

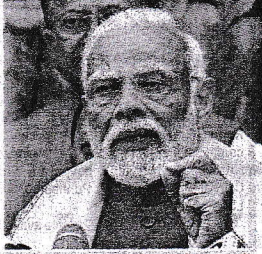
Govt will follow the poll year tradition of interim Budget: PM

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New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said that the government will "follow tradition" in the interim Budget. He simultaneously targeted the Opposition for "frequently disrupting" Parliamentary proceedings.

"Traditionally, when elections are imminent, the complete Budget is not presented. We will adhere to this tradition and present the full Budget after the formation of the new government. This time, the country's Finance Minister, Nirmalaji, will be presenting her budget tomorrow with some guiding points," Modi said in his customary remarks before the beginning of the last session of the 17th Lok Sabha while greeting media persons with 'Ram-Ram'.

Tradition says the government, going into the election, should refrain from making big policy announcements in the interim budget. However, there is no rules that bar the government from doing so. Normally, it is said that if there is a govern-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi

ment with a full majority, it has the confidence of the House, and the election has not been announced, then the government can use the interim budget to make policy announcements. The last two interim budgets have seen some big announcements, such as PM Kisan Samman Nidhi, a hike in the standard deduction and a cut in duty on automobiles and electronic items.

TARGETS OPPOSITION

The PM also targeted the Opposition MPs for frequently disrupting Parliamentary proceedings. "As they gather for the final session today, they should ponder over what they have

achieved in the last decade. If you ask 100 people in your parliamentary constituency, none will remember or even know the names of those who consistently created ruckus," he said.

"Despite the sharpness of the Opposition's voice and the severity of criticism, a significant portion of the public still remembers those who enriched the House with constructive ideas," he added.

Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha had suspended 146 MPs in the last session for their relentless disruption of proceedings over a host of issues. All of them will be participating in the Budget Session, but the government has cautioned that bringing placards into the chambers and causing disruptions in violation of rules may invite disciplinary action.

Expressing confidence about people's support for the ruling BJP-led NDA in the elections, he said, "I am of the firm belief that the country is moving forward and touching new heights of progress... the country is experiencing all-round and all-inclusive development. This journey will go on continuously with people's blessings."