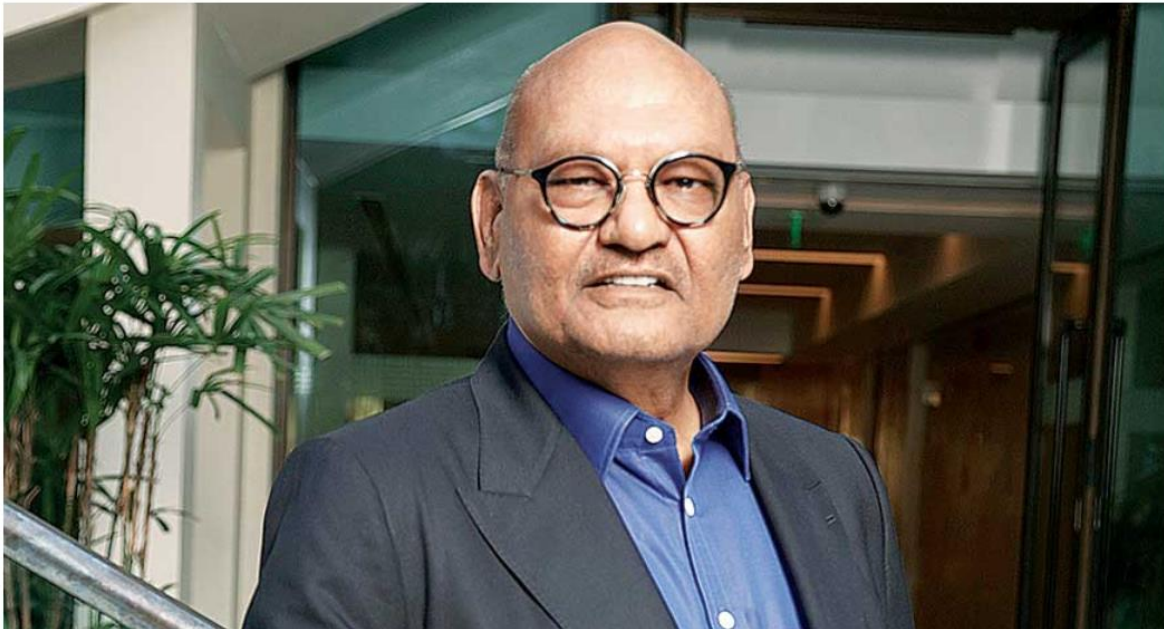


## Corporate Never Expresses Its Concern: Anil Agarwal

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Anil Agarwal, Executive Chairman, Vedanta Resources on politics and policies



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by Suman K Jha

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### On the upcoming general elections

No matter what happens, the poor will benefit. The writing is on the wall. My dream has been to eradicate poverty. Of roti, kapda and makan, I am sure that roti and kapda will certainly happen. Makan will follow in due course.

### On the crucial issues in this election

There is tremendous potential in India and India's march will be unparalleled. At the same time, I am concerned about some things. For instance, India has been made a dumping ground. We have to stop the import of at least half of the quantity of oil that we import and half of the quantity of gold that we import.

### **On single party rule versus coalition government**

Everybody likes a single party government. But, then, it doesn't mean that coalitions have not delivered. We have seen the P.V. Narasimha Rao government and Atal Bihari Vajpayee government and their accomplishments. There were path-breaking reforms during their times.

### **On corporate India's concerns in this elections**

This is the fundamental problem that I have seen in India that the corporate never expresses its concern. They choose to wait and watch. Once the mandate is given, they then accordingly develop their strategies. They decide how progressive the government is and decide on their investments. In case the wind is blowing against them, they hold on accordingly. But they don't raise concerns!

### **On government-business interface**

In a democratic country, the government never runs the business. Take, for instance, in the US or Europe, the government doesn't take part in the business. In socialist countries such as China and Russia, they run businesses. But in a democratic country, regulators should be important. In India, all government companies should be made autonomous.

### **On India witnessing an era of jobless growth**

At the moment the growth in jobs is not there the way it should be, but I definitely see it picking up after the elections. The whole world is watching India as it is the fastest growing economy in the world. Also, the whole discourse on jobs must undergo a change. Today when we talk of jobs, we talk of skilling, reskilling, engineering, AI and so on.

I wish to flag off another important point in this debate – that of liberal arts. Let us vigorously promote liberal arts as 30 per cent of total jobs can come from this stream. We have to encourage professions like painting, music, acrobatics, and so on.

### **On Modi versus Manmohan years**

If we compare both, one was talking and doing the work, and the other was silent and doing the work.

### **On the high points of Modi years**

Everybody knows the Insolvency Code has been one of the highlights. This government has empowered the States to make decisions. Even GST is one of the highlights of the Modi period. If Modi comes back to power, we will see what it does in the coming years.

**On the low points of Modi years**

Every government has certain minuses. Some say they didn't encourage the industry enough.

**On whether Corporate India should speak out more often**

Absolutely! They are the drivers of the economy. They should speak out more often. And the public sector too. The public sector is the backbone of India. And the public sector banks too in India are phenomenal. It is time they are made autonomous. Once you give them power, they can do wonders.

**On the allegations of data fudging in the Modi regime**

I have heard that data is sometimes manipulated. In the coming times, however, I think it will be difficult to do so.

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