



English rendering of the text of PM's address at Closing Ceremony of 'Namami Narmade - Narmada Sewa Yatra' in Amarkantak, Madhya Pradesh

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Present here in large numbers, my dear brothers and sisters,

Our scriptures say that if we offer our obeisance to a pilgrim when we can't go on a pilgrimage we get the holy reward of the pilgrimage. I am now seeking a part of that reward by offering my obeisance to you pilgrims. But, I am not seeking it for myself. The holy reward earned through your pilgrimage should benefit our motherland, should benefit 1.25 billion Indians, it should alleviate the sufferings of the poor of this country.

And it's my belief that Narmada Yatra is that same pilgrimage that has long been associated with the Narmada circuit. And, I am very well familiar with that scripture. Once I tried to live up to that expectation and so, I know that how a pilgrimage to Narmada circuit erases your arrogance. And mother Narmada cleanses the arrogance of the person doing a Narmada circuit. Mother Narmada sets the person free from all kind of bondages and attachments. Even a highly decorated, highly regarded person also gets free from those attachments and titles. Completing a Narmada circuit unite followers of mother Narmada with herself, one can feel unison with mother Narmada. Today you have taken the solemn vow to serve the mother Narmada.

When time turns a page then it can turn one's life upside down. These problems arise when arrogance dominates and your commitment to duties weakens; we are compelled to come out and serve the mother Narmada. This is the same mother Narmada that has sustained us for ages, gave us life and protected our ancestors, but we mistook all these favours as our right and turned away from our duties, and we exploited the mother Narmada to the hilt. In order to serve our self-interests we never cared for the mother Narmada, we only cared for our narrow interests. Deep down in our hearts, we had this thought of possession that we had rights over mother Narmada and we could exploit her the way we want to. And this arrogance led us to shed our sweat to save the mother Narmada that had always sustained us. Had we not turned away from our duties, had we fulfilled our duties to mother Narmada then it would not have become incumbent upon us humans to save mother Narmada. However, chief minister of Madhya Pradesh, people of Madhya Pradesh got into action just in time.

India has several rivers that feature in the map but they have no water. Several rivers have been lost in history. India has one river, perhaps that is the only river named after the country, it's called Bharat Puja. However, it's a cause of concern that whether that river would survive or not. It's not that the rivers die due to use of their water. If we do not fulfil our obligations to protect the elements that sustain a river then it would cause unspeakable damage to mankind.

We're very well aware that mother Narmada does not emanate from snowy hills, it does not emanate from the melting snow. Mother Narmada takes her shape from the blessings of every single plant and it blesses our lives. Therefore the most important task that the Madhya Pradesh government has undertaken for the shining future of Mother Narmada; for ensuring the sustenance of Mother Narmada is to plant trees. At this stage, we cannot fully comprehend the great service done by us to our future generations when we plant saplings. Today we've been reaping the benefits of mother Narmada only due to hard work, industriousness and the rigorous services done by our ancestors. Future generations would remember the hard work done by us today that there was a time when people took help of plants and trees for saving the mother Narmada; for the revival of mother Narmada. This journey that takes nearly 150 days is an extremely difficult task, however, it's very unfortunate for our country that attempts are made to undermine such great work if the government, politicians associate themselves with such events. Otherwise it's a work for which I congratulate people of Madhya Pradesh, every single person of millions of people associated with this Narmada Yatra and also to every single person inhabiting on the banks of mother Narmada. This is such an important event that in any other country one fifty days of rigorous service to save a river would have become a global talking point, it would have been hailed world over and global TV networks would rush to cover such an event. However, this is unfortunate that in our country we fail to recognise and comprehend global importance of our efforts and miss out on such opportunities.

The event of a solar park being set up somewhere is being discussed world over; that in that area of that country a solar park has been set up to save the mankind. This mammoth task of saving a river has been accomplished, this gigantic work of protecting the environment is being done. More than twenty five lakh people took a solemn vow, millions more associated themselves with these twenty five lakh people, suffered hardships and body pains and put up with extremely difficult days by working hard, by walking for long distances to save the mother earth, to save the river, