

THE JOURNEY OF SANSAD RATNAS 2026

by

Priyadharshni Rahul



PRIME POINT FOUNDATION

Sansad Ratna MPs 2024 with Hon'ble President of India
Feb 17, 2024



Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi tweeted appreciating all the Sansad Ratna Awardees 2023 - Feb 22, 2023



सत्यमेव जयते

प्रधान मंत्री
Prime Minister

MESSAGE

It is indeed heartening to learn about the 13th edition of Sansad Ratna Awards being held in New Delhi. Greetings and heartiest congratulations to the distinguished Parliamentarians for winning the awards.

As the Mother of Democracy, India's socio-political systems and practices have an ancient tradition of debate, dialogue, spirit of cooperation, transparency and inclusiveness.

Our democracy, Parliament, Parliamentary systems and procedures and the participation of people's representatives have played a crucial role in furthering the nation's glorious journey.

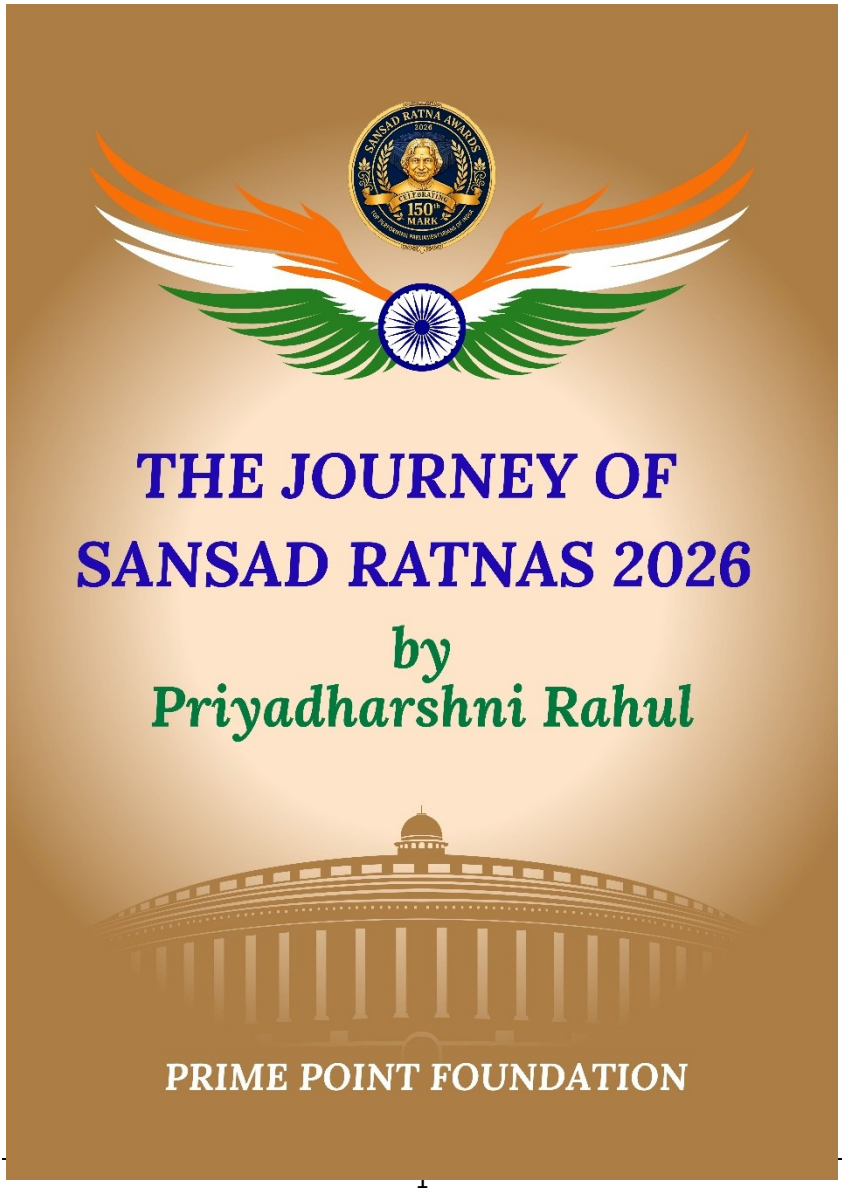
Discussions and debates in Parliament provide a forum to the government and policymakers to fulfil the people's aspirations and take the country's development journey ahead. It is the responsibility of every Parliamentarian to enhance the quality of debates in the House, as also voice the concerns of the people, particularly the poor and marginalised sections of the society.

This year's edition of Sansad Ratna Awards recognise and honour the outstanding contributions of some of our eminent Parliamentarians. I am sure that the Awards will inspire every Member to further enrich Parliamentary proceedings through their vision and wisdom.

Best wishes to everyone associated with Sansad Ratna Awards Committee for their future endeavours.

(Narendra Modi)

New Delhi
फाल्गुन 05, शक संवत् 1944
24th February, 2023


SANSAD RATNA AWARDS
2026
CELEBRATING
150th
MARK
THE JOURNEY OF
SANSAD RATNAS 2026
by
Priyadharshni Rahul
PRIME POINT FOUNDATION

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Introduction

Dedication



*To **Lord Sri Krishna**, the Almighty, my eternal guide and strength. Like the flute that sings only through His touch, this book flows through His divine will. May it serve as an offering at His feet and illuminate minds with wisdom and purpose.*

🙏 **Jai Shri Krishna!** 🙏

Foreword From Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam For The PreSense100

Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam
Former President of India



10, Rajaji Marg
New Delhi-110011

FOREWORD

I am very happy to know that the PreSense monthly ezine published by Prime Point Foundation is bringing out a book based on some of the unique articles, interviews and events published in its editions so far since from March 2006. The 100 issues of the publication have gone through an eventful journey, focusing on knowledge capture and important knowledge dissemination. I recollect my direct association with PreSense in July 2008, when I launched the cartoon character, 'Prince', created exclusively for PreSense.

I see PreSense continuing in its journey under the mentorship of Prime Point Srinivasan, maintaining its status as a must-read ezine, in the fast moving and evolving world of communication, knowledge and connectivity.

I congratulate the Editorial Team of PreSense for bringing out the 100th Edition as a Collector's Digest.

28th May 2015

(A.P.J.Abdul Kalam)

Author's Profile



Priyadharshni Rahul: Supreme Court Advocate with dual degrees in Political Science and Law, plus a master's in psychology, Editor-in-Chief of PreSense and President of Prime Point Foundation, Digital Journalists Association of India, and Next Gen Political Leaders. She is the Chairman of Sansad Ratna Awards Committee.

A distinguished achiever from childhood—Duke of Edinburgh Award, President's Award, Prime Minister's Award for leading Tamil Nadu NCC at Republic Day 2005, and India's Youth Ambassador to UK—she has authored ten books and received multiple recognitions, including the Dr Abdul Kalam Award of Excellence.

She is a motivational speaker and writer. She has authored 10 books, including this book. She has received several awards, including Dr Abdul Kalam International Award and PRCI's National Award as Young Visionary. India Book of Records (IBR) has also recognised her services and included her in the world records.

She is the Central Government Counsel at the Supreme Court of India and the Assistant Standing Counsel for the New Delhi Municipal Corporation and Counsel for the Municipal Corporation of Delhi. She is one of the busiest advocates in Delhi. She has been assisting many senior Parliamentarians, including Chairmen of Joint Parliamentary Committees on legal

matters. She is currently pursuing a PhD in Indian Parliamentary democracy.

She is one of the popular TV personalities, sharing her views on current affairs. She has authored 10 books in English on various subjects of importance to the youth.

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Prime Point Foundation: 26 Years of Empowering India's Youth

Since 1999, Prime Point Foundation has been helping young Indians become better leaders and communicators. Founded by Shri K Srinivasan, a former banker-turned digital journalist, this non-profit organisation has grown into one of India's most respected youth development platforms.

What We Do

The Foundation runs five key initiatives that make a real difference:

eMagazine PreSense - Started in 2006, following Dr APJ Abdul Kalam's suggestion, this digital magazine promotes positive journalism. With 233 editions published till July 2026 and recognition from the India Book of Records, it includes the popular cartoon character Prince, which Dr Kalam himself launched in 2008.

Sansad Ratna Awards - Since 2010, these prestigious awards honour India's best-performing MPs and Parliamentary Committees. Dr Kalam inaugurated the first ceremony, and over 15 years, 143 Awards have been presented. The India Book of Records acknowledges this as the largest parliamentary award programme run by civil society.

Next Gen Political Leaders - This programme trains young people who want to enter politics, connecting them with experienced Ministers and MPs through workshops and mentoring sessions.

Education Loan Task Force - Helping students and families understand education loans since 2010. The team has answered over 30,000 questions and helped resolve 5,000 serious complaints with banks.

Digital Journalists Association of India - Training journalists to adapt to the digital age, including AI through workshops and seminars with industry experts.

All programmes are by passionate volunteers and focus entirely on helping young people succeed. Prime Point Foundation proves that dedicated efforts can create lasting changes in Indian democracy and society.

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Chief Guests for the Award Ceremonies

18th Lok Sabha Awards

2025 Shri Kiren Rijiju, Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs

17th Lok Sabha Awards

2024 Shri Hansraj Ahir (Chairman, NCBC), Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan (Governor, Telangana and LG Puducherry), Ajay Mishra (MoS, Home Affairs) and Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul (Former Judge, Supreme Court of India)

2023 Shri Bandaru Dattatreya, Governor of Haryana

2022 Shri Sushil Chandra, Chief Election Commissioner of

2021 India
Shri Sunil Arora, Chief Election Commissioner of India and
Justice Shri A K Patnaik, former Judge, Supreme Court of India

16th Lok Sabha Awards

2019 Shri Bhanwarilal Purohit, Governor of Tamil Nadu

2018 Shri M K Narayanan, former Governor of West Bengal

2017 Justice P Sathasivam, Governor of Kerala, and former Chief Justice of India

2016 Dr C Rangarajan,
(former Governor, RBI, and Former Governor of Andhra Pradesh)

2015 Dr Justice AR Lakshmanan, Retired Judge, Supreme Court of India

15th Lok Sabha Awards

2014	Shri N Gopalaswamy, former Chief Election Commissioner of India
2013	Dr K Rosaiah, Governor of Tamil Nadu
2012	Shri Gopalakrishna Gandhi, former Governor of West Bengal
2011	Shri Era Chezian, veteran Parliamentarian Shri N Vittal, former Chief Vigilance Commissioner of India
2010	Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, former President of India Shri T S Krishnamurthy and Shri N Gopalaswamy (both former Chief Election Commissioners of India)

Sansad Ratna Awards 2010 – 25



2010



2011



2012



2013



2014



2015



2016



2017



2018



2019



2021


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Foundation
Sansad Ratna
Awards Committee
PHOENIX
NEXT GEN
POLITICAL LEADERS
Sansad Ratna

2022


PRIME POINT
Foundation
Sansad Ratna
Awards Committee
PHOENIX
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2024


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POLITICAL LEADERS
Sansad Ratna
Sansad Ratna MPs 2025

Sansad Ratna Award Winning Members of Parliament 2024

Photo Session with Hon'ble President of India - Feb 17, 2024





Author's Note

It feels like only yesterday when we gathered in July 2025 for the 15th Sansad Ratna Awards ceremony, where the first volume of *The Journey of Sansad Ratnas* was officially released by the Honourable Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Shri Kiren Rijiju. That foundational book chronicled the exemplary public service of seventeen outstanding parliamentarians. Today, it is an immense honour to introduce this second volume for 2026, which expands our repository by focusing strictly on the new awardees who were not featured last year but are receiving this coveted institutional recognition this year.

The extensive interviews compiled within these pages reveal a powerful, shared narrative of resilience and unwavering dedication. Whether transitioning from the high-stakes precision of an orthopaedic operation theatre, the rigorous legal frameworks of the courts, or the data-driven dynamics of global multinational corporations, these parliamentarians have successfully bridged the gap between their specialised professional backgrounds and grassroots statecraft. Their lived experiences—navigating complex public policies, revitalising rural healthcare, transforming urban transit infrastructure, and chairing highly sensitive parliamentary committees—serve as exceptional templates of leadership. They have effectively

become timeless role models, demonstrating to the present generation of aspiring politicians and young professionals across all fields how technical competence can be seamlessly harmonised with empathy and selfless public service.

This volume is the result of continuous collaboration. I wish to express my deepest gratitude to Shri Prime Point Srinivasan, the visionary Founder of the Sansad Ratna Awards and our monthly eMagazine ***PreSense***, whose constant guidance and encouragement inspired the publication of both volumes. I also extend my sincere appreciation to Shri Ramesh Sundaram, our Joint Managing Editor, for his meticulous editing support and unyielding dedication to this project.

Adv. Priyadharshni Rahul

Editor-in-Chief, ***PreSense*** &
Chairman, Sansad Ratna Awards Committee

www.corpezine.com

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Publisher's Note

At the Prime Point Foundation, our core mission for the past twenty-six years has centered on strengthening democratic values and empowering the next generation of Indian leaders. As we bring out this second volume of *The Journey of Sansad Ratnas 2026*, we underscore the vital necessity of documenting the unvarnished challenges, historical transitions, and grassroots success stories of India's finest parliamentarians. True statecraft is never forged in a vacuum; it is earned through decades of tireless execution, confronting institutional bottlenecks, and maintaining an unbroken connection with ordinary citizens.

The common threads running through this year's awardees are their extraordinary work ethic and systemic problem-solving. From spearheading financial turnarounds of major institutions and digitising rural land records to championing tribal rights under the Fifth Schedule and executing multi-modal transport lines, these award-winning MPs demonstrate that legislative excellence requires robust structural discipline. This book functions as a vital, permanent reference document for our democratic history. To ensure these powerful lessons in leadership actively ignite minds across the nation, the Prime Point Foundation continues its proud tradition of distributing both volumes

completely free of cost to youngsters, educational institutions, and universities.

We wish to place on record our profound appreciation for Adv. Priyadharshni Rahul. Her boundless enthusiasm, intellectual clarity, and unwavering commitment have been the driving force behind the publication of both the 2025 edition and this second volume in 2026. Her dedicated efforts ensure that the institutional wisdom of our highest lawmaking body is preserved to inspire, educate, and guide the future custodians of our democracy for generations to come.

Prime Point Srinivasan
Founder and Chairman,
Prime Point Foundation

www.primepointfoundation.in

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Acknowledgements

With deep humility, we extend heartfelt thanks to all who made this book possible. We are especially grateful to the Hon'ble Members of Parliament and their dedicated Secretaries for their time, insights, and timely responses. Our sincere appreciation to Mr Ramesh Sundaram, Joint Managing Editor of *PreSense*, for his meticulous editing support. We also thank the *PreSense* Editorial Team for their continued dedication and professionalism.

To each contributor, our deepest gratitude.

Jai Hind

Journey of Sansad Ratnas 2026

Bhagavad Gita 3.21

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः।

स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते॥

Yad yad ācarati śhreṣhṭhas tat tad evetaro janaḥ
Sa yat pramāṇaṁ kurute lokas tad anuvartate

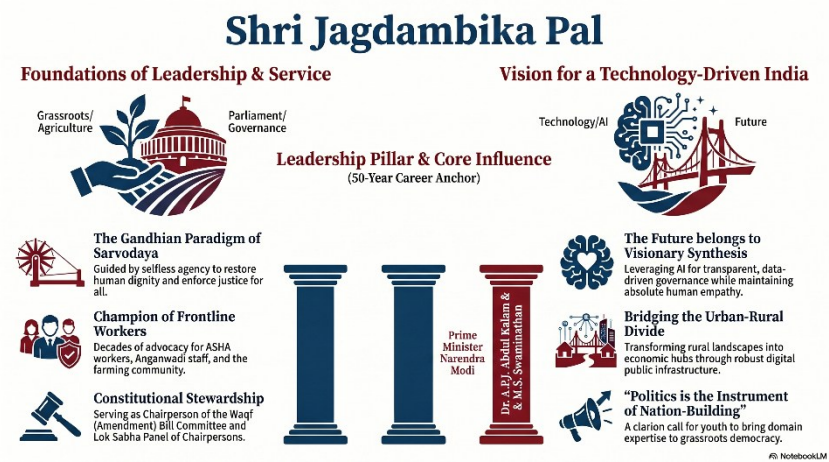
English Translation & Meaning

"Whatever actions a great person performs, common people follow. Whatever standards they set, the world pursues."

Meaning:

This Sloka emphasises that leaders and people in positions of authority set examples for others. Their actions, values, and standards become the benchmarks for society. For parliamentarians, this underscores the immense responsibility to govern ethically and righteously, as their conduct shapes the nation's character and future.

Shri Jagdambika Pal: Five Decades of Unwavering Public Service



Shri Jagdambika Pal is a veteran parliamentarian representing Uttar Pradesh. He brings over five decades of political experience to the Lok Sabha. He has served in many important roles, including his tenure as the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh. Today, he is a highly respected member of the Panel of Chairpersons in the Lok Sabha. He is also the Chairperson of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill.

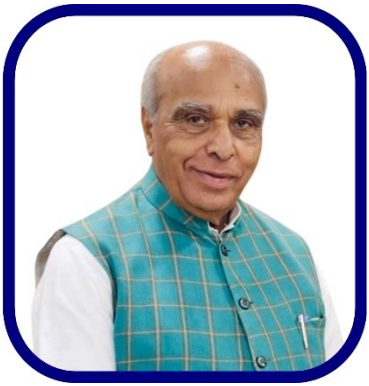
In an exclusive interview with PreSense, the Hon'ble Member of Parliament, Shri Jagdambika Pal, mentioned that true visionary leadership means standing shoulder-to-shoulder with frontline workers. How did he navigate the massive changes in Indian politics over fifty years? What is

his advice for the younger generation? Read on to discover his profound insights and his bold vision for a technology-driven India.

Excerpts:

Question: The Spark of Public Service - Over half a century ago, in the late 1970s, you transitioned from your life as an advocate and educationist into the rigorous world of grassroots politics. As you look back, what was that pivotal moment or profound inner calling that first prompted you to dedicate your life entirely to public service?

Shri Jagdambika Pal: My journey into public life began in the late 1970s. I was deeply inspired by my father. He shared testimonies of the anti-colonial struggle. This gave me a profound sense of civic duty. Later, as an advocate and teacher, I saw the deep struggles of marginalised people. Legal work resolves individual grievances. Education empowers minds. However, grassroots politics has the transformative leverage to alter structural inequities. I am guided by the Gandhian paradigm of Sarvodaya and Vinoba Bhave's ideal of selfless agency. I do not view political engagement



as a pursuit of authority. It is a rigorous mechanism to restore human dignity and enforce justice for all.



Question: Guiding Lights of a Marathon Journey - To survive and thrive in the political arena for over five decades requires immense resilience and solid grounding. Who were your earliest political mentors during those formative years, and what enduring piece of wisdom did they impart that still anchors your decisions today?

Shri Jagdambika Pal: Keshav Dev Malaviya and Jayaprakash Narayan guided my early years. They instilled

a foundational commitment to institutional integrity and grassroots democracy. In the modern era, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's governance paradigm inspires me deeply. His relentless work ethic and citizen-centric policies translate vision into systemic impact. I also look up to Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw, Verghese Kurien, and M. S. Swaminathan. They served as great institutional templates for nation-building. These luminaries taught me a very important lesson. Enduring leadership is decoupled from transient authority. True substance resides in character, administrative competence, and an unyielding commitment to the public good.

Question: The Evolution of Politics: The 1970s vs. The AI Era - You possess the rare and invaluable experience of having lived through fifty years of India's political evolution. Comparing the grassroots movements and interpersonal dynamics of the 1970s to today's fast-paced, hyper-connected Artificial Intelligence era, what fundamental differences do you observe in the political attitude, discourse, and behaviour of modern politicians?

Shri Jagdambika Pal: The political landscape has evolved profoundly since the 1970s. We have transitioned from organic grassroots movements to hyper-connected digital campaigns. Technology has successfully democratised outreach. However, real-time metrics and deepfakes now

threaten deep ideological convictions. Public service sometimes turns into a perpetual media campaign. Yet, technology is merely a mirror of our intent. The future belongs to a visionary synthesis. A new generation of leaders must use Artificial Intelligence for transparent, data-driven governance. At the same time, they must anchor their practice in absolute integrity and direct human empathy.



Question: Weathering the Storms and Challenges - Your illustrious journey has taken you to the highest echelons of state power, including your tenure as the

Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, alongside decades of parliamentary service. What have been the most formidable, character-testing challenges of your career, and how did you summon the strength to navigate them?

Shri Jagdambika Pal: My political trajectory reflects a continuous negotiation between institutional principles and realpolitik. The primary challenge has been institutionalising universalist governance. I had to transcend cleavages like caste and community. Prioritising social cohesion frequently meant confronting powerful interest groups. I also navigated the contemporary shift toward personalised, dynastic networks. This posed a significant ethical dilemma. I found resilience through an unwavering adherence to constitutional morality. I maintained a strictly public-centric philosophy. I always upheld the national interest over patrimonial configurations during complex political transitions.

Question: Upholding Democratic Decorum - Today, as a highly respected member of the Panel of Chairpersons in the Lok Sabha, you frequently bear the responsibility of presiding over the House in the absence of the Speaker. What goes through your mind as you sit in that revered chair, balancing the heavy burden of maintaining parliamentary discipline while ensuring every democratic voice is heard?

Shri Jagdambika Pal: Sitting in the Chair of the Lok Sabha is a profound exercise in constitutional stewardship. Parliament is the living repository of the nation's democratic conscience. The presiding officer must completely transcend partisan identities. The core challenge lies in harmonising freedom with order. Every diverse voice must find expression. However, no expression should diminish the dignity of the House. True democracy thrives on disciplined disagreement. Guided by absolute impartiality, I maintain an equilibrium where debate is rigorous, but decorum remains sacrosanct. I draw immense inspiration from the Speaker, Shri Om Birla. His monumental patience ensures every member has a voice in our national discourse.

Question: Navigating National Sensitivities - You were recently entrusted with the immense responsibility of chairing the Joint Parliamentary Committee to examine the Waqf (Amendment) Bill. How emotionally and intellectually demanding is it to build consensus, bridge divides, and listen to such diverse, impassioned stakeholders on a deeply sensitive national issue?

Shri Jagdambika Pal: Chairing this Joint Parliamentary Committee is a profound exercise in democratic statesmanship. It demands a rare confluence of rigorous intellectual discipline and deep emotional equilibrium. Intellectually, one must navigate decades of intricate legal

precedents and diverse socioeconomic realities. Emotionally, the role requires unwavering composure. Deliberations bring forth deeply held convictions and faith-based sentiments. A statesman must rise above the immediate friction. I anchor the committee in constitutional propriety and national interest. I work to transform polarised debate into dignified, structured dialogue. Listening patiently helps foster an enduring national consensus rooted in equity and legislative clarity.

Question: Championing the Unsung Heroes - Despite a towering stature in national politics, your legislative record shows a relentless, emotional advocacy for frontline workers—ASHA workers, Anganwadi staff, and farmers. After fifty years in the corridors of power, how do you keep the struggles of the common citizen so close to your heart?

Shri Jagdambika Pal: My public life has always been rooted in the soil of our villages. For fifty years, I have believed that governance cannot be managed from distant corridors. It must be lived among the people. The incredible resilience of our ASHA workers, Anganwadi staff, and farmers is the foundation of our progress. I do not view their daily sacrifices with pity. They are a blueprint for a self-reliant and equitable future. True visionary leadership means standing shoulder-to-shoulder with the frontline. Service is a lifelong relationship of trust. As long as the

common citizen approaches me with hope, my commitment remains deeply grounded.

Question: A Dream for Tomorrow's India - Having actively contributed to the governance of India's most populous State and the nation at large, you have a sweeping vision of our developmental trajectory. What is your most fervent, ultimate dream for the future of India over the coming decades?

Shri Jagdambika Pal: My ultimate dream is an India where our ancient civilisational ethos fuels a futuristic powerhouse. We must build a developed nation with rapid, deeply inclusive economic growth. This will bridge the urban-rural divide. We must leverage Artificial Intelligence and robust digital public infrastructure. Governance will become entirely transparent and citizen-centric. This ensures precision in delivering agriculture, education, and healthcare. Rural landscapes must transform into vibrant economic hubs. Meanwhile, our cities will lead global innovation. I dream of an India free from poverty and malnutrition. We will be self-reliant in defence and stand tall as a global leader of knowledge.

