

## **In 2009 Urban India switched their allegiance and voted for Dr. Manmohan Singh: Baru**

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“One of the reasons for having written this book was to change the opinion about Dr. Manmohan Singh to first-time voters; in the backdrop of the ridiculing jokes across the media about the PM, prior to the elections” explained Dr. Sanjaya Baru speaking about his book “The Accidental Prime Minister – The Making and Unmaking of Manmohan Singh” during its release function held at The International Centre Goa, Dona Paula recently. “In the book I put forth to this generation that UPA I under Dr. Manmohan Singh's leadership, was not a disaster than what UPA II was” further explained Dr. Baru, media advisor and principal speech-writer to PM Dr. Manmohan Singh from 2004-08. Before Dr. Baru's remarks the book was released at the hands of Mr. Robin Gupta (IAS), former Financial Commissioner, Government of Punjab. The Marathi version translated by Ms. Leena Sohoni and published by Mehta Publications was also simultaneously released in the presence of its publisher Mr. Sunil Mehta and Director ICG, Ms. Nandini Sahai.

Mr. Gupta who chaired the function described the book as “a convincing recount and insider view of governmental functioning at the highest level, a deep insight on administrative decisions, a superb portrait of the Dr. Manmohan Singh era and an honest account of the failure and corruption that faced UPA I & II”. He said that in the book the author has tried to explain the dilemma about how PM Singh despite being a great economist and intellectual had led to failure.

“Dr. Manmohan Singh was nominated PM after the surprise election victory in 2004, he called himself “the accidental prime minister”; and in 2009, he explained why he was not” said Baru. He was the face for the election manifesto, urban India switched allegiance from Vajpayee and voted for Dr. Singh. In first 5 years UPA I delivered, but in 2014 disappointed by the second term of the UPA, the allegiance went back to the BJP”, Baru explained further. “The unmaking of Dr. Singh began on the day that UPA was elected back to power in 2009. The first fatal error was that Dr. Singh did not return from Lok Sabha. The UPA I was a success due to its ability to run a coalition government, thus the Congress proved the argument that it is with its allies and not dominated by a family. In UPA II, Sonia Gandhi wanted to engineer the transition from Dr. Singh to Rahul Gandhi. Despite all the confusion on the top, she intended to build Rahul's image without destroying Dr. Singh. But she failed miserably in doing so, as she never succeeded in building Rahul's image, but on the contrary succeeded in destroying Dr. Singh's” he added.

“In the book I have described why the PM's popularity went up in 2004 – 09 and the epilogue which is so controversial finally led to the sale of the book. In one day 5,000 books were sold across Delhi. This had set an all India for sale of a non-fiction book. The publishers soon realized they had a best-seller in their hands and printed more copies” Baru spoke about the record success of the much anticipated book.