

People of State, Ambassadors of Economic Revolution, says Chouhan

By Shivraj Singh Chouhan

INDIA witnessed a historic decision on November 8, 2016. This day has given a meaningful reply to the queries raised by the people at large on the style of functioning of governments. Often allegations are levelled against the governments that they cannot take tough decisions under pressure. They fear to take decisions that could harm powerful people.

Our Prime Minister has broken the myth with his courageous decision to demonetise Rs 500 and Rs 1000 currency notes from November 8, 2016.

The decision of demonetisation is historic in a way that it surprised everyone and this is the distinct feature of it. India had seen decision of demonetization twice in the history of 100 years but these decisions gave ample time to the people having black money in the form of

currency to change it. Thus the main objective of the decision was partially met. This time, however, the decision could not give any chance to people with black money plan.

Those criticising the decision say that the decision could be taken with better planning and people could be given ample time. It is beyond my comprehension as to whom these critics are referring to when they talk of giving time to people. Do they talk of the poor people whose monthly income is Rs. Five or Ten thousand and do not have currency notes of more than Rs. 5 or Rs. 40 at a time. Certainly, they do not talk of such people because such people having Rs. 5 or Rs. 10 notes got them changed timely and were relaxed. Then who are those about whom critics say time should have been given to them. It is obvious that a section of critics is favouring those who had black money in

the form of currency.

The decision of the Prime Minister for encouraging cashless transaction is a decision to transform the country from a developing nation to a developed nation. The critics should examine all the aspects before

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criticising such a decision. The Congress and other political parties say that the demonetization has wrought havoc on farmers and they could not sow in time. In Madhya Pradesh, this year already sowing has been done on 105 lakh hectare so far as compared to a total of 108 lakh hectare last year. The sowing will further go up to 115 lakh hectare. It is clear that sowing has not been affected.

The so-called critics of demonetization say that cashless transaction is not possible in our country. The fact is that after

demonetization, 95 percent transactions is cashless transaction being done by farmers, who are in their opinion illiterate. This is a lesson for them that a section about which there were little expectations could do 95 percent cashless transactions. This is true for all the developed nations are following this practice. If we want our economy to take off, we have to follow certain practices that have helped developed economies to succeed.

All of us accept that cashless transaction could improve the economy. Not a single economist in last one and half months has given logic that cashless transaction is not good for the economy. If we feel that something is good then we should come forward to make it successful instead of obstructing its success by criticizing it. Those who opine that cashless transaction is not possible in this country, are chal-

lenging the wisdom and capacities of the 120 crore people of the country without testing it. This is injustice to the people. The last two months have witnessed an impressive 77 percent increase through internet banking in the Central Bank of India in Madhya Pradesh alone. The sale through POS machines has gone up by 54 percent. Does this not indicate to positive results? The people of our country are more aware and capable than certain critics make them out to be.

Another benefit of cashless transaction is also very clearly perceptible. In December the VAT revenue has increased 1% whereas there was a fall in revenue from other taxes. This makes it amply clear that the tax collection has reduced in cashless transaction. This will improve tax collection and the state governments will be able

to spend more on welfare schemes. Imparting training to the masses in cashless transaction is need of the hour. We are making elaborate arrangements for this in Madhya Pradesh. In the days to come training programmes will be organized upto Panchayat level to educate and train the people in the use of various modes of cashless transaction.

The endeavour will be to ensure total financial inclusion by opening bank accounts of those poor families which have been left out under Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana.

About seven lakh new bank accounts have been opened and about five lakh new RuPay cards issued since November 10 last in the state. Madhya Pradesh government has exempted POS machines from VAT and the stamp duty payable on agreement with banks to help small

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and medium traders to install these machines. The state government has taken measures to ensure entire cashless government transaction. The different departments have evolved systems for online tax and duty payment. The state government is making the different payments online to the citizens. The state government is committed to promoting cashless economy.

I have always believed that the people are wise enough to know what is in their interest. They are fully aware that the Prime Minister's step of demonetization is a masterstroke against those indulging in amassing black money, anti-national activities and circulating counterfeit currency in the market. The people very well understand that this is step in the interest of the country and are extending wholehearted support to promoting cashless economy. This will definitely help India catch up with the most developed nations.

(Blogger to Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh)