

English rendering of Mann Ki Baat address by PM on All India Radio, 30 April 2017

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My dearest countrymen namaskar. Before each episode of 'Mann Ki Baat', 'suggestions pour in Aakashvani, on NarendraModiApp, come through on MyGov, by the phone and come by the means of recorded messages from every corner of the country and people of every age group, And sometimes when I take the time to view them, for me it becomes an extremely pleasant experience.

One comes across such a wide spectrum of information, one finds that every corner of the country is filled with talented people. Like a selfless seeker, these countless people are consumed by desire to contribute something to the society, on the other hand there are mounds of problems that perhaps even the government does not notice! Maybe the system has also become accustomed in dealing with these problems, and so do have the people become accustomed to them. I have come across the inquisitiveness of children, the ambitions of the youth, and the gist of the experience of elders! Myriad kind of facts emerges. Every time the inputs that come in response to every episode of 'Mann Ki Baat', are analyzed in detail by the government.

What are the kinds of suggestions, what are the kinds of complaints and what are the experiences of the people? It is an inherent human nature to advise others. While travelling in the train or the bus if someone coughs, the next person immediately advises a cure. To offer advice or suggest a solution, are part of our nature. In the beginning, when suggestions came in response to a certain episode of 'Mann Ki Baat', one could discern words of advice, and you could read them too, so our team always felt that many people might have had this particular habit of proffering advice. But when we analyzed the suggestions minutely, I really became quite emotional.

Most of those who give suggestions or try to reach to me are those who are really doing something in their lives. They are making efforts and are engrossed as per their intellect, capacity, ability and circumstances so that something good must happen. And when these things came to my notice I felt that these suggestions are extraordinary. These are suggestions that have emerged out of a certain squeeze of life's experiences. Some people also give suggestions thinking that if an idea has the potential to work then more people would listen to it if it is heard on a wider platform and hence many people can benefit. And therefore it is their natural desire that it gets a mention in 'Mann Ki Baat'

According to me all of these things are extremely positive steps. First of all, I express my gratitude to the Karma yogis and those people who have offered some or the other service to the society and recommend maximum suggestions. And not only this, when I mention something positive, such memories come to recall, it is very much a pleasant experience. In the previous 'Mann Ki Baat', some people had suggested to me that food was being wasted; not only had I expressed my concern but mentioned it too. And upon my mention, there were mentions of many innovative ideas to save food from being wasted that are being put into practice employed in many corners of the country on NarendraModiApp and also on MyGov.

I had never even imagined that in our country especially the young generation has been doing this kind of work from a long time. Some social institutions have been involved in this activity for many years was common knowledge, but the youth of my country are engaged in this task, I only came to know later. Many have sent me the videos of their work in this field. There are many places where 'Roti Banks' are operating. In the Roti Banks, the leftover rotis are deposited by people, they also deposit the leftover vegetables and the needy can obtain food from these banks. The person who donates rotis feels a sense of satisfaction also, the recipient also does not feel humiliated. These are examples of how work can be achieved with the help of society.

Today is the last day of month of April. 1st May is the foundation day of the states of Gujarat and Maharashtra. On this occasion, many felicitations to the citizens of these two states on my behalf. Both states have made constant strides to scale newer heights of development and have contributed toward the advancement of the country. And both the states had a steady stream of great men whose lives and sterling contributions in every sphere of society is a source of inspiration for us.. In remembrance of these great men, on the foundation day of these two states, we should take the pledge of taking our state, our country, our society, our city, and our family to glorious heights in 2022, when we celebrate 75 years of independence.

Plans should be drawn to achieve that pledge and taken forward with the cooperation of all citizens. I wish the very best to these two states.

There used to be a time when climate change was a subject confined to the domain of the academic world, it used to be the topic for seminars, but today,

we experience it in our everyday life and it also astounds us. Nature has also changed the rules of the game. The heat that we used to experience in months of May-June in our country is being felt in March-April this year. So, when I was taking suggestions for 'Mann Ki Baat', most of the suggestions offered related to what should be done to beat the heat during summer time. Most of the suggestions or practices to beat summer are not new but are prevalent for a long time, however it is very useful to remember them from time to time.

Shri Prashant Kumar Mishra, Shri T. S. Kartik and many such friends have expressed their concern about birds during the summer. They've mentioned that water should be kept in trays and utensils on the balcony and on the terrace. I have seen that small children of the family do this very enthusiastically. Once they understand why they should fill the pots with water they would go and inspect 10 times in a day to ensure there is water in the tray. And also watch if the birds came or not. We think as if it is a game going on, but in actuality, this is a novel way of instilling empathy in the child's mind. You can also experience for yourself that a little attachment to an animal or a bird makes you feel very happy.

