

**Speech of Smt. Sonia Gandhi, Chairperson UPA
and Hon'ble Congress President at the
Dedication of National Capital Thermal Power Project,
Dadri, Stage-II, to the Nation, 9th September 2010**

Sushilkumar Shinde ji,
Bharatsinh Solanki ji,
Members of Parliament
Shri Uma Shankar,
Shri Arup Roy Choudhury,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my privilege to be here today to dedicate this prestigious power project to the nation. Stage II of the Dadri power station has been earmarked to supply power for the Commonwealth Games and it is a matter of great pride that it has been completed in a record 39 months. I congratulate all those who have contributed to the creation and completion of this project.

NTPC was born out of Indiraji's commitment in the mid-seventies to bring managerial and technological excellence into the power sector. Since then, it has emerged as a truly world-class company. I congratulate the entire NTPC family, both past and present, for the company's outstanding accomplishments. The commissioning of both the units of this project, well ahead of the schedule time, underlines your commitment to your work and responsibilities, and to provide electricity to the people of our country.

I am also happy to learn that NTPC is showing appropriate concern for the environment and that the Dadri plant showcases NTPC's commitment in this area. We definitely need to generate more power from different sources to meet the growing demands from our farmers, our factories and our people. Economic growth is built on greater electricity production and consumption. At the same time, we must protect the environment to ensure sustainable development. In whatever we do we must not forget that our lush forests and mountains, majestic rivers and all other water sources, and clean air have sustained and nurtured us for millennia. We have a responsibility to preserve them for the coming generations.

I would also like to say a few words on land acquisition. New industry and new infrastructure cannot be built without acquiring land. This is obvious. But land acquisition must be done in a manner that does not result in the loss of large tracts of fertile and productive agricultural lands so indispensable to cultivate food grains needed to feed out people. And if farmers are of necessity deprived of their land-based livelihood, they must be provided with adequate

compensation and alternative occupations. Some states like Haryana have progressive legislation in this regards. Other states would do well to emulate it.

Ours is one of the fastest growing economies in the world. Yet there is poverty, and essential services such as electricity have yet to reach all hamlets and homes. The majority of our population still lives in rural areas. It is our obligation to ensure that affordable electricity is provided to all the sections of our population. It is also evident that if we are to sustain our pace of economic growth and lift all our people out of poverty, the power sector has to lead the way.

Shri Shinde ji has just mentioned that his Ministry has taken up the challenging task of adding more than 62,000 MW during the 11th Plan, a goal that is no less than three times the capacity that was added during the 10th Plan. A good beginning has been made and we are on track to achieve this target. This is of the utmost importance because the Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana (RGGVY) has the ambitious goal of providing electricity to all our villages. Not just that – the supply of electricity has to be reliable and continuous.

Our future requirements necessitate that we pay much more attention to clean and renewable sources of energy. Now that Parliament has passed the Civil Nuclear Liability Bill, India is in a position to invest in nuclear power to help meet its growing needs. I understand that NTPC is gearing up to enter the field of nuclear energy. It is also taking steps to expand the utilization of wind and solar energy on a larger scale. This is a tribute to its culture of innovation and performance.

I once again take this opportunity to wish all of you the very best. I am confident that you will more than fulfill your duty to the nation and meet the high expectations that the country has of this crucial sector. With these words, I have the privilege of dedicating NTPC's Dadri Stage-II Power Project to the nation.

Thank You,

Jai Hind!