



English Rendering of PM's speech at the inauguration of Dhola-Sadiya Bridge across River Brahmaputra on 26 May, 2017

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Finally the opportune day has arrived, and several years of your wait are over! Presenting to you the *Dalong* of your dreams! Today, as we come together to unveil the most awaited infrastructure, I request you all to share your happiness with everyone by brandish the flashlights of your mobile phones to signal to the nation about this momentous occasion. All of you here must show your happiness by flaunting this achievement through the flash of your mobile phones. Wonderful! Everyone-from all corners! Let's see your gleam! Show us what a great celebration this is!

What a sight to behold! Superb! *Dalong* is glowing! Yes, there! The audience at the rear too! Indeed a fantastic occasion! You all are the showstoppers! All the cameras are vying to capture your jubilant faces! I am truly grateful to all of you! Dear ladies and gentlemen, it is indeed a privilege that I was ordained to be here today at such a pious place, the erstwhile *Kundilnagar*, which has been blessed by the visit of *Dwarkadheesh* Lord Shri Krishna himself. I was born in Gujarat, which is home to the pilgrimage for Lord Krishna's devotees- the *Dwarika ji*. Lord Krishna's steps have blessed *Dalong*, and hence, I feel fortunate to visit this place of such historical legacy. Today, I feel elated to gift to you the bridge for which you all had been waiting for the last five decades. Had Shri Atal Ji's government been re-elected in 2004, I believe this bridge would have been serving you all since last 10 years for sure. Our MLA Shri Jagdish Bhojan had requested for this game changing bridge on 29 May, 2003. Atal Ji's government was immediately entrusted with the task of preparing a feasibility report. It was taken up with fire fighting spirit. Had the work been initiated promptly then, this bridge would have seen the light of the day a decade back. Sadly then, an unwarranted change in the ruling government caused several hiccups in the planning of the project which abortively put a halt on your dream of having this bridge in *Dalong*. But, for the past three years, the current government is fully dedicated to actuate Atal Ji's dreams of a developed nation. We left no stone unturned, and here we are today commissioning the *Dhola-Sadiya* Bridge to commemorate the first anniversary of BJP Government in Assam. Under the proactive leadership of Mr. Sarbanand Ji, it is heartening to see, that the state is getting rid of so many problems. On this occasion dedication of country's longest bridge, which is built in the faraway north-eastern state of Assam, to the nation, is a moment of extreme pride and jubilation, not only for the people of Assam, but for the entire country.

It is an unwavering truth that for sustained and enduring development, right infrastructure is the prime catalyst. Physical and social infrastructure put together lead to a balanced growth. If we do not give optimum value to infrastructure, then the result of our random efforts will only be rendered trivial and will not lead to a lasting impact and growth. It is therefore pertinent that our government should plan development in a phased manner to maintain the momentum of growth. We are committed to creating an ecosystem which facilitates the fulfilment of the nations' aspirations. This *Dhola Sadiya* Bridge has brought the states of Arunachal Pradesh and Assam closer by 165 kilometers. This amounts to an evincive saving of 6-7 hours of travel time by a native of these states.

No sooner than we have imagined, this high quality ginger produced at Sadiya will capture the larger markets. This bridge shall undoubtedly open up all the opportunities to the ginger farmers to enhance their revenues. I also envision that in the near future the high quality Sadiya variety of ginger is sure to become a brand to reckon with at the global market if the farmers here embrace organic farming methods. It has all the potential then to become one of the significant players in the world market. This bridge will not only save money and time of the farmers, but it will also open the golden gate towards economic revolution for these states. Such a commendable infrastructure development is the pride of every Indian, and all eyes are glued to see *Sadiya* becoming the base of economic stability for North-eastern states.

Dear brothers and sisters, This Bridge is fostering the development of Arunachal Pradesh and Assam. The world is waiting to witness how North Eastern states of India have the potential to take the country to higher levels of development and growth. North East is India! Our government has laid a lot of emphasis on developing North East through its present schemes; such schemes which will strengthen all the north-eastern states and bring them into the mainstream by putting certain systems in place. Even a small infrastructure development can catapult these states to magical advancements. Such is the potential of our North East. The government, in all its forthcoming agenda of nation building, has directed its vision towards growth of the northeast to phenomenal heights.

Come to think of it! This bridge is fostering a gross saving of up to Rs. 10 lakhs daily for the citizens of this region by mere reduction in the diesel consumption. Surely, time is money but the reduced expenses on diesel mean more money in households. Earlier, we were commuting on ferries. Often due to fortuitous weather, the ferry services had to be discontinued. With Brahmaputra in deluge, of course ferry services are bound to be discontinued. But with the construction of this bridge we can now boast of having 24x7 and 365 days of uninterrupted transportation support notwithstanding any natural calamity. We are fortunate that this bridge has seen the light of the day to bind the eight states and make it a part of the mainstream. Nitinji rightly said that the construction of this bridge reinstates the importance of a robust transport infrastructure. Our government is now focussing on providing state of the art roadways, bridges, railways, air transportation along with preponderance on waterways.

Though it may seem a highly ambitious mission as of now, but it would certainly be pertinent to shift our focus towards expanding waterway networks to capitalise on natural resources like rivers of the regions. Also, at the same time this will provide a highly cost effective and time efficient sustainable green solution for the states. This region alongside the river Brahmaputra is developing with a great momentum due to the multi crores of investments in transport infrastructure. In the days to come, this region will boast of the most advanced waterways transport technology. One can only envisage the magnitude of development that north eastern states are preparing for.

Dear brothers and sisters,

Our government is making concerted efforts to bring the North Eastern states into the mainstream by investing massively in infrastructure development in all sectors; be it electricity, optical fiber network, roads or railways. We ensured the release of Priority funding from government coffers for expeditious implementation of socio-economic development projects which had been languorously left utilised for almost two decades.

Under the visionary "Act East Policy", if we are able to develop NER as a prototype of world class economic trade centre, it is anyone's guess that this region of India has all the potential to play a pivotal role in driving the South East Asian economy. Therefore, we are keenly working on developing such facilities that will make India the hub for economic and business activities in South East Asia region. The nation will soon witness the results of the efforts made in this direction.

Brothers and sisters,

The central government has realised the importance of the railway infrastructure development in NER which was due to this region for the last 50 years of independence. Right endeavours are being initiated by the government so as to provide these states with a secure transport system. A vibrant tourism industry can also contribute phenomenally to the revenue of these states. Very little is known to public about the surreal landscapes of north east which boasts of locales like the pristine temple of Mother Kamakhya or the ethereal vista of Kohima. The government conjectures strengthening of economy in

the wake of escalating footfall of tourists from other parts of the country to this region. State tourism is bound to flourish due to the abundance of serene natural landscapes of NER. Coupled with advanced development of tourism infrastructure it will add to the wanderlust of national as well as international travellers.

Brothers and sisters,

On this auspicious day, when I commission this valuable bridge to the nation, it is known to you all as *Dhola Sadiya, Dalong*. On this august occasion, it gives me immense pleasure to convey to you that our government has decided to dedicate the bridge to the son of this soil whose sonorous voice has been inspiring us till today. It has been decided to rechristen this bridge after *Shriman Bhupen Hazarika ji*. What can be a more fitting tribute to the son of river *Brahmaputra*? His life and times continue to be an inspiration to the future generations.

Throughout his lifetime this great soul, a venerator of Ganges of the East, dedicated all his melodies to Brahmaputra. His commendations brought this place on the international globe. This legendary name is synonymous with *Dalong*, hence we are declaring today that the *Dhola Sadiya* bridge shall henceforth be called as *Bhupen Hazarika Setu*. Once again I would like to heartily congratulate *Shriman Sarbanand Ji* and his team on the commendable efforts they have made for the advancement of the state of Assam in the first year itself.

I feel satisfied that in the maiden year alone, despite all adversities, the team has touched the right chord and identified the ailing pulse of the state. It's a first for us on many fronts- a first time BJP government in the Assam state, a maiden stint of a Chief Minister posed with the challenge of setting right past 15 years of debacle! It is indeed heartening to see the measures taken by the CMs team to reinstate Assam to its past glory and richness. Going by the momentum of development that has been set in the first year, I repose full faith in the team and trust that Assam will be freed from years of privation within the next five years. I firmly believe in this and assure that the central government will support all advancements wholeheartedly.

The dream of "A for Assam" shall soon be a reality if we walk hand in hand towards development. With this credence I once again thank you all! Hail Mother India!

Bharat Mata ki Jai!

AKT/SS/RSB/AK

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