


# Second Thoughts



Modi Sarkar commanded respect in Year Two but as an *ET Magazine-MavenMagnet* study of online conversations suggests, doubts have crept on multiple fronts

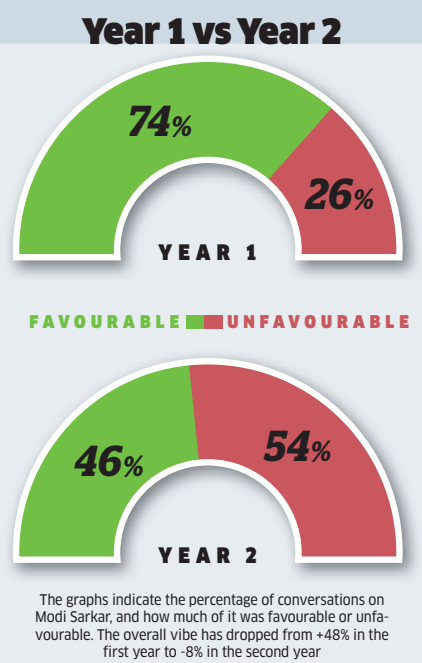
**:: Suman Layak**

Earlier in the year, a businessman from the West was meeting with the A-listers of Mumbai's business world, a dozen or so of the top industrialists. The visitor asked how many of those present thought the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government at the Centre led by prime minister Narendra Modi is doing a good job. Two hands went up. Then he asked how many thought it wasn't doing well. This time no one raised their hands. Clearly, the majority among the business people were happy sitting on the fence. Or, worse, they were unwilling to or were uneasy about expressing their opinion in public.

That spell of silence was broken pretty spectacularly earlier this week when Adi Godrej, chairman of the diversified Godrej Group, spoke out on how right-wing and electoral compulsions are hurting the economy. "Some of the things are affecting growth, for example, the ban on beef in some states. (This) is clearly affecting agriculture, affecting rural growth," Godrej told *The Indian Express*. "Prohibition is bad for the economy," added the face of the conglomerate that has a consumer products arm focused on rural growth, a meat joint venture with Tyson Foods of the US (not beef, though), and a retail venture that offers, among other products, wines, cold cuts, meats and cheese.

If Godrej is an exception in India Inc to say it as he sees it, on social media it is a totally different story, with opinions, outrage and comments just a tweet away. *ET Magazine* partnered with big data firm MavenMagnet – like it did a year ago – to gauge the online verdict on two years of the Modi government. MavenMagnet uses tools to trawl the internet, seeking out public conversations on social media, blogs and news sites, identifying triggers or topics that get people talking and then measuring the buzz around these triggers. This year the study has considered more than 15,000 conversations between June 1, 2015, and April 20, 2016, among more than 13,000 participants to come up with its findings. The conversations have been harvested looking around 10 triggers (see *Top 10 Triggers*).

The study reveals a clear shift in perception about the government in its second year. A year ago, the survey showed a 48% net positive buzz for the Modi government on its first anniversary. This year the buzz around the government has turned to an 8% net negative. The study shows that while 46% of the conversations included in the



survey this year had a positive buzz, the ones with negative buzz made up 54%. In 2015, this split between positive and negative was 74:26 (48% net positive).

Admiration for the prime minister's vision and penchant for hard work persists in the public imagination, but impatience at a lack of tangible proof of *achhe din* (good days) shows up strongly.

### Impatient for Results

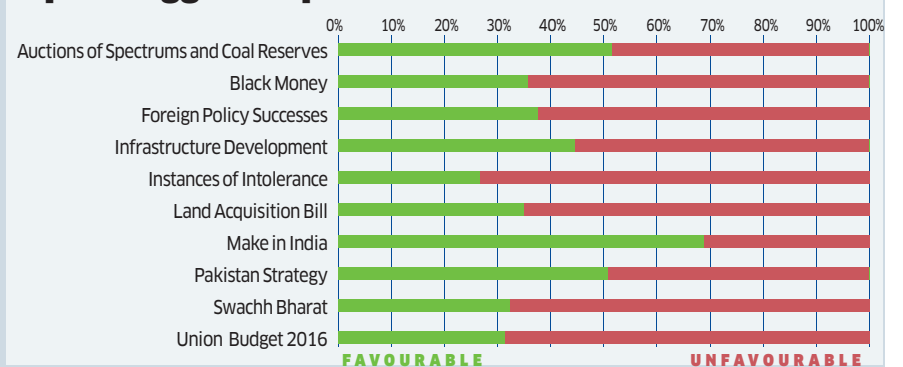
Industrialist Harsh Goenka, who believes Narendra Modi is the best thing that could happen to India at this point, hits the nail on the head when he says: "I believe *achhe din* is near. But a lot more has to be done in terms of execution to make it happen."

Ritu Ghuwalewala, managing partner of MavenMagnet, explains the shift by suggesting that after the huge build-up of expectation in 2015, the perception could travel only in one direction – down. "While the first year had a sense of euphoria all around, the second year was a reality check for the Modi government. The Indian public realised that there is no magic wand to fix the country's problems. This led to negativity around key parameters of trust, respect and hope (see *The Response to Modi Sarkar*).

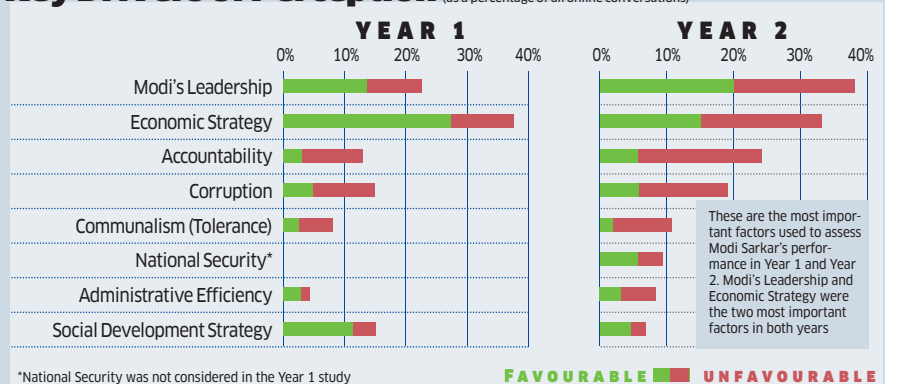
Among the 10 triggers, seven show a net negative vibe. Vibes are net negative when the number of conversations with negative vibes exceed those with a positive one.

Make in India and the auctions of spectrum and coal-mining rights have gathered

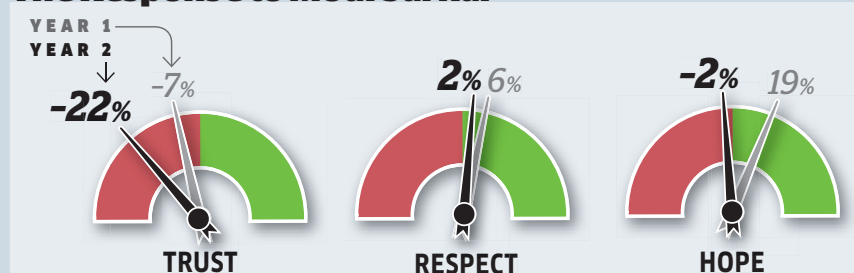
### Top 10 Triggers: Topics that Led to Online Buzz



### Key Drivers of Perception (as a percentage of all online conversations)



### The Response to Modi Sarkar



MavenMagnet Association Meter™ shows, on a scale of -100% to +100%, emotive association with the Modi Sarkar brand as reflected in the tone of online conversations. It plots emotions expressed in conversations by a person on the twin parameters of intensity and positivity. Each of the 13,000-plus participants is then assigned a dominant emotion. The net of the percentage of people with a positive association and those with a negative association determines the score for every emotion.

most of the positives vibes for the government. The biggest negative vibes have been noted around conversations on intolerance, which include issues like award *wapsi*, the JNU incident and the arrest of Kanhaiya Kumar, and the suicide of University of Hyderabad scholar Rohith Vemula. The vibes around the Union budget too are in the negative.

The Union budget gets brickbats for not doing enough for the middle class (who are at the heart of social media), a clear thumbs

down for the reluctance of finance minister Arun Jaitley to announce any income tax sops. It gets brownie points on financial inclusion and in helping the rural sector while it attracts negative buzz around inflation and taxation. The Swachh Bharat campaign and the related 0.5% cess levied on all taxable services suffer for promising the moon and delivering less.

The government does not fare well on corruption and accountability with negative buzz predominating these parameters.



Almost one-fifth of all conversations are on corruption (13% negative, 6% positive) and almost a fourth is on accountability (18% negative and 6% positive). While unfulfilled promises have hurt the government on accountability, it has not been able to shake off the concerns on crony capitalism, something the government says it has. Even economic strategy, the second highest discussed consideration factor (33%), had 18% conversations with negative buzz and 15% with a positive tone.

Harsh Neotia, president of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (Ficci) and chairman of the Ambuja Neotia Group, is impressed with the emphasis on infrastructure, roads and railways. He faults the government in two broad areas. Firstly, in not being able to create a more friendly tax regimen, which he sees as "adversarial and sometimes aggressive". Secondly, in ease of doing business where, Neotia says, India is still way behind even though the government is in the right direction.

Chandrajit Banerjee, director-general of industry lobby Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), says the government must do more to spur domestic demand. "In addition to reforms, government must augment capital expenditure on key projects in sectors like roads, railways, irrigation, power and other infrastructure sectors to provide a fillip to domestic demand."

**Modi Aura Intact**

The leadership ability of Narendra Modi still fires the imagination. Around 38% of all conversations (the highest among all consideration factors) touched upon the prime minister's leadership, with a little over half of these being of a positive nature. The PM also scores well on "vision" but takes a beating on the "authenticity" front. While he is praised for his ability to put in hard work, the perceived tendency to make promises on issues without having concrete deliverables in sight has come in for criticism.

Elimination of corruption has been one of the key thrusts of the government. Godrej told ET Magazine that he feels crony capitalism and corruption at high places have ebbed. The study, though, suggests a mixed record for Modi Sarkar on the corruption front: The positivity is led by initiatives to rein in black money and conduct auctions for coal and spectrum allocation; yet, the perception that key ministers are keen to promote the interests of industrialist "friends" mars the record on the corruption front.

For a quick look at the positive (in green), neutral or mixed (in orange) and negative (in red) online perceptions of Modi Sarkar, see the word cloud alongside.

UNFAVOURABLE FAVOURABLE SHARE IN TOTAL CONVERSATIONS



**Authenticity**  
Negative sentiments around Modi are primarily on account of scepticism around his authenticity and perceived image of focusing on publicity more than real action

**VERBATIM (FROM ONLINE DISCUSSIONS):** "Taking decisions more by impulse than sound reasoning. Actually he likes appeasing foreign countries... like when he conceded visa on arrival facility to the Chinese without getting anything concrete from them"

**Vision**  
Modi still garners respect for his vision and political acumen, especially around Make in India and Pakistan strategy

**VERBATIM:** "PM Modi is indeed a statesman. Whether anything materialises or not is a different issue, the fact is that he has courage and vision"



**Business Friendly**  
It's a bit of a mixed bag - there is positivity on account of Modi sarkar's focus on ease of doing business and infrastructure creation; the negativity is because of perceived proximity to certain industrialists

**VERBATIM:** "This (infrastructure development) will certainly advance the economic activities and thereby generate employment"  
"It (Make in India) means ache din for a certain section of people"

**FDI**  
Make in India and the resultant bump in FDI inflows have been recognised in conversations

**VERBATIM:** "He is working very hard to win more investments which can lead us to grow fast"

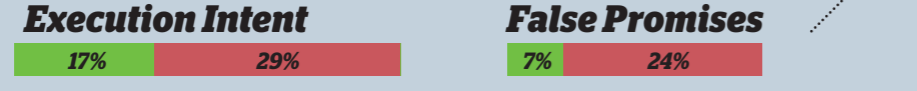


**Taxation**  
Middle class expressed its unhappiness online because of increased tax burden

**VERBATIM:** "Very sad about the Budget as it's all about paying tax for the common man and with no gain in place. Never expected this from a populous govt"  
"The only activity of the Government seems to be imposing tax on the people"  
"BJP has to change their mind on EPF taxation, otherwise salaried class people will suffer"

**Inflation**  
To add to the lack of respite on the tax front, a perception existed that inflation would increase because of coal and spectrum auctions

**VERBATIM:** "These spectrum auctions are not helping the common man. Eventually it's us who pay the price"  
"One more move to fleece the customers in the name of spectrum auctions"



**Execution Intent**  
Negativity dominated here because of the inability to push through reforms like land acquisition reforms

**VERBATIM:** "The Modi government has conceded defeat on the land bill. It is flogging a dead horse"  
"Smart City way to make political money. Make only 1 smart city. A new city. Showcase it. Then talk"

**False Promises**  
The inability to bring back black money as promised didn't go down too well

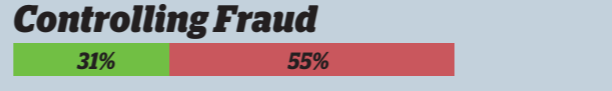
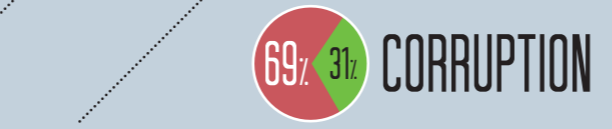
**VERBATIM:** "BJP govt hasn't done anything to prevent Black money going into the foreign bank accounts. Same BJP had promised to bring back all the money from foreign bank accounts and give it to poor people"

