. Sardar Patel, Babasaheb Ambedkar and Mahatma Gandhi found mention, but not Jawaharlal Nehru, the founding Prime Minister whose vision and unfailing commitment to secularism, pluralism and progress set the Republic on a sustainable course.

The 'New India' that the President mentioned is a departure from that founding vision, and there was no ambiguity on that aspect. He struck a chord with the constituency of the government, but not with all. The notion that there is a non-sectarian development agenda that is impervious to identity politics is good to have, and the Prime Minister's evangelical fervour in driving its schemes is laudable. But triumphalism around many schemes such as the Swachh Bharat Mission has deflected public attention from the serious tasks ahead and an honest discussion on achievements. New focus on water conservation and management and the rural economy is not a moment too early. These are critical areas. Mr. Kovind also spoke of the government's intent to expand scientific research and higher education. A speech by the President is significant not for the technical details it offers, but for the vision. The cultural nationalist agenda of the ruling dispensation that has made

intellectual curiosity and academic integrity dangerous in India is not the route to any of these goals. The restrictions on cattle trade and violence against those employed in it — mostly Muslims and Dalits — have not merely become a protracted communal conflict but are also among the factors that have pushed the rural economy off the rails. Announcing yet another scheme for cattle, as the President did, is not confronting the real, self-inflicted problem. What differentiates one dispensation from another is not the material ambitions but the social purpose and direction of such pursuits. The clarity on that aspect in the address may be stimulating for many, but certainly not good for India.