Question: A Clarion Call to the Youth - Today, many brilliant, educated young minds view the political sphere with hesitation or cynicism, preferring the safety of the corporate world. From the vantage point of a lifetime of service, what is your heartfelt appeal to

the youth? Why is it absolutely vital for them to enter politics to strengthen our democracy?

Shri Jagdambika Pal: My young friends, the future of India cannot be built from the sidelines. I hear your cynicism clearly. However, politics is not a murky swamp to avoid. It is the ultimate instrument of nation-building. We need your brilliant minds, your ethics, and your domain expertise. Your skills in technology, law, and policy are essential for the AI era. Begin at the grassroots level. Understand the true pulse of our Panchayats and cities. We, the seniors, promise to create merit-based pathways and mentorship for you. Step forward, lead with discipline, and strengthen our democracy from within. Your country calls you.



Question: The Fulfilling Fiftieth Milestone - As you look back at a legacy that spans over fifty years of unwavering service, sacrifices, and triumphs, what brings you the deepest sense of personal fulfilment? What is the one core message you wish to leave behind to motivate the new generation of Indians?

Shri Jagdambika Pal: Fifty years of service and sacrifice bring deep fulfilment through witnessing a nation awaken. The true measure of a life is what it transmits to the future. The Katha Upanishad proclaims, “Arise, Awake, and Learn from the wise”. My message to the new generation is an invitation to realise your boundless potential. You are expressions of the infinite Atman. When you realise this truth, fear vanishes. Combine your modern ambition with dharma. Unite your intellect with deep compassion. Live for the upliftment of all. Serving India and the world helps you truly discover your Self.

Question: On the Honour of the Sansad Ratna Award - Unlike many accolades, the Sansad Ratna Award holds a unique distinction: it is an honour bestowed entirely by civil society, evaluating a parliamentarian's performance objectively and transparently. Knowing that this recognition comes directly from the citizens you serve, and carries forward the visionary ethos of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, what emotions run through your mind as you receive this award? How do you

personally cherish this profound validation of your tireless dedication to the nation?

Shri Jagdambika Pal: Receiving the Sansad Ratna Award evokes deep humility and a renewed sense of responsibility. When citizens evaluate public service, this honour transcends politics. It becomes a sacred moral dialogue between a representative and the nation. I am profoundly reminded of Dr A. P. J. Abdul Kalam's vision. He stated that dreams transform into thoughts, and thoughts result in action. This recognition reminds us to translate shared dreams into disciplined parliamentary work. John Stuart Mill aptly noted that public office is a trust, never a privilege. I cherish this award as a reaffirmation of my accountability to the people. It strengthens my resolve to serve every citizen with unwavering integrity.

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Shri Anurag Singh Thakur: Fostering Progress and Grassroots Development



Shri Anurag Singh Thakur is a five-term Member of Parliament from Hamirpur, Himachal Pradesh. He currently serves as the Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Coal, Mines and Steel. He is a dynamic leader who masterfully balances various roles. He is a dedicated politician, a regular officer in the Territorial Army, and an ardent sports administrator. Over the years, he has launched path-breaking grassroots initiatives. These include the Sansad Khel Mahakumbh and the innovative mobile health service, 'Asptal'.

In an exclusive interview with ***PreSense***, the Hon'ble Member of Parliament, Shri Anurag Singh Thakur, mentioned that politics and Parliament provide the broadest

platform for bringing in meaningful change to people's lives. He shared his journey from the sports field to national statecraft. He discussed his vision for rural healthcare, youth empowerment, and a self-reliant India. Read on to explore his inspiring insights.

Excerpts:

Question: On Entering Public Life - Your journey in the Lok Sabha began in 2008, marking the start of a distinguished parliamentary career that now spans five consecutive terms. Given your deep involvement in sports administration at the time, what was the defining moment or primary motivation that led you to transition into active, full-time politics?

Shri Anurag Singh Thakur: My journey into public life was



driven by a simple belief. I believed that politics and Parliament provide the broadest platform to bring meaningful change to people's lives. Before entering active politics, I was deeply involved in sports administration and public service. However, I soon realised a vital truth. Administration allows you to execute policies. On the other hand, Parliament gives you the opportunity to shape those policies. It allows you to

influence change on a much larger scale. After achieving success in many spheres, I felt a deep responsibility. I wanted to dedicate myself fully to serving the people of Himachal Pradesh and the nation. Public life gave me a grand opportunity. I could work for farmers, youth, women, soldiers, and entrepreneurs. Every citizen aspires for a better future. For me, politics has never been about power. It has always been about service. Parliament became the ideal platform for contributing towards nation-building. It helps create great opportunities for the next generation.



Question: On Mentorship and Guidance - Throughout your dynamic career, navigating from the grassroots of Hamirpur to holding key portfolios in the Union Cabinet, you must have encountered significant guiding figures. Could you share with us who your primary political mentor has been, and what is the most invaluable piece of advice they imparted to you?

Shri Anurag Singh Thakur: I have been fortunate to learn from several extraordinary individuals throughout my life. My first and greatest inspiration is my father, former Chief Minister Professor Prem Kumar Dhumal ji. I have closely watched him dedicate his entire life to the people of Himachal Pradesh. His unwavering commitment towards State development inspires me every day. He always focused on improving the living standards of ordinary citizens with deep humility. Another guiding force in my life was the late Shri Arun Jaitley ji. He was much more than a senior leader to me. He was a mentor, a dear friend, and a confidant. I could approach him freely whenever I faced challenges or needed guidance. His wisdom, strategic thinking, and ability to remain calm under pressure taught me invaluable lessons about public life and leadership. I have also had the privilege of working closely with Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji. I observed his extraordinary organisational skills, work ethic, and commitment towards national development firsthand. He was once the BJP's in-charge for Himachal Pradesh, and I later served under his

leadership in the Union Cabinet. His vision of Vikas, Unnati, and Garib Kalyan has transformed India completely. It has inspired countless public representatives. His belief that governance must touch the lives of the poorest citizens is a lesson I carry with me every single day.



Question: On the Armed Forces and Discipline - You hold the highly unique distinction of being the first serving Member of Parliament to be commissioned as a regular officer in the Territorial Army, currently serving as a Captain. What inspired you to don the uniform, and how does this military discipline influence your approach to parliamentary duties and governance?

Shri Anurag Singh Thakur: The spirit of patriotism runs very deep in Himachal Pradesh. In my parliamentary

constituency and across the State, every second household has a deep connection with our armed forces. They are serving personnel, brave veterans, or families who have proudly contributed towards national defence. My own family has a strong military connection. My grandfather and great-grandfather both served in the army. Growing up, I heard countless stories of courage, sacrifice, and service. The heroic lives of Param Vir Chakra awardees always inspire generations of Himachalis. These include heroes like Major Somnath Sharma, Lieutenant Colonel Dhan Singh Thapa, Captain Vikram Batra, and Major Sanjay Kumar. My decision to join the Territorial Army was a humble tribute to these brave men and women. My journey from the sports field to Parliament and then to the uniform reflects core values. These are discipline, commitment, teamwork, and service. Military training reinforces qualities that are equally vital in governance. These include leadership under pressure, absolute accountability, punctuality, and putting the nation above self. Wearing the uniform is not merely an honour. It is a constant reminder of the sacrifices made by our soldiers and the responsibility we carry as public representatives.

Question: On Fostering a Sports Culture - Your passion for sports is well-recognised globally and locally, particularly through the remarkable 'Sansad Khel Mahakumbh' initiative in your constituency. How crucial is grassroots sports development in

channelling the energy of our youth, and what tangible transformations have you witnessed in Hamirpur through this programme?

Shri Anurag Singh Thakur: Sports have the absolute power to transform lives. They help young people remain physically fit and mentally strong, disciplined, and focused. Sports teach teamwork, leadership, resilience, and the ability to overcome setbacks. Most importantly, they channel youthful energy in a positive direction. This keeps young people away from social evils such as drug abuse. This strong belief inspired the launch of the Sansad Khel Mahakumbh in Hamirpur. Our objective was simple. We wanted to identify talent early, nurture it systematically, and create opportunities for every child, regardless of their background. The response has been phenomenal. Thousands of young athletes have participated, many discovering their potential for the first time. Beyond medals and trophies, this initiative has created a culture of fitness, aspiration, and healthy competition. Today, similar initiatives are being replicated across the country. The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has also significantly expanded grassroots sporting opportunities. It encourages every MP to have one such initiative in every parliamentary constituency. As India prepares for the 2036 Olympics, we must build a strong sporting ecosystem from the grassroots level. If we identify talent early and provide the right support, India can emerge as a global sporting powerhouse. These

initiatives are not merely sporting events; they are investments in India's future.



Question: On Pioneering Rural Healthcare - Navigating the hilly terrains of Himachal Pradesh presents formidable healthcare challenges. Your innovative initiative, 'Asptal: Sansad Mobile Swasthya Seva', has brought primary healthcare directly to the doorsteps of remote villages. What drove you to conceptualise this mobile health unit, and how has it impacted the rural populace?

Shri Anurag Singh Thakur: The hilly geography of Himachal Pradesh presents unique healthcare challenges. For many people living in remote villages, even a routine medical consultation causes great trouble. It means

travelling long distances, walking up and down steep terrain, and taking multiple buses. They spend money on transport and lose an entire day's work. For a daily wage worker, a farmer, or an elderly citizen, this can become a significant burden. When I interacted with people across my constituency, I realised a key fact. Access to healthcare was often just as important as healthcare itself. This led to the creation of the Asptal: Sansad Mobile Swasthya Seva. The idea was to bring healthcare directly to people's doorsteps. We wanted to avoid forcing people to travel long distances for basic medical services. Through this initiative, citizens receive free medical consultations, diagnostic tests, medicines, and health awareness services within their own villages. It saves time, reduces financial burdens, and ensures early detection of health issues. The greatest satisfaction comes from seeing elderly citizens, women, and economically weaker families receiving quality healthcare easily. For me, this initiative embodies compassionate, accessible, and people-centric governance. Healthcare should not be a privilege determined by geography. It should be a right available to every citizen.

Question: On the Sansad Ratna Award and Committee Leadership - You are being honoured with the Sansad Ratna Award this year for your exceptional leadership as the Chairperson of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Coal and Mines. Under your guidance,

the committee has presented a remarkable number of original reports. Could you share the gist of the most critical recommendations your committee has made to strengthen this vital sector?

Shri Anurag Singh Thakur: I consider it a great honour to receive the Sansad Ratna Award. However, I firmly believe that this recognition is not about an individual alone. It reflects the collective efforts of all members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Coal and Mines. The ministries and sectors under our committee's purview are extremely important for India's economic growth and energy security. They are vital for industrial development, infrastructure expansion, and the realisation of the vision of Viksit Bharat. During my tenure as Chairperson, the Committee presented an unprecedented number of original reports. We undertook detailed examinations of the Demands for Grants. We scrutinized policy implementation and reviewed the performance of the Coal, Mines, and Steel ministries and PSUs. We also conducted extensive subject-specific studies. Every report addressed a critical aspect of India's growth story. This included energy security, coal production, critical minerals, exploration, sustainability, technological modernisation, and resource efficiency. Our recommendations focused on enhancing domestic coal production and reducing dependence on imports. We aimed at accelerating coal gasification and strengthening mineral exploration. We promoted scientific

mining practices, environmental sustainability, and mine safety. We also encouraged private participation and built a robust critical minerals ecosystem essential for India's energy transition. Parliamentary Committees are unique because they function beyond political considerations. Members study issues in depth, consult stakeholders, visit project sites, interact with experts, and provide evidence-based recommendations. Many of our recommendations have been accepted and implemented, contributing to stronger policy outcomes. They enable detailed scrutiny, constructive dialogue, and informed policymaking away from daily political debates.

Question: On Formulating Impactful Recommendations - Leading a committee that produces such a high volume of original reports requires immense research and consensus-building. During your tenure as Chairperson of the Coal and Mines Committee, what were the major challenges you faced in aligning diverse viewpoints to produce these comprehensive and actionable reports?