# TWO YEARS OF MODI SARKAR

India still believes in Modi's vision but is impatient about *achche din* not arriving. There is no magic wand in sight. And trust, respect and hope are eroding



COURTESY: MAVENMAGNET BRAND AURA



**Controlling Fraud**  
Scepticism around inappropriate use of funds for initiatives like infrastructure development drove negativity around corruption in the form of embezzlement/fraud; the positivity around corruption was courtesy of auctions of coal and spectrum

**VERBATIM:** "Smart city is not big shopping malls. But smart network and better facility. Corruption is part and parcel of this pet project"  
"Good step by Modi government. This will save lacs of crore of nation's assets from going in bribes to benefit individuals as it happened in UPA govt"

**Patronage**  
There is a perception that the government is keen to help its industrialist friends

**VERBATIM:** "Let BJP ruling states give away their land to industrialists... Other political parties are committed to the common man, so let them concentrate on social schemes"



**RSS Dominance**  
Shadow of Hindutva hovers over the government

**VERBATIM:** "Most of the politicians in BJP are RSS based so the govt will continue as RSS discipline"  
"Not only academics, they want to control each and every institution and saffronise it"

**Dalit**  
Rohith Vemula's suicide drove negativity around perceived anti-Dalit attitude of Modi Sarkar

**VERBATIM:** "I am a dalit and I promise, me and my cohorts will never forgive BJP..."  
"Modi Sarkar is Anti Dalit and Anti People Sarkar. If Modi is Really Pained by Death of Rohith, he should Sack his Favourite Smriti Irani and Bandaru Dattatreya"

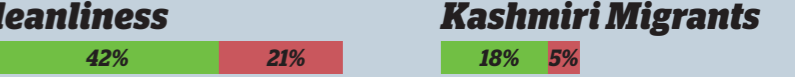
**Methodology**

MavenMagnet is a Mumbai- and New York-based big data research agency that uses digital conversations to uncover consumer and market insights across a cross-section of demographic and psychographic segments. MavenMagnet's Conversational Research™ methodology aggregates and analyses data from a wide range of sources: social networks such as Facebook and Twitter as well as communities, forums, blogs, chat rooms, press/ comments, etc.

MavenMagnet identified the most impactful initiatives by the Modi government that created a buzz during the second year. It analysed over 15,800 conversations among over 13,200 individuals from June 1, 2015, to April 20, 2016

It found top 10 Consideration Factors, like "Leadership" and "Economic Strategy", which ran across online conversations. Under each such theme are specific issues like "Authenticity" and "Vision" and their share of conversations as well. The bars indicate positive (green) and negative (red) share of conversations within each theme.

Numbers in brackets are percentage of total conversations pertaining to a particular topic. Numbers in green are percentage of favourable conversations; numbers in red are percentage of unfavourable conversations. In the word cloud, the bigger the size of the word, the higher the impact. Words in green indicate positive perceptions, orange suggests a neutral or mixed outlook and red indicates negativity.



**Cleanliness**  
The positive buzz around social development strategy was largely driven by Swachh Bharat

**VERBATIM:** "Such a basic measure and no one had ever done it in India! Glad we have a PM who is at least making this a topic of discussion!"

**Kashmiri Migrants**  
A ₹2,000 crore package for Kashmiri migrants was okayed by the Union cabinet in November 2015

**VERBATIM:** "This was much needed (funds). For the first time any Govt cared for the Kashmiri Hindu community displaced from their homeland"



**Speed of Action**  
Initiatives like single window system for investors to get all clearances got a thumbs up

**VERBATIM:** "Excellent job by the current govt., all decisions are taken swift and fast, single window system I believe is adapted to clear all projects by different ministries involved to clear the projects"

**Meritocracy**  
Perceived inappropriate comments by BJP leaders like Smriti Irani and Hema Malini during instances of intolerance drove negativity around meritocracy

**VERBATIM:** "Smriti Irani, Bandaru Dattatreya and University VC Should be Arrested for the Murder of Dalit Student Rohit and Tried under the Atrocities on SC/ST Act"



**Foreign Policy**  
NaMo's stand on Pakistan - especially his Islamabad visit - gave a positive tilt to conversations around national security

**VERBATIM:** "Well done PM Sir. Get going with your plans and take our country to peace and prosperity"