Some time back, Shri Mr. Jagat Bhai from Gujarat, had sent his book, 'Save the Sparrows' in which he not only expressed concern about the continuously declining number of sparrows, but also what steps he has taken in a mission mode for the conservation of the sparrow which is very nicely described in that book. In our country, we are traditionally imbued with a sense of symbiotic co-existence with animals, birds and nature yet it is necessary that collective efforts in this regard should be emphasized.

When I was Chief Minister of Gujarat, Syedna Sahib the religious leader of Dawoodi Bohra Community had completed his hundred years. He lived till 103 years. As part of the celebration of his 100th year the Bohra community society had launched a huge campaign to save the sparrow under the aegis of Burhani Foundation. I had the opportunity to inaugurate it. Nearly 52 thousand bird feeders were distributed in every nook and corner of the world. This effort also found a mention in the Guinness book of World Records.

Sometimes we are so busy, that we even forget to offer water to the newspaper boy, the milkman, the vegetable seller, the postman or anybody else who come to our house in peak summer days.

Young friends, I want to have a chat with you too. I am sometimes worried that much of our younger generation prefer leading life in their comfort zones. Parents also raise their children in a very protective manner. True there are other extremes also but most are brought up in this comfort zone syndrome. Now the examinations have ended and you must be done with your plans to enjoy the vacation.

Summer vacations feel good inspite of scorching heat. But as a friend, I want to suggest you certain tips about how to utilize your vacation. I believe some people will put them to use and they will tell me about that too. Would you like to use this time of vacation gainfully, I offer three suggestions, it will be good if you follow all of the three but then try to do atleast one of the three. See that you gain a new experience. Try to take the opportunity of acquiring a new skill. Try to experience something that you have neither heard before, nor seen, nor thought of and yet there is a curiosity in your mind. You must try new places, new experiences and new skills.

There is huge difference between to sometime to see something on television or reading about it in the book or listening about it from acquaintances and to experiencing the same thing yourself. I will urge you to try to experience and satiate your curiosity on any subject during this vacation. Try a new experiment. The experiment must be positive and a little out of your comfort zone. We all belong to the middle class and happy comfortable families. Friends have you ever thought of travelling in a Second Class railway Compartment without a reservation, and going for atleast a 24 hours ride?

What great experience it will be? How are the lives of your co-passengers, what do they do at the station when they alight from the train? What you cannot learn in a year, you will learn in that crowded train travelling without any reservation for 24 hours! You might not get to sleep and have to travel standing. Try it, just experience it once, I am not asking you to try it again and again, do it once. In the evening, take your football or your volleyball or any other sports item and go to a colony of poor and lesser privileged people. Play with those poor kids, you will experience a new kind of joy, the kind you would have never experienced in your life before-that's the kind of joy you'll experience!

Have you ever thought what changes would come in the lives of those kids who live in abject poverty when get the opportunity to play with you. And I believe that if you go there once, your heart will tell you to go back again and again. This experience will teach you a lot. Many volunteer organizations are engaged in this kind of work. You are connected to Google Guru, try searching on it and get associated with any such organization for 15 days or 20 days. Go, explore, go to the jungles. Sometimes there are summer camps, for development of different facets of your personality. You can participate in these camps.

But at the same time, don't you feel that after you've attended such summer camps, you have participated in the courses for development of personality and you reach out to those people who have no such opportunity and teach them what you have learned without taking any money. It is possible that you can teach them. I am also worried that technology evolved to reduce the distance, technology came in to being to end the boundaries. But the end result of this is that six people in the same house are sitting in the same room but they are separated by unimaginable distances! Why? Everyone has become so busy with technology in his or her own way. Collectivity is also a way of life, collectivity is power in itself. Secondly I had mentioned about skill acquisition, don't you feel that you should learn something new!

Today is the era of competition. You get so submerged in the preparation for the examinations, get so consumed to obtain the best grades, there are coaching classes going on even in vacations and you're worrying about the next exam! Sometimes you feel scared that our youth have become robot like, living life like a machine.

Friends, dreams of making it big in life is a good thing, it is good to have some purpose in life, and you must achieve your goals. But also self-evaluate whether the human element within yourself is getting frustrated, are we not moving away from our human qualities.

Can't a little emphasis be given on this aspect in Skill development? Get away from technology, and try to spend some time with yourself. Learn a musical instrument or learn a few sentences of a new language, Tamil, Telugu, Assamese, Bengali, Malayalam, Gujarati, Marathi or Punjabi. This is a country full of diversity and if you look, then there can be someone who can teach us something new is just around the corner. If you don't know how to swim, then learn swimming, try doing some drawing, even if you do not end up making the best drawing, try to practice putting hand to the paper!

The empathy within you will begin to appear. Sometimes if our heart desires to learn the trade of so called 'small people' then let us learn it, why not? You want to learn to drive a car but then do you ever want to learn how to drive an auto-rickshaw? You're able to ride a bicycle but have you ever tried to operate the three-wheeler cycle or rickshaw which transports people? You see, all these new experiments, these skills are such that they will bring you joy and will remove you from the limitations of life to which you're tied down!

Do something out of the box, my Friends. This is the only time to make something of your life. And if you think that after appearing in all exams, at a new threshold of your career you will learn some new skill, then you won't get a chance. At that time you will be tangled into other things and therefore I tell you if you have a passion to learn magic then learn the card tricks! Keep showing the tricks to your friends. Try to know about things about which you have no prior knowledge, it will definitely benefit you. Your inner human potential will awaken and this will provide a great opportunity for development. I can tell you from my experience of going around the world, that the amount we can learn by seeing the world is something we cannot even imagine. New places, new cities, new towns, new villages, new areas. But before leaving for a particular place, preparing for the journey and upon reaching your destination gathering information about it like a seeker of knowledge, understanding about the place and having discussions with the local people, if you make an effort in this manner then the pleasure of visiting the particular place would be something else!

Do try to do it; of course do not travel too much in one go. Go to a destination and spend three to four days there. Then go to the next and spend a like duration there. You will get to learn a lot that way. I wish you share your travel photographs with me, it will be nice. What new did you see ! Where did you travel to ! Make good use of the hash tag Incredible India and share your experiences.

Friends, this time around, the government of India has provided you with a great opportunity. The new generation is more or less freeing itself from the shackles of cash. It does not need cash. It has begun adopting digital currency. I know you do it, but have you ever wondered that you can earn using this very scheme? It is a scheme of the Government of India. You must be downloading the BHIM App and using it. But do refer it to others; make others join you in that.

If the new member does three transactions, performs financial business thrice, you stand to earn ten rupees for that. Ten rupees will be credited to your account from the government. If you involve twenty persons in a day, by evening, you would've earned two hundred rupees. The traders can earn, so can students. And this scheme is valid till the 14th of October. It will be your contribution towards making of a digital India. You'll become a sentinel of New India. The joy of a vacation coupled with income ! Refer and earn.

Generally speaking, in our country there exists an atmosphere of disdain towards the VIP culture. But that it runs so very deep, I just experienced, when the government recently decided that no person in India, whatsoever his status might be, will not move with a red beacon atop his vehicle. In a way it had become a symbol of the VIP culture. Experience tells us that whereas the red beacon used to be fixed atop the vehicle, atop the car, slowly & steadily it permeated into the psyche and got firmly entrenched in the mindset. The red beacon now has gone for good but nobody can say with certainty that the same in the mindset has also disappeared. I have received a very interesting phone call. Though the caller has expressed the same apprehension. One can discern from this phone call that common men detest these tendencies. They feel distanced.

"Namaskar Pradhan Mantri ji, I am Shivaa Choubey calling from Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh. I wish to say something on the government's ban on red beacons. I read a line in a newspaper, 'Every Indian is a VIP on the road'. It made me feel very proud. I am glad that today, even my time is equally important. I don't have to be caught in a traffic jam and I don't have to stop for anyone as well. I want to thank you from the core of my heart for this decision. And the Swachh Bharat Campaign that you have launched will not only clean our country, it will get rid of the VIP hegemony from our roads. Many thanks for that."

The exit of the red beacon through a government decision is part of a system. But we have to make efforts to cleanse it out of our minds. If we collectively strive to do it with eternal vigilance , it surely can be flushed out. Our concept of New India precisely is that in place of VIP, more priority should be accorded to EPI. And when I'm saying EPI in place of VIP, the essence of my sentiment is clear – every person is important. Every person has his or her own importance, every person possesses a sagacious aura, Mahaatmya, in a unique manner. Let us warmly accept the importance of a hundred & twenty five crore countrymen, let us respectfully embrace the Mahaatmya, the divine greatness of a hundred & twenty five crore Indians and we'll garner strength of immense magnitude. We have to do this together.

My dear countrymen, I maintain time & again that we should keep re - visiting the annals of our history, traditions and culture. That lends us energy and inspiration. This year, we the hundred & twenty five crore countrymen are celebrating the thousandth birth anniversary of Saint Ramanujacharya. For one reason or the other, we confine ourselves to celebrating and observing centenaries of events mostly. For other countries of the world, a century may be of immense significance. But India is such an ancient Nation that we are the proud inheritors of thousands and thousands of years of heritage, knowledge and civilized existence and have an opportunity to observe and celebrate a memorial heritage of over thousand years. Just try and imagine it. Even today breaking the shackles Social orthodoxy is so difficult. How would society be a thousand years ago? What kind of a mindset would be prevalent then? Not many would know that Ramanujacharya relentlessly struggled against rampant social evils such as the class divide, the chasm between touchable and untouchables and the caste system. Through his own conduct, he embraced those who were ostracized by society. A thousand years ago, he launched an agitation allowing their entry into temples and succeeded in facilitating the same. We are indeed fortunate that in every era, for eradicating social evils, noble souls, great men were born in this society itself. Now that we are celebrating the 1000th birth anniversary of Ramanujacharya, we should gain inspiration from him in our endeavour to foster social unity, to bolster the adage 'unity is strength'.

In memory of Saint Ramanujacharya, the government of India is releasing a stamp tomorrow, the 1st of May. I respectfully salute Saint Ramanujacharya and pay tributes to him.

My dear countrymen, tomorrow, that is the 1st of May, carries one more significance. In many parts of the world, it is observed as 'Labour Day'. And when 'Labour Day' is referred to, labour is discussed, labourers are discussed, it is but natural for me to remember Babasaheb Ambedkar. You would be aware that for the facilities and respect that workers have earned, we are grateful to Babasaheb. One can never forget the contribution of Babasaheb towards the welfare of the working class. Today when I refer to Babasaheb, when I talk about Ramanujacharya, I'm also reminded of the great 12th century saint & social reformer from Karnataka Jagat Guru Basaveshwar. Yesterday I got the opportunity to be part of a function. It was the occasion of dedication to the nation of his collection of Vachana Amrit, the elixir of his spoken words. In the 12th century, he had laid down his profound thoughts on labour & workers. He had mentioned in Kannada "Kaay Kave Kailas"... it means, it is just through your perseverance that you can obtain Kailash, the abode of Shiva. This means, it is only endeavour or Karma that leads you to attain Swarga, or heaven. In other words, labour, hard work is Shiva. I repeatedly mention 'Shrameva Jayate', and Dignity of Labour. I distinctly remember the words of Shriman Dattopant Thengdi, the founder of Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh, the thinker, who deliberated a lot on the working class. He used to remark, on the one hand, inspired by Maoism, 'Workers of the world unite', on the other he would say, workers, come, unite the world. Today when I refer to workers, it is but natural to remember Dattopant Thengdi.

My dear countrymen, a few days from now, we shall celebrate Budha Purnima. Followers of Lord Budha across the world celebrate the festival. The world today is undergoing a plethora of problems such as violence, war, annihilation, the arms race et al. Amidst this atmosphere, the philosophy of Buddha comes across as extremely relevant. And in India, Ashok's life perfectly epitomizes the transformation from war to enlightenment. I feel fortunate that the occasion of the great festival of Budha Purnima is celebrated as Vesak day by the United Nations. This year it will take place in Sri Lanka. On this holy event I shall get an opportunity to pay tributes to Lord Budha in Sri Lanka. It will be an opportune moment to re-visit his ideals.

My dear countrymen, India has always advanced on the path of progress in the spirit of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas... inclusive development for all. And when we say Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, it is not limited to the confines of India. It applies to the global context too. And very specially to our neighbouring countries. May our neighbouring countries be with us in our journey, may they develop equally. There are many projects under way. On the 5th of May, India will launch the South Asia Satellite. The capacities of this satellite and the facilities it provides will go a long way in addressing South Asia's economic and developmental priorities. Natural resources mapping, tele medicine, the field of education, deeper IT connectivity or fostering people to people contact - this satellite will prove to be a boon in the progress of the entire region. It is an important step by India to enhance co-operation with the entire South Asia... it is an invaluable gift. This is an appropriate example of our commitment towards South Asia. I welcome all the South Asian countries who have joined us on the South Asia Satellite in this momentous endeavour.... My best wishes to them.

My dear countrymen, the weather is too hot and inhospitable , take care of your loved ones and take care of yourselves.

Wish you all the best.

Thank you

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