Shri Anurag Singh Thakur: The greatest strength of Parliamentary Committees is also one of their biggest challenges. We bring together members from diverse parties, regions, experiences, and perspectives. The objective, however, is never to win an argument. We want to arrive at the best possible recommendation for the

nation. The coal, mining, and steel sectors are highly technical. They impact multiple stakeholders, including industry, workers, local communities, State Governments, environmental concerns, and national energy requirements. Therefore, it was important to ensure that every viewpoint was heard and considered carefully. Our approach was rooted in extensive consultations and detailed briefings from ministries. We relied on interactions with experts, field visits, and evidence-based discussions. We encouraged open dialogue and constructive debate while maintaining a consensus-driven approach. I am proud that the Committee functioned with remarkable cooperation and professionalism. Everyone was heard clearly. The focus always remained on national interest rather than political differences. The success of our reports demonstrates a great truth. When people come together with sincerity, mutual respect, and a shared commitment to public service, meaningful consensus is always possible.

Question: On the Vision for Future India - Having served at the highest levels of the Union Government and having maintained a continuous, strong connection with your grassroots constituency, you possess a comprehensive view of the nation's trajectory. What is your ultimate dream for the future of India over the next decade?

Shri Anurag Singh Thakur: My dream is to see India emerge as a fully developed nation and become one of the world's leading powers by 2047. This is when we celebrate 100 years of our Independence. This is not merely a dream of economic growth. It is the vision of a strong, self-confident, prosperous, and inclusive Bharat where every citizen can realise their full potential. Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji, India has undergone a remarkable transformation over the last decade. We have moved from being seen as a country with immense potential to becoming a nation that is delivering results at scale. From digital governance and financial inclusion to infrastructure development, manufacturing, innovation, and social welfare, India today stands more confident and capable than ever before. The Prime Minister's vision of Viksit Bharat 2047 provides a clear roadmap for the future. It is a vision where every village is connected, and every youth is empowered. Every woman will have equal opportunity. Every entrepreneur will have the confidence to innovate. Every citizen will have access to quality education, healthcare, and modern infrastructure. I also strongly believe in the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat. A self-reliant India does mean building domestic capabilities, strengthening manufacturing, encouraging innovation, creating jobs, and becoming a trusted global partner. Whether it is defence production, semiconductors, renewable energy, digital technology, or critical minerals,

India is steadily building capacities that will define the future global economy. The coming decade will be crucial. India is already among the fastest-growing major economies in the world. It is firmly on the path toward becoming a $5 trillion economy, with the potential to becoming one of the world's top three economies in the years ahead. Our demographic dividend, technological capabilities, entrepreneurial spirit, and policy reforms provide an unprecedented opportunity for growth. I envision an India that leads the world in innovation, artificial intelligence, manufacturing, clean energy, sports, research, and entrepreneurship while remaining rooted in its civilisational values and democratic traditions. Most importantly, I want every Indian, whether in a metropolitan city or a remote village, to feel that the country's progress is their progress. If we continue on this path, the dream of Viksit Bharat will become a reality. Future generations will look back at this period as the defining era of India's rise.

Question: On Youth and Democracy - Today, many educated youngsters and professionals are hesitant to step into the political arena, often viewing the system with apprehension. Drawing from your own successful transition into public life, why is it absolutely vital for educated youth to join politics, and how can their active participation strengthen our democracy?

Shri Anurag Singh Thakur: Democracy cannot thrive if good people remain spectators. Young people often discuss governance, public policy, and the challenges facing our country. However, meaningful change does not happen from the sidelines. It happens when capable, educated, and committed individuals step forward and become part of the solution. I often tell young people that charity begins at home. If you want to change society, start by engaging with your own community. If you want better governance, participate directly in governance. As Mahatma Gandhi said, "Be the change you wish to see in the world." Do not simply look for change; be the change. Today, India is one of the youngest nations in the world. The aspirations, energy, innovation, and fresh perspectives of our youth are essential for shaping the future of our democracy. If educated and talented young people stay away from politics and public life, they leave important decisions entirely to others. Politics should not be viewed merely as a profession; it is one of the most powerful instruments of public service and nation-building. My own journey into public life taught me that politics provides an unparalleled opportunity to create positive impact at scale. Whether it is improving infrastructure, creating employment opportunities, strengthening healthcare, empowering women, supporting farmers, or building opportunities for youth, public representatives have the ability to directly improve people's lives. I would especially encourage young

people aspiring to enter politics to begin at the grassroots level. Participate in local governance and engage with Panchayats, Municipal Bodies, Resident Welfare Associations, youth organisations, and community initiatives. Grassroots democracy is the foundation of our democratic system. Working at that level teaches invaluable lessons about leadership, consensus-building, public service, and understanding people's real concerns. Many of the finest leaders in our country began their journey by serving at the grassroots. There is no better classroom for public life than direct engagement with people. India's future will be shaped by young leaders who combine idealism with hard work, innovation with compassion, and ambition with a spirit of service. Their active participation will strengthen our institutions, improve governance, and make our democracy even more vibrant, accountable, and representative. The message to the youth is simple: don't wait for someone else to build the India of your dreams. Step forward, participate, contribute, and become active partners in nation-building.

Question: On Leaving a Legacy - As a five-term Parliamentarian, a military officer, a sports administrator, and a champion of rural healthcare, your journey is highly motivational. What is your final message to the next generation of leaders who wish to serve the nation and leave a lasting, positive impact on society?

Shri Anurag Singh Thakur: My message to the next generation is simple: dream big, work hard, stay humble, and always put the nation first. Leadership is not about position or power. It is about responsibility, integrity, and service. The true measure of success is not what you achieve for yourself, but how many lives you positively impact. There will always be challenges, setbacks, and moments of difficulty. What matters is perseverance, character, and the courage to continue moving forward. Never underestimate the power of discipline, continuous learning, and commitment to excellence. Whether you serve as a teacher, entrepreneur, soldier, scientist, athlete, administrator, or public representative, every contribution towards nation-building matters. India's future will be shaped by young leaders who combine ambition with compassion and innovation with integrity. My belief has always been that if your intentions are sincere and your efforts are dedicated to public service, success will follow naturally.

Question: On the Honour of the Sansad Ratna Award - Unlike many accolades, the Sansad Ratna Award holds a unique distinction: it is an honour bestowed entirely by civil society, evaluating a parliamentarian's performance objectively and transparently. Knowing that this recognition comes directly from the citizens you serve, and carries forward the visionary ethos of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, what emotions run through your

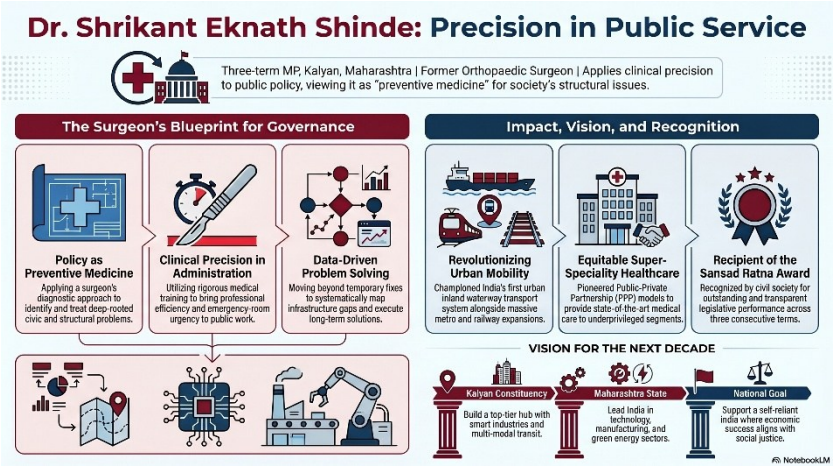
mind as you receive this award? How do you personally cherish this profound validation of your tireless dedication to the nation?

Shri Anurag Singh Thakur: Receiving the Sansad Ratna Award is a deeply humbling and emotional moment for me. What makes this recognition especially meaningful is that it comes from civil society. It is based on an objective assessment of parliamentary performance. It reflects the trust and confidence of the people whom we are privileged to serve, and that makes it truly special. This honour carries an even deeper significance because it is inspired by the vision and ideals of Bharat Ratna Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam. His life exemplified integrity, knowledge, innovation, humility, and an unwavering commitment to nation-building. For every public representative, his ideals continue to serve as a guiding light. This recognition also brings back fond memories. In 2018, I had the privilege of receiving the Sansad Ratna Award from the hands of Shri Banwarilal Purohit ji. That recognition served as a source of encouragement and inspiration, motivating me to work even harder as a parliamentarian and continue striving for excellence in public service. To be honoured once again by the same prestigious institution is both gratifying and humbling. At the same time, I view this award not merely as recognition for past work, but as a reminder of the responsibilities that lie ahead. Public life is a continuous journey of service, learning, and accountability. Every

recognition raises expectations and reinforces our commitment to serve with greater dedication. I accept this honour with gratitude and humility on behalf of the people of Hamirpur, my colleagues in Parliament, the dedicated teams that support our work, and every citizen whose trust gives meaning to public service. Awards provide encouragement, but the real reward lies in the opportunity to contribute to the progress of our nation and improve the lives of our fellow citizens. As I receive this honour, I feel thankful, inspired, and even more determined to continue working for the vision of a Viksit Bharat with sincerity, commitment, and a spirit of selfless service. I believe the best way to honour such recognition is not by looking back at what has been achieved, but by rededicating oneself to the work that remains to be done for the nation and its people.

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Dr Shrikant Eknath Shinde: From Surgeon to Visionary Parliamentarian



Dr Shrikant Eknath Shinde is a dynamic young leader and a dedicated public servant. He is currently serving his third term in the Lok Sabha. He proudly represents the Kalyan constituency in Maharashtra. Before entering the demanding world of politics, he trained rigorously as an orthopaedic surgeon. He entered Parliament at the young age of 27. He brought the clinical precision of a surgeon directly into public administration. Dr Shrikant Shinde's journey reflects a deep dedication to curing societal issues with the same precision he brought to surgery. His visionary approach to infrastructure and public health continues to inspire progress across Maharashtra and the nation.

Over the years, he has completely transformed local infrastructure and revitalised public healthcare in his region.

In an exclusive interview with ***PreSense***, the Hon'ble Member of Parliament Dr Shrikant Shinde mentioned that public policy acts as preventive medicine for society's structural problems. He shared his unique journey from the operating theatre to the Parliament. He also discussed his vision for urban transit and made a heartfelt appeal to educated youth. Read on to explore his inspiring insights.

Excerpts:

Question: On Early Life and the Healing Profession - Growing up in a household deeply rooted in grassroots public service, you initially chose the highly rigorous path of medicine, pursuing a Master of Surgery in Orthopaedics. Looking back at those early, formative years, how did your environment and your academic dedication to healing shape your core values and character?

Dr Shrikant Eknath Shinde: Medicine and public service



share the exactly same objective. They both aim to relieve human suffering and restore well-being. Choosing orthopaedics required intense discipline, long hours, and absolute precision. In an operation theatre, you learn that a single error can alter a life. You need a sharp diagnostic approach and a calm mind under intense pressure. This rigorous training shaped my character. It taught me patience and deep empathy for people in pain. Every patient taught me to listen carefully. This trait is absolutely vital for a public representative. Healing is not just about writing prescriptions. It is about restoring dignity, mobility, and hope. This academic dedication built the foundation of my work ethic. It ensures that my approach remains systematic and data-driven. I am entirely focused on delivering tangible relief to the people.

Question: The Leap from Surgery to Statecraft - Entering the Lok Sabha at the young age of 27, while still completing your medical post-graduation, is a truly extraordinary feat. What was that compelling inner voice or pivotal moment that prompted you to step out of the operation theatre and plunge into the complex, demanding world of electoral politics?

Dr Shrikant Eknath Shinde: Entering the Lok Sabha at the age of 27 was a profound transition. At the time, I was still completing my medical post-graduation. As a surgeon, I was trained to treat one patient at a time. I fixed specific fractures or deformities. However, my exposure to the community opened my eyes. I realised that systemic issues affect thousands of families simultaneously. These include poor healthcare access, weak public infrastructure, and economic bottlenecks. The inner voice prompted me to step out of the hospital. I realised that statecraft offers a much larger canvas for healing. Cleanly executed public policy is preventive medicine for society's structural problems. The pivotal moment arrived when I saw an opportunity to bring youthful energy to governance. I wanted to bring professional efficiency and emergency-room urgency to public work. Moving from treating individuals to serving a suburban constituency changed my path. It allowed me to apply technical focus to mass public welfare. This made my shift from surgery to statecraft a natural extension of my commitment to serve.



Question: On Mentors and Enduring Lessons - Your father, the Honourable Deputy Chief Minister Shri Eknath Shinde Ji, is a towering figure in Maharashtra's political landscape. Beyond the profound inspiration he provides, who else has been a guiding mentor to you on your political journey, and what is the most invaluable lesson you have learnt about navigating public life?

Dr Shrikant Eknath Shinde: Towering leaders have shaped my political journey. They define selflessness, work ethic, and absolute commitment. My father, Deputy Chief Minister Shri Eknath Shinde Ji, taught me a great lesson. He taught me the absolute value of being an accessible,

round-the-clock grassroots worker. I draw profound inspiration from Hindu hridaysamrat Balasaheb Thackeray. His courage and unyielding love for the common citizen teach us to stand firm on principle. The legendary Dharmaveer Anand Dighe Saheb's dedication to justice is my daily benchmark. It guides my service to the people of Thane and Kalyan. Furthermore, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Ji and Union Home Minister Amit Shah Ji inspire me deeply. Their unmatched work ethic, strategic vision, and iron-willed commitment are remarkable. They show what true public service looks like while building a strong, self-reliant nation. I have learnt a very invaluable lesson from these mentors. Credibility in public life is built entirely on trust. You must keep your word and stand firmly with citizens through every challenge.

Question: Diagnosing Civic Challenges - Representing a densely populated, rapidly expanding urban-suburban constituency like Kalyan brings immense pressure. What were the most daunting challenges you faced as a young, first-time representative, and how did the analytical mindset of a surgeon help you diagnose and treat these deep-rooted civic issues?



Dr Shrikant Eknath Shinde: Representing a rapidly expanding constituency like Kalyan brings immense pressure. As a young, first-time representative, the sheer volume of demands was daunting. People needed civic amenities, sanitation, and relief from severe urban congestion. However, my analytical mindset as a surgeon proved to be an unexpected asset. A surgeon relies on clear steps. You examine the symptoms, identify the root cause, and perform a precise intervention without delay. I applied this exact method to civic administration. We did not settle for temporary fixes. We diagnosed deep-rooted issues by systematically mapping infrastructure gaps. We upgraded drainage networks and revamped transport

routes. We broke massive civic challenges into manageable, data-driven targets. This helped us tackle urban bottlenecks cleanly. This professional approach bridged the gap between bureaucratic delay and real-world execution. It ensures that our suburban growth is matched by robust, sustainable public utilities.



Question: A Vision for Urban Transit - You have been a driving force in transforming urban mobility, notably championing India's first urban inland waterway transport system, alongside massive railway and metro expansions. How emotionally fulfilling is it to witness these grand infrastructural dreams turning into a

tangible reality that eases the daily struggles of millions of commuters?

Dr Shrikant Eknath Shinde: Transforming urban mobility is deeply fulfilling. A commuter's travel time directly impacts their daily quality of life and economic potential. I have championed India's first urban inland waterway transport system. I also focused on massive metro line expansions and the modernisation of railway stations. These are core priorities to ease congestion across the Mumbai Metropolitan Region. Witnessing these grand infrastructure dreams turn into physical reality is an emotional reward. Words cannot fully capture this feeling. Every new transit link, water ferry, or upgraded station represents hours of saved travel time. It saves misery for working-class commuters. It allows them to return home safely and spend quality time with their families. This measurable improvement in human welfare is the ultimate goal of public service. It validates the endless coordination meetings with various ministries. It also fuels my determination to build a seamless, future-ready transit ecosystem.

Question: Revitalising Public Healthcare - Leveraging your specialised expertise as a doctor, you have spearheaded the revitalisation of public healthcare in your region through innovative Public-Private Partnership models. What continues to fuel your passion for ensuring that state-of-the-art super-

speciality medical care reaches the most underprivileged segments of society?

Dr Shrikant Eknath Shinde: Public healthcare requires complete structural revitalisation. As a medical professional, I consider it my primary duty to lead this transformation. We pioneered innovative Public-Private Partnership (PPP) models to overcome resource constraints. We combined government infrastructure with private sector operational efficiency. This allowed us to establish state-of-the-art super-speciality medical centres locally. We also built advanced diagnostic hubs. My passion is fuelled by a simple, non-negotiable belief. Access to world-class healthcare is a fundamental right. It is not a luxury reserved for the affluent. No underprivileged family should face financial ruin due to a sudden medical emergency. I see daily wage earners receive advanced orthopaedic surgery without paying a single penny. This drives my commitment every single day. We continue to expand these super-speciality models. This ensures that advanced medical science serves humanity equitably.

Question: Championing Global Perspectives Locally - While deeply invested in local infrastructure, you have also brought a progressive, global perspective to Parliament, consistently raising critical yet often overlooked issues like climate-induced migration and environmental conservation. Why is it vital for modern

leaders to bridge the gap between hyper-local developmental needs and global environmental crises?

Dr Shrikant Eknath Shinde: Modern leaders can no longer separate local development from global environmental crises. In rapidly growing urban centres like Kalyan, environmental degradation directly impacts daily life. It causes flooding, rising temperatures, and air pollution. I have consistently raised issues like climate-induced migration in Parliament. I also focus heavily on environmental conservation. Global climate trends have severe, hyper-local consequences. We cannot simply build massive concrete infrastructure. We must protect our wetlands, green cover, and natural water bodies. Otherwise, that development will ultimately fail our citizens. Leaders must bridge this gap carefully. We need to introduce eco-sensitive urban planning and protect local biodiversity. We must also manage solid waste efficiently at the municipal level. We connect global sustainability goals with grassroots execution. This ensures our infrastructure is resilient and our natural resources are preserved. It helps our citizens inherit healthy and sustainable cities.

Question: Sustaining Outstanding Legislative Performance - Over the course of three consecutive terms, you have maintained an outstanding and exemplary performance on the floor of the Lok Sabha.

Balancing the heavy, round-the-clock demands of your constituency with such active, disciplined legislative participation requires immense focus. What is the secret behind this unwavering commitment to your parliamentary duties?

Dr Shrikant Eknath Shinde: Maintaining active, disciplined participation across three consecutive terms requires rigorous focus. It also demands deep respect for our democratic institutions. I balance the round-the-clock demands of an expanding constituency with active legislative duties. This means managing time with absolute efficiency, and the secret lies in treating parliamentary duties as a powerful tool to advocate for local needs. I approach legislative debates and committee meetings with great care. I prepare for them just like a surgeon prepares for a critical operation. I have structured a highly responsive team to handle day-to-day constituency grievances. This ensures that local issues are cleanly documented. They are then translated into policy interventions on the floor of the House. This unwavering commitment is fuelled entirely by the trust my voters place in me. Representing their voice cleanly and forcefully remains my greatest duty.

Question: The Ultimate Dream for Tomorrow - As you look ahead, having already achieved so much as a young and dynamic leader, what is your ultimate

ambition? What is your grand vision for the future of Kalyan, Maharashtra, and India over the next decade?

Dr Shrikant Eknath Shinde: My grand vision for the next decade is centred on inclusive growth. It focuses on infrastructure excellence and self-reliance. For Kalyan, the dream is to build a top-tier suburban hub. It will have world-class educational institutions, smart industries, and multi-modal transit networks. This will eliminate the need for long, exhausting daily commutes. For Maharashtra, the goal is to lead India's technology, manufacturing, and green energy sectors. We will execute transparent and forward-looking industrial policies. Nationally, I am fully committed to supporting a developed, self-reliant India. I envision a global leader where economic success aligns perfectly with social justice. We need a nation with world-class public infrastructure and equitable healthcare. By empowering our youth with future-ready skills, we secure progress for every segment of society. This will create a secure, prosperous, and proud tomorrow.

Question: A Call to Educated Youth - Today, many highly educated professionals—including doctors, engineers, and scientists—hesitate to enter the political sphere, often viewing it with apprehension. Drawing from your own highly successful transition, what is your heartfelt appeal to the youth? Why is it

absolutely essential for educated minds to step forward and strengthen our democracy?

Dr Shrikant Eknath Shinde: Our democracy urgently needs analytical minds and technical experts. We need highly educated professionals to step forward into the public sphere. Many qualified individuals hesitate to enter politics due to apprehension or cynicism. However, my own transition from an orthopaedic surgeon to a parliamentarian taught me a lot. Statecraft is the most effective instrument for driving large-scale structural change. If educated youth stay away, we lose a great opportunity. We miss bringing data-driven problem-solving and professional efficiency to governance. We need engineers to design smart cities and doctors to reform public health. We need scientists to tackle environmental crises. My heartfelt appeal to the youth is to step across the line. Join public service today. True change happens when we stop criticising from the sidelines. We must actively bring our skills and dedication into policymaking to strengthen our nation.

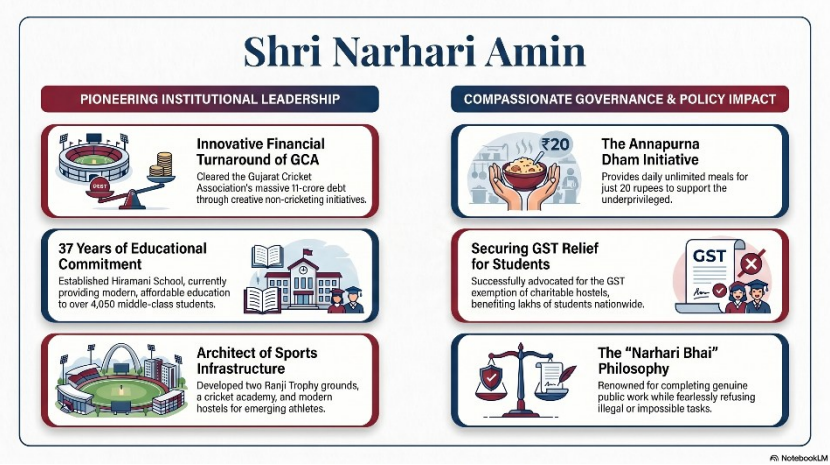
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Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, what emotions run through your mind as you receive this award? How do you personally cherish this profound validation of your tireless dedication to the nation?

Dr Shrikant Eknath Shinde: Receiving the Sansad Ratna Award is a deeply moving experience. It brings a profound sense of humility, gratitude, and renewed responsibility. This accolade holds a very unique distinction. It is bestowed entirely by civil society. It uses objective and transparent metrics to evaluate a parliamentarian's performance. This recognition comes directly from the citizens. It proudly carries forward the visionary, public-spirited ethos of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam. This honour is not a personal victory. It belongs to the citizens of Kalyan who consistently trust me to represent their aspirations. It serves as a powerful validation of transparent and hard legislative work. It proves that such work is truly valued by society. This honour strengthens my resolve to continue working with complete integrity. I will always keep the welfare of the people at the absolute centre of my duties.

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Shri Narhari Amin: Five Decades of Enduring Public Service



Shri Narhari Amin is a veteran parliamentarian and the former Deputy Chief Minister of Gujarat. His remarkable public life spans over fifty years. He began his journey as a fierce student leader during the historic Navnirman Andolan in 1974. Over the decades, he has made monumental contributions to state administration, sports, and education. He successfully transformed the Gujarat Cricket Association and established the prestigious Hiramani School. Today, he serves the nation with great distinction in the Rajya Sabha.

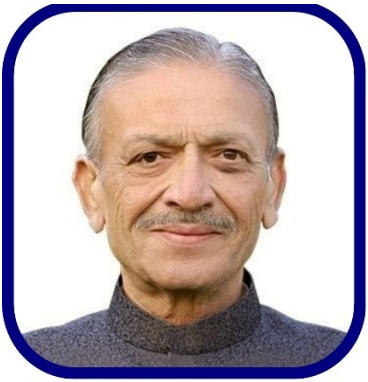
In an exclusive interview with ***PreSense***, the Hon'ble Member of Parliament Shri Narhari Amin mentioned that a true leader must have the courage to do genuine public

work at any cost while fearlessly refusing impossible tasks. How did he transition from agitating on the streets to guiding the State? What is his profound vision for empowering the youth? Read on to explore his highly inspiring journey and his dedication to the nation.

Excerpts:

Question: The Crucible of Student Activism - Your journey in public life was forged in the fiery crucible of the historic Navnirman Andolan in 1974. When you look back at those turbulent days as a young student leader fighting for a corruption-free society, what was the defining moment that compelled you to dedicate your entire life to public service?

Shri Narhari Amin: I was the General Secretary of



Navgujarat College in 1974. Chimanbhai Patel was the Chief Minister of the State at that time. The agitation started over a food bill and dining arrangements at the LD Engineering College hostel. We held a massive meeting with Senate members and students at Gujarat University. A fierce agitation began right from that hall. I worked as a leading figure in this movement. Eventually, the Chief Minister resigned. Some people

wanted to stop the protests then. However, young leaders like me demanded the complete dissolution of the Assembly. We organised road blockades and a successful Gujarat Bandh. The leaders in Delhi finally had to dissolve the Gujarat Assembly. This massive agitation brought out my leadership qualities. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and industrialists like Pankajbhai Patel also joined this movement. Recently, the Prime Minister specially mentioned my role during an event in Vadodara.



Question: From Agitation to Administration - The transition from being a fierce, agitating student leader

on the streets to becoming the Deputy Chief Minister of Gujarat requires immense personal and political evolution. What were the toughest administrative challenges you faced during this transformation, and how did you navigate the heavy burden of executive statecraft?

Shri Narhari Amin: I became a Senate member in 1977. As a third-year law student, I won a seat on the Executive Council of Gujarat University with a huge margin. I solved many student problems by working closely with principals and teachers. In 1980, I became a Corporator of the Naranpura ward with massive public support. In 1990, at the age of 35, I became an MLA from Sabarmati. I also became a State Minister with independent charge of Home, Youth, and Sports. Later, I served as a Cabinet Minister for Education and Urban Development. After the demise of Chief Minister Chimanbhai Patel, I became the Deputy Chief Minister under Chhabildas Mehta. I took revolutionary decisions to resolve pending issues in the Education, Health, and Sports departments during this time.

Question: On Guiding Lights and Mentors - Surviving and thriving in the intensely competitive landscape of Gujarat's politics for nearly half a century requires both resilience and profound guidance. During your formative years, who were your primary political

mentors, and what enduring wisdom did they impart to you?



Shri Narhari Amin: I received guidance from many respected leaders over the last fifty years. I got the opportunity to work with great figures like Shri Narendra Modi, Shri Amit Shah, and Morarji Desai. I also learned a lot from Babubhai Patel and Indubhai Patel. Chimanbhai Patel and Dr Ramanbhai Patel significantly shaped my public life. I learned very important values from them. They taught me to complete genuine work for the people at any cost. They also taught me to refuse work that breaks the rules. Even today, the people of Gujarat know this truth about me. They know Narhari Bhai will solve genuine problems immediately. They also know he will fearlessly refuse impossible or illegal tasks.

Question: An Enduring Bond Beyond Ideologies - Over a remarkable career spanning five decades, you have successfully navigated across major political and ideological spectrums—transitioning to the Bharatiya Janata Party whilst continuously retaining the unwavering trust of the masses. What is the secret behind this deep, personal bond with the people of Gujarat that completely transcends party lines?

Shri Narhari Amin: I faced many different challenges over my fifty-year career. I worked with the Sanstha Congress, the Janata Party, the Congress, and the Bharatiya Janata Party. I won the municipal elections twice and the Assembly elections twice. I also faced electoral defeat twice. I joined the BJP in December 2012 under the visionary leadership of Shri Narendra Modi. I served as the Deputy Chairman of the Gujarat State Planning Commission for seven years. Since June 2020, I have been proudly serving as a Rajya Sabha member for the BJP.

Question: Parallels Between Sports and Statecraft - Beyond the political arena, you have made monumental contributions to Indian sports as the President of the Gujarat Cricket Association and the Vice-President of the BCCI. How does the discipline and team-building required in high-stakes sports administration influence your approach to national governance?

Shri Narhari Amin: In 1993, many cricketing leaders asked me to lead the Gujarat Cricket Association. The association had a bank balance of just 375 rupees. It carried a massive debt of 11 crore rupees. Banks and businessmen had filed court cases to recover their money. We decided to organise a premiere show of the film *Sarfarosh* in Ahmedabad. We successfully raised a huge amount of 60 lakh rupees from tickets and advertisements. We used this to start settling our bank debts. Later, we organised a match at Motera Stadium to pay off all the remaining debts. We built two new grounds for the Ranji Trophy. We also established a cricket academy, a hostel, and a modern club house. We are the only association to clear massive debts by screening a movie instead of relying on cricket activities.


TEAM
Bride
NIKE
PRO

Question: Empowering the Next Generation - Retaining the passionate spirit of your early days as a student leader, you remain deeply invested in the educational sector, notably guiding institutions like the Hiramani School. In today's rapidly changing world, how crucial is it for seasoned politicians to actively mentor and shape the minds of the youth?

Shri Narhari Amin: I served in the educational field for 37 consecutive years. I was a Senate and Syndicate member at Gujarat University. I also chaired the university's consumer stores for 35 years. In the year 2000, we proudly started the Hiramani School. It is named after my father, Hirabhai, and my mother, Maniben. Today, over 4,050 students study there from Nursery to Standard 12. We kept the fees very affordable to help middle-class families. The campus features modern laboratories, libraries, and sports grounds. Our trust also publishes a monthly magazine called *Hiramani Jignasa*. We send 18,000 free copies to schools, libraries, and temples. It shares useful educational articles and government schemes with the public.

Question: Bringing State Wisdom to the Upper House - As a Member of the Rajya Sabha, you bring the extraordinary gravitas and perspective of a former Deputy Chief Minister and a top state planner. How does this deep, ground-level understanding of state

machinery help you shape broader national policies in the Upper House of Parliament?

Shri Narhari Amin: During my Rajya Sabha election, there were four open seats. The BJP had enough guaranteed votes for two members. Shri Narendra Modi and Shri Amit Shah made me the third BJP candidate. Eight Congress MLAs resigned to help me win the election. I won with the highest number of votes among all candidates. In the Rajya Sabha, I have asked 653 questions regarding central schemes. I actively participated in budget discussions and important national anniversary celebrations. I personally requested the Prime Minister and Finance Minister to exempt charitable hostels from GST. They gladly approved this request. This decision brought massive financial relief to lakhs of students. I also adopted five villages under the Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana. We allocated huge funds to renovate lakes and upgrade local schools and hospitals. I have maintained an attendance record of over 90 percent throughout my tenure.

Question: Weathering the Storms of Public Life - A fifty-year political marathon is inevitably accompanied by deep setbacks, electoral challenges, and emotional trials. In moments of political adversity, from where do you draw the inner strength and resilience to keep fighting for the people?

Shri Narhari Amin: I draw my deepest strength from social service. I serve as the President of the Annapurna Dham Trust. Every single day, we serve an unlimited meal to 600 people for just 20 rupees. We also serve food in the evening at very low costs. We built the Hiramani Aarogya Dham charity hospital at a cost of 50 crore rupees. Prime Minister Modi laid the foundation stone, and Amit Shah inaugurated it. I also run an old age home with four-star facilities. We care for 120 elders for a very small token amount. During the Corona pandemic, we provided free meals to 1,100 people twice a day for 65 days. We also distributed essential food grain kits to needy families.

Question: The Ultimate Vision for Tomorrow - Having intimately shaped the economic and developmental trajectory of Gujarat, and now serving the nation at the highest legislative level, what is your ultimate dream for the future of India over the next decade?

Shri Narhari Amin: India is completely safe under Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the BJP. Our economy is progressing rapidly every single day. The Modi government has achieved more in 12 years than others did in 77 years of independence. We built 10.5 crore toilets and provided over 11 crore gas connections. We gave clean tap water to 15 crore homes. The government successfully brought 25 crore people out of poverty. We also provide free food grains to 81 crore people every single month.

Question: A Clarion Call to the Youth - Today, many bright, educated young minds view the complex world of politics with apprehension. Drawing from your own highly inspiring journey—starting from a student movement in 1974 to the Parliament of India—why is it absolutely vital for our youth to courageously enter politics and strengthen our democracy?

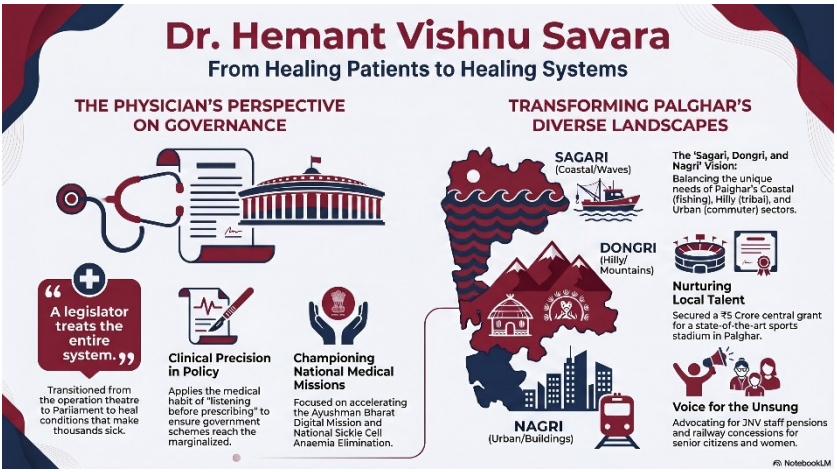
Shri Narhari Amin: India has a massive youth population today. Our youth make up 60 to 65 percent of the country. It is absolutely necessary for them to boldly enter politics. They need to join the system to strengthen the pillars of our democracy. The government is taking bold steps to make India the third-largest economy in the world. The young generation will help make our country more organised and economically strong.

Question: On the Honour of the Sansad Ratna Award - Unlike many accolades, the Sansad Ratna Award holds a unique distinction: it is an honour bestowed entirely by civil society, evaluating a parliamentarian's performance objectively and transparently. Knowing that this recognition comes directly from the citizens you serve, and carries forward the visionary ethos of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, what emotions run through your mind as you receive this award? How do you personally cherish this profound validation of your tireless dedication to the nation?

Shri Narhari Amin: Receiving the Sansad Ratna Award brings wonderful emotions to my mind. It highlights my very important role across 50 years of public life. This covers my political, social, educational, and sports activities. I have taken many important decisions that people remember even today. Even at the age of 71, I continue to solve the issues of poor and middle-class people. They come to me with their problems every single day. I simply pray to God to give me the strength to serve society even more in the coming years.

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Dr Hemant Vishnu Savara: Healing Patients to Healing Systems



Dr Hemant Vishnu Savara is a first-term Member of Parliament. He represents the Palghar (ST) constituency in Maharashtra. He is an accomplished Orthopaedic Surgeon. He is also the son of the late tribal leader, Shri Vishnu Savara. Today, he brings a unique and modern voice to Indian politics. Dr Savara has made a remarkable debut in the 18th Lok Sabha. People deeply respect his legislative discipline and his empathy for marginalised communities.

In an exclusive interview with ***PreSense***, the Hon'ble Member of Parliament Dr Hemant Vishnu Savara mentioned that a doctor heals one patient at a time, but a legislator can treat the entire system. How did he transition from the operation theatre to national politics? What is his

vision for Palghar's coastal, hilly, and urban areas? Read on to discover his inspiring journey and his deep gratitude for this civil society recognition.

Excerpts:

Question: Before stepping into the political arena, you dedicated years to rigorous study at Mumbai's prestigious Grant Medical College to become a qualified doctor. What were your earliest inspirations during your youth, and how did your academic journey as a medical professional shape your worldview on social service?



Dr. Hemant Vishnu Savara: Growing up in Palghar, my greatest inspiration was my father, the late Shri Vishnu Savara. He served as Maharashtra's Cabinet Minister for Tribal Development. He devoted his life to helping our tribal communities. Watching him work gave me a deep sense of social responsibility. Alongside this, I was always drawn to medicine. It is the most direct way to help someone in pain. I completed my MBBS from the historic Grant Medical College in Mumbai. Later, I became an Orthopaedic Surgeon. My time at J.J. Hospital introduced me to farmers,

labourers, and tribal patients. It showed me that poverty and illness are deeply connected. A tribal patient from a remote village often arrives with an untreated fracture simply because there is no local doctor. This turns medicine into a question of justice. Medicine taught me to listen before prescribing. I carry that same habit into Parliament today. My father gave me my life's purpose, and my medical training gave me the method.

Question: Medical professionals rarely transition into full-time electoral politics. What was the exact defining moment, or the core inner calling, that prompted you to step away from a successful medical practice to plunge into the intense, round-the-clock world of active public life?



Dr. Hemant Vishnu Savara: There was no single big moment. It was a slow realisation over many years. As a surgeon, I treated tribal patients from across Palghar. They walked for miles and suffered needlessly because the system had failed them. Medicine taught me to heal the person in front of me — but it also showed me how much more needed to be done. Good health is never the work of a single hand. It is shaped by the roads that reach you, the water you drink, the system that does not forget you because of where you live. My duty is to ensure that care reaches every person, in every corner of Palghar — not as a privilege, but as a right. Then, in December 2020, my father passed away. People came to me. They believed I could carry forward his legacy of service. I realised that a stethoscope heals one patient at a time. But a seat in Parliament can change the conditions that make thousands sick. A doctor treats the person, while a legislator treats the system. This thought brought me from the operation theatre to the Lok Sabha. I did not leave medicine behind; I simply found a larger clinic.

Question: Your late father, Shri Vishnu Savara, was a deeply revered stalwart, a grassroots leader, and Maharashtra's former Minister for Tribal Development. Growing up watching his tireless service, what were the most profound life lessons you learnt from him, and how does his legacy continue to guide your footsteps today?

Dr. Hemant Vishnu Savara: My father was a way of life. Watching him, I learned that real leadership is about the lives you touch. He came from an ordinary farming family in Wada. He gave up his bank job to serve his people through the BJP and the RSS. He won elections through trust built one village at a time. He would sit on the floor of a tribal home as comfortably as in a minister's office. That simplicity was his greatest strength. He ran residential schools for tribal children and fought for their land rights quietly. He taught me that working for praise means losing your way. Work because it is right. After he passed, people in Palghar lost a guardian. Every time I raise a question about tribal welfare in Parliament, I continue a conversation he started decades ago. His legacy feels like a compass, not a burden.



Question: While your father's memory remains an eternal guiding light, navigating the intricate machinery of national politics requires deep resilience. Apart from

your father, who else has inspired and motivated you the most during your formative political years, helping you find your own distinct voice?

Dr. Hemant Vishnu Savara: Every leader is shaped by many people. Beyond my father, the values of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) gave me a strong foundation. Growing up in that environment taught me selfless service and discipline. Within the BJP, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji has been a steady source of inspiration. He showed that a person from a humble background can transform an entire nation. His vision of Viksit Bharat connects deeply with Palghar's needs. Senior party leaders in Maharashtra also guided me. They taught me that elections are a result of service, not a replacement for it. However, my most powerful teachers are often nameless. The ASHA worker in Dahanu walking kilometres every day without complaint is a great example. The patient tribal farmer and the dedicated village school teacher remind me why I am here. They keep my feet firmly on the ground.

Question: Bridging Medical Acumen with Governance - As a medical doctor, you possess a unique, evidence-based perspective on public health. In your parliamentary debut, you have aggressively raised questions regarding the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission and the National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission. How satisfying is it to bring your

specialised medical knowledge onto the floor of the Lok Sabha to cure structural gaps in our healthcare system?



Dr. Hemant Vishnu Savara: It is deeply satisfying when your profession and your purpose come together. Raising healthcare questions in the Lok Sabha is exactly that. As a doctor, I learned to understand the cause before treating a symptom. In Parliament, this means finding solutions to ensure government schemes reach every citizen. I raised questions on the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission to speed up its reach into tribal areas. The Mission has created over 67 crore digital health accounts. Prime Minister Modi ji has brought healthcare into the digital age while keeping the poorest citizen at the centre. Similarly, the National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission is deeply personal for me.

The goal is to free the country from this disease by 2047. Already, 6 crore individuals have been screened. My role is to ensure Palghar's tribal families fully benefit from these historic missions. Prime Minister Modi is healing an entire nation, and I am proud to be a small part of it.

Question: Balancing Diverse Regional Demands - Your constituency, Palghar, is highly unique; it encompasses deeply remote tribal pockets on one hand, and the rapidly urbanising fringes of the Mumbai Metropolitan Region on the other. How demanding is it for a first-term parliamentarian to emotionally and logistically balance the infrastructure demands of suburban railway commuters alongside the preservation of tribal rights?

Dr. Hemant Vishnu Savara: Palghar is three distinct worlds existing side by side. We describe our district as Sagari, Dongri, and Nagri. This translates to the Coastal, Hilly, and Urban areas. The Sagari coastal belt is home to Koli fishing communities. They need fishing rights, jetty infrastructure, and climate support. The Dongri hilly interior is the tribal heart of Palghar. These communities wait for basic things like proper roads, health centres, and forest land recognition. Finally, the Nagri urban towns host lakhs of daily commuters. They struggle with overcrowded trains and need better urban development. I do not see this variety as a problem. It is a beautiful picture of India. My

medical training helps me decide which problem needs immediate attention and which needs a long-term solution. Under Prime Minister Modi's leadership, central schemes give me the tools to serve all three worlds. My job is simply to be the bridge.

Question: Exceptional Debut Performance and Discipline - For a first-time Member of Parliament, your legislative discipline has been exemplary—maintaining a near-perfect 98% attendance record, participating in debates, and raising questions. What drives this relentless work ethic, and how do you ensure that you stay so deeply connected to the floor of the House while managing your duties on the ground?

Dr. Hemant Vishnu Savara: For me, attendance is not an achievement worth celebrating; it is simply the basic duty I owe to the people of Palghar. When I look at the 22-lakh people of this constituency, every man, every woman, every family, I do not see only those who voted for me. I see every single person I am responsible for. Whether they stood with me or not on that day, they are all my people, and their trust is something I carry with me every moment**.** The Lok Sabha is the highest platform of democracy. Every debate and question can change a policy or shift a budget. When I raise a question, I raise the voice of the fisherman, the tribal mother, and the daily commuter. That is an honour, not a burden. I also return to Palghar every weekend. I sit in

public meetings and listen before I speak. Prime Minister Modi ji leads by example with his work ethic and discipline. I constantly aspire to follow his standard.

Question: Exclusive Contributions to the Unsung - Your parliamentary service reveals a deep-seated empathy for the unsung heroes of our society—from fighting for pension benefits for Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya staff to advocating for railway fare concessions for senior citizens and women. What draws you so strongly towards championing these specific social welfare causes?

Dr. Hemant Vishnu Savara: Some people in our society give everything and ask for nothing. The system often forgets them. A Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya teacher spends thirty years educating rural children. He deserves a proper pension. An elderly woman travelling alone on a train deserves a fare reduction. These are not big political issues. Nobody will hold a rally for them. But I must raise them because my father taught me a vital lesson. The true measure of a representative is how regularly he speaks for those who have no voice. As a doctor, I treated patients who were exhausted from being overlooked by the system. Every unsung person I fight for represents hundreds more. Under Prime Minister Modi's philosophy of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, my role is clear. I must make sure this vision reaches the most forgotten corners of India.

A nation only moves forward when its invisible contributors are honoured.

Question: Empowering the Next Generation - Through your persistent efforts, you successfully secured a ₹5 crore central grant for a state-of-the-art sports stadium in Palghar to nurture local talent. Looking at the immense potential of our youth, what is your ultimate goal and ambition for the next generation of sports professionals and educated minds in your region?

Dr. Hemant Vishnu Savara: The ₹5 crore grant for a sports stadium in Palghar is a powerful message. It tells every young person in this district that their dreams are valid. For too long, talent in Palghar went unnoticed without a proper platform. We have produced great athletes, especially from our tribal communities. They have natural strength and a competitive spirit. However, without facilities and coaching, that raw talent disappears. This stadium is the first step in building a proper support system. Prime Minister Modi's vision of the Sansad Khel Mahotsav has already found great success here. I promise the youth of Palghar that I will walk alongside them to bring glory to India. But my ambition does not stop at sports. I want a young tribal girl to dream of becoming a doctor or a scientist right here in Palghar. No child should have to leave their home to find opportunity. We will build that opportunity locally.

Question: A Message to Hesitant Young Professionals - Today, a significant number of educated young professionals and doctors hesitate to enter politics, viewing the system with deep apprehension. Drawing from your own inspiring journey as a highly educated professional who chose the path of service, why is it vital for the youth to enter politics to strengthen our Indian democracy?

Dr. Hemant Vishnu Savara: I completely understand the hesitation among educated youth. Politics in India often carries a negative image. But if the people who care most stay outside the system, who will change it? Staying away is not something India can afford. Democracy needs active participation from honest, educated people. When I left my medical practice, many thought I was giving something up. I saw it as growing bigger. I moved from healing individuals to fixing systems. Politics is tough and complex. However, one right decision in Parliament can change millions of lives. Under Prime Minister Modi ji, we are building a new, strong India. This journey needs professionals inside the system. We need doctors, engineers, and teachers bringing their knowledge into governance. Public service is the most powerful way to give back to the nation that educated you.

Question: On the Honour of the Sansad Ratna Award - Unlike many accolades, the Sansad Ratna Award holds a unique distinction: it is an honour bestowed entirely

by civil society, evaluating a parliamentarian's performance objectively and transparently. Knowing that this recognition comes directly from the citizens you serve, and carries forward the visionary ethos of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, what emotions run through your mind as you receive this award in your very first term? How do you personally cherish this profound validation of your tireless dedication to the nation?

Dr. Hemant Vishnu Savara: When I received the Sansad Ratna Award, my first thought was of the people of Palghar. This award belongs to every fisherman, tribal family, and commuter who trusted me. Receiving this in my first term is deeply humbling. The Sansad Ratna Awards are uniquely given by Indian civil society. They were started in 2010 on the suggestion of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam. He believed that hard-working MPs should be recognised by the people. The awards are based completely on honest, data-based performance. There are no nominations or lobbying involved. You can only earn it through genuine work in Parliament. For sixteen years, these awards have stood for accountability. To be measured by that standard and found worthy is a great privilege. My father spent thirty years in public service with total honesty. I like to believe he is watching with quiet approval. This award is my renewed promise to never give up on the people I serve.

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Shri Saptagiri Sankar Ulaka: Bridging Grassroots Realities with Global Expertise



Shri Saptagiri Sankar Ulaka is a distinguished two-term Member of Parliament representing the Koraput constituency in Odisha. Transitioning from a highly successful global corporate career to the rigorous world of grassroots politics, he brings a unique, data-driven, and structured approach to Indian governance. He currently heads the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Rural Development and Panchayati Raj. Under his visionary leadership, the committee is being honoured with the

Sansad Ratna Award for presenting an exceptional number of original reports.

In this exclusive interview with *PreSense*, the Hon'ble Member of Parliament, Shri Saptagiri Sankar Ulaka, discusses his monumental leap from multinational boardrooms to tribal advocacy. He shares his sweeping dreams for rural India, the critical need for decentralised development, and why it is absolutely vital for educated youth to actively shape the nation's democratic future.

Excerpts:

Question: Before entering the dynamic world of Indian public service, you had a successful global career as a software engineer and Senior Project Manager in multinational corporations. What were the most valuable lessons you learnt during your corporate life, and how do those experiences influence your structured approach to governance today?

Shri Saptagiri Sankar Ulaka: While corporate work differs



vastly from politics, the core lessons I learnt continue to shape my approach as a public representative. Firstly, my corporate career taught me that data and evidence are paramount; decisions must be driven by measurable outcomes and ground realities, not mere assumptions. Secondly, I learnt the critical importance of meticulous planning and timely execution. A brilliant strategy means little without clear milestones and accountability.

Thirdly, corporate life exposed me to the power of teamwork across diverse cultures, teaching me that successful projects are built through deep collaboration. Furthermore, just as understanding customer needs is essential in business, citizens are our ultimate stakeholders in governance; their constant feedback is vital for effective policymaking. Finally, the tech sector instilled a culture of continuous learning and transparency. Today, I strive to merge this structured, results-oriented approach with the profound empathy and inclusion that genuine public service demands.



Question: Transitioning from a comfortable, high-tech corporate role in the US and India to the rigorous, grassroots life of a parliamentarian is a remarkable leap. What was the pivotal moment or core motivation that compelled you to leave the corporate sector and enter active politics?

Shri Saptagiri Sankar Ulaka: The decision was not driven by a single moment, but by a steadily growing realisation. While my corporate career offered global exposure and financial stability, I always felt a powerful, undeniable connection to my roots in Koraput and the deep challenges faced by Adivasi communities, farmers, and youth.

Growing up, I witnessed the transformative impact of public service through my father, the Late Shri Ramachandra Ulaka. His unwavering commitment to social justice left a

lasting impression on me. The pivotal realisation was that while corporate work allowed me to solve business problems, public life offered a unique canvas to address structural issues affecting millions—such as healthcare, education, tribal rights, and infrastructure. Moving from air-conditioned boardrooms to village public hearings was certainly a challenging shift in perspective, but the opportunity to serve as a voice for the unheard is a responsibility I consider both a privilege and a profound calling.



Question: Behind every successful leader, there are guiding lights who help shape their path. Could you tell us about the mentors who have influenced you the most? In particular, who has been your political mentor, and what is the most profound piece of advice they imparted to you?

Shri Saptagiri Sankar Ulaka: The greatest influence on my life was undoubtedly my father. Far more than just a political leader, he was a teacher by pure example. He taught me that politics is never about power—it is fundamentally about trust. His most profound advice was: "Always remain accessible to the people who elected you. The day you stop listening to ordinary people, you stop being their representative."

I also had corporate mentors who taught me professionalism, discipline, and the art of empowering teams. In the political sphere, I have drawn deep inspiration from leaders like Rahul Gandhi, whose emphasis on engaging directly with marginalised communities demonstrates that politics must always be rooted in compassion and conviction. I have also learnt immense resilience from senior leaders who remain steadfastly committed to their principles during difficult times. Ultimately, my guiding principle is to never lose touch with my roots or allow success to distance me from the people I serve.



Question: You have navigated two vastly different ecosystems—the corporate world and the political arena. What were the most formidable challenges you faced in each of these spheres, and how did you manage them? We ask this particularly to inspire our younger readers on the importance of resilience and problem-solving.

Shri Saptagiri Sankar Ulaka: In the corporate world, the most formidable challenge was managing complex global projects under strict deadlines. When unexpected setbacks occurred, I quickly learnt that panic never solves problems. The key was to stay calm, break a massive challenge into manageable tasks, communicate transparently, and focus entirely on solutions rather than assigning blame.

The transition to politics brought an entirely different set of challenges. In business, decisions are executed cleanly through organisational structures; in public life, every issue involves complex social realities, raw emotions, and competing interests. Moving from a purely results-driven environment to a grassroots setting where change requires immense time, patience, and consensus-building was my biggest challenge. I had to learn that active listening is often just as important as acting. Adapting to relentless public scrutiny also required developing a thick skin. To the youth, my message is simple: do not view challenges as obstacles, but as brilliant opportunities to grow. Resilience is not about never falling—it is about getting up every single time you do.

Question: Representing the people of Koraput for a second consecutive term is a testament to their immense faith in you. Looking back at your journey so far, how satisfied are you with your performance as a Member of Parliament and your specific contributions to the development of your constituency?

Shri Saptagiri Sankar Ulaka: Representing the wonderful people of Koraput for a second consecutive term is life's greatest honour. However, public service is not a profession where one can ever afford to be completely satisfied. The systemic challenges our region faces are significant, so I

view my work through the lens of continuous responsibility rather than satisfaction.

I strive to be an unrelenting voice for Koraput, consistently raising issues like the Rayagada Railway Division, Jeypore Airport, mobile connectivity in remote villages, and the vital protection of Adivasi rights. I am encouraged by the tangible progress made on several of these long-pending demands through sustained advocacy. Beyond infrastructure, my paramount responsibility is accessibility—ensuring citizen grievances reach the right authorities. True development cannot be measured solely by concrete infrastructure; it must be measured by how effectively it improves human dignity and opportunity. I see this second term not as a culmination, but as a critical opportunity to work even harder for the long-term transformation of Koraput.

Question: Hailing from the Jatapu tribal community, you have been a staunch advocate for indigenous rights, questioning implementation gaps in the Forest Rights Act and pushing for GI tags for Odisha's traditional heritage. How do you balance the preservation of traditional community identities with the push for modern policy and infrastructure?

Shri Saptagiri Sankar Ulaka: I firmly reject the false choice between tradition and modern progress. Sustainable development can only truly succeed when it actively respects and strengthens indigenous cultures rather than

attempting to replace them. Our tribal communities absolutely deserve both: the preservation of their unique heritage, language, and traditional knowledge, coupled seamlessly with access to high-quality education, healthcare, technology, and economic opportunities.

Policies must be consultative while fully respecting constitutional protections like the Fifth Schedule, the Forest Rights Act, and PESA. When we fiercely advocate for mobile connectivity or modern schools in remote regions, we are demanding equal opportunities. Similarly, when we seek GI tags for traditional handlooms and indigenous crops, we are effectively using modern policy tools to preserve and economically empower these communities. Modern society has much to learn from indigenous wisdom regarding biodiversity and sustainable agriculture. Education must empower tribal youth to compete globally without ever alienating them from their roots.

Question: As the Chairperson of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, you have successfully submitted nine original reports. For the benefit of our readers, could you briefly share the gist of these reports and the most critical recommendations your committee has made?

Shri Saptagiri Sankar Ulaka: It has been a distinct privilege to work collaboratively with Members across all political parties to examine programmes that directly affect

rural India. Our nine original reports were intended to identify critical implementation gaps, improve accountability, and ensure development reaches the last mile.

A major focus was strengthening rural livelihoods. For schemes like MGNREGA, we heavily emphasised timely wage payments, improved local planning, and creating durable community assets. We vigorously advocated for decentralisation, recommending a much greater devolution of funds and capacity-building for Panchayati Raj Institutions and women representatives. Regarding land governance, we pushed for transparent, digitised records that do not inadvertently exclude vulnerable populations. We also examined social security, urging better pension delivery and reduced exclusion errors for the elderly, widows, and disabled citizens. Furthermore, we highlighted climate-resilient development and the expansion of credit access for women-led self-help groups.

Our most critical overarching recommendation is this: development always works best when local communities themselves become active partners in planning and implementation. Empowered Gram Sabhas and active citizen participation are the bedrock of meaningful outcomes.

Question: Given your deep legislative involvement with rural policies and Panchayati Raj institutions, what is

your ultimate dream for rural India? How do you personally plan to contribute towards realising this dream and bridging the urban-rural divide?

Shri Saptagiri Sankar Ulaka: My ultimate dream is to transform our villages from passive beneficiaries of State development into powerful, self-sustaining engines of growth. I envision a rural India where a young person never has to leave their home village out of grim compulsion, but rather chooses to migrate based entirely on aspiration.

The real measure of success should be whether rural citizens have equal access to the exact same quality of education, advanced healthcare, high-speed digital connectivity, and economic opportunities as those in metropolitan centres. I dream of villages connected by excellent roads and reliable internet, where schools respect cultural roots, farmers receive fair returns, and Panchayats function as vibrant democratic institutions. Development must be tailored to diverse local realities, especially in marginalised tribal regions, rather than applying a lazy, one-size-fits-all approach. As a legislator, I will continue to fiercely advocate for these investments in Parliament while engaging directly with grassroots communities to ensure our policies reflect their true aspirations. Bridging the urban-rural divide fundamentally means bridging the deep opportunity divide.

Question: Now in your second term as a Member of Parliament, your political footprint is well established. However, looking beyond the realm of politics, what are your broader personal aspirations? How do you wish to contribute to society outside of your parliamentary duties?

Shri Saptagiri Sankar Ulaka: While public service occupies a significant part of my life, political tenures are inherently temporary; the profound impact we create for future generations is what endures. My broader aspiration is to build a much more equitable society, particularly focusing on young people and tribal communities in underserved regions.

Education is incredibly close to my heart. Beyond my parliamentary duties, I ardently wish to strengthen regional educational institutions, promote digital learning, and foster a strong scientific temper in remote areas. I am also deeply committed to preserving and heavily promoting tribal heritage and indigenous knowledge systems regarding biodiversity and community living. Furthermore, I want to actively mentor young Indians, encouraging their participation in nation-building through entrepreneurship and innovation. Leveraging my background in technology, I aim to use digital governance to bridge deep socio-economic inequalities, ensuring tech serves as a powerful democratising tool. Ultimately, I want to leave behind strong

institutions and ideas that foster a just, inclusive, and compassionate society long after my political career.

Question: Today, many educated youngsters and professionals are hesitant to enter public life, often viewing politics with scepticism. Drawing from your own inspiring journey, what is your message to the next generation? Why is it crucial for educated youth to join politics to strengthen our Indian democracy?

Shri Saptagiri Sankar Ulaka: I strongly urge young professionals not to remain mere spectators. I was once in their position, enjoying a lucrative corporate career, but I realised that if highly capable, ethical people stay away, we cannot expect the quality of our public life to improve. Politics influences absolutely every aspect of our lives—our education, job markets, healthcare, and environment. If you stay away, vital decisions will still be made, but entirely without your expertise.

Despite the perception of conflict, politics is fundamentally about creatively solving complex societal problems. India's young demography inherently understands technology, rapid innovation, and environmental sustainability—precisely the modern skills our developing democracy desperately needs. Meaningful public service can begin in numerous ways: working with local communities, participating in Panchayat governance, or supporting social causes. True leadership is built through dedicated service,

not merely by acquiring titles. Educated youth bring a crucially important blend of high idealism and practical problem-solving. My own journey taught me that the greatest life satisfaction comes from contributing to something much larger than oneself. Democracy is not a spectator sport, and India's future depends entirely on the talented young men and women who bravely decide to step forward today.

Question: Unlike many accolades, the Sansad Ratna Award holds a unique distinction: it is an honour bestowed entirely by civil society, evaluating a parliamentarian's performance objectively and transparently. Knowing that this recognition comes directly from the citizens you serve, and carries forward the visionary ethos of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, what emotions run through your mind as you receive this award? How do you personally cherish this profound validation of your tireless dedication to the nation?

Shri Saptagiri Sankar Ulaka: Receiving the prestigious Sansad Ratna Award is both an immense honour and a deeply humbling responsibility. What makes this specific accolade uniquely meaningful is that it is strictly based on objective performance metrics and stems directly from civil society, beautifully reflecting the genuine faith of the people we serve.

Being closely associated with the monumental, visionary legacy of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam adds a profound significance to this honour. I accept it with immense gratitude on behalf of the wonderful people of Koraput, whose aspirations I carry every single day to Parliament, and on behalf of all the Honourable members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Rural Development and Panchayati Raj. I cherish this award not merely as a celebration of past achievements, but as a powerful, daily reminder to continue serving the nation with absolute sincerity, meticulous diligence, and an unwavering commitment to strengthening our great democracy.

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About This Book

The Journey of Sansad Ratnas 2026 (Volume 2) continues the proud legacy of documenting the exemplary lives of India's finest parliamentarians. This edition features the profoundly inspiring interviews of newly recognised Sansad Ratna awardees, capturing their relentless transitions from grassroots activism, corporate boardrooms, and medical theatres into the rigorous realm of national statecraft. Highlighting their extraordinary resilience, visionary policymaking, and deep-seated commitment to marginalised communities, this volume serves as a powerful historical record. It is crafted not merely to celebrate legislative excellence, but to actively inspire the next generation of youth to step forward and strengthen the democratic fabric of India.

About the Author



Adv. Priyadharshni Rahul is a distinguished Supreme Court Advocate, serving as Central Government Counsel and Assistant Standing Counsel for the NDMC and MCD. Holding dual degrees in Political Science and Law, alongside a master's in psychology, she is currently pursuing a PhD in Indian Parliamentary Democracy. An exceptional achiever from childhood, she was India's Youth Ambassador to the UK and received the Prime Minister's Award for leading the Tamil Nadu NCC in 2005. Currently the Editor-in-Chief of *PreSense* and President of the Prime Point Foundation. She is a prolific motivational speaker who has authored ten books. Her outstanding public service has earned her several awards, including the prestigious Dr Abdul Kalam International Award and recognition in the India Book of Records.