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Third Concept aims at providing a platform where a meaningful exchange of ideas can take place among the people of the Third World. The attempt will be to communicate, debate and disseminate information, ideas and alternatives for the resolution of the common problems facing humankind. We welcome contributions from academics, journalists and even from those who may never have published anything before. The only requirement is a concern for and desire to understand and take the issue of our time. Contributions may be descriptive, analytical or theoretical. They may be in the form of original articles, reactions to previous contributions, or even a comment on a prevailing situation. All contributions, neatly typed in double space, may be addressed to:

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Government of U-Turns

The BJP-led NDA government at the Centre has completed one year in office. The government came to power amid much fanfare and the tall promises made by its leadership had aroused huge expectations amongst the gullible masses. However, its inability to deliver on the promises led to the waning of the euphoria just only six months after its victory in national elections, especially when the BJP embarrassingly lost to Arvind Kejriwal's Aam Aadmi Party in state elections in Delhi. During its spell of one-year rule, the NDA government has taken almost U-turn on all major programmes initiated by the past UPA government by rechristening them with slight changes to make look them as of its own. The NDA government has cleared the proposal for FDI in retail, which was mooted by the previous UPA regime and vehemently opposed by the BJP at that juncture. The Modi government has also steered the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Bill, then mooted by UPA but was blocked by BJP-led states. The NDA government also takes credit for delivering Nuclear Power treaty, which was actually 'midwived' by the UPA.

The NDA government has not felt shy of taking credit for other initiatives like the decision to raise FDI in private insurance, the land swap treaty with Bangladesh, promise of increased allocation to MNREGA etc, which were, in fact, launched by UPA government. The NDA Prime Minister has visited to 18 countries in just one year thereby surpassing his UPA's predecessor's record of foreign visits in a year. However, little has been achieved in terms of this 'frenzied focus' on foreign visits. One opinion succinctly sums up this: "The dollar, as people are pointing out on twitter in a caustic reminder of another Modi jumla, is on an escalator and the Rupee is on ventilator. The GDP numbers, after some jugglery, haven't moved from wherever they were earlier.

Undoubtedly, the NDA government has deliberately changed the statistical base year for national income accounts to juggle with gross domestic product (GDP) numbers to project the GDP growth rate in better light; nonetheless, a different story on ground emerges from measures of industrial production, sentiment among business leaders and bank lending trends etc. The NDA government is backtracking on many issues that it had opposed earlier. A crisis of distress is already brewing up in agricultural sector and rural India for which the government seemingly has no immediate solution. Manufacturing and industrial growth is just not taking off. The most blatant U-turn has been the new Land Acquisition Ordinance that it has pushed through thrice after having supported the 2013 Bill. The expediency shown by the government in handing over real estate to foreign and domestic corporates for profit maximisation is driving the government's agenda at the expense of poor peasants and working class. An unprecedented accumulation of inventories has been reported by big corporate houses. There is sharp fall in employment. The relentless rise in the prices of all essential commodities and successive big hikes in the prices of fuel have proved instrumental in imposing severe hardships on the livelihood of poor people, especially in rural areas. A way is being paved for crony capitalism by opening up precious mineral resources for private profit along with ambitious targets of the privatisation of the public sector.

The popular schemes like Make in India, Digital India, Swachh Bharat, Jan Dhan Yojana etc have not recorded even incremental progress and have remained just seductive slogans. It has been reported that measures like slashing of social sector allocations on public health, delayed MNREGA payments, allowing the Food Security Act to remain comatose etc have not only disillusioned the masses, especially the poor, but have also made the middle-class feel short-charged. The promise to recover black money within 100 days was subsequently revealed to be mere jumla or electoral rhetoric. The frequent U-Turns taken by the NDA government have spurred one expert to observe that the NDA has, "given us another year of UPA. From Congress mukt (free) Bharat in 2014, we now have a Congress yukt (containing) government. Another expert laments that the NDA Prime Minister seems to be amending the saying of the French King Louis XV, "After me, the deluge, to be read as: "Before me, the void: After me, the deluge.

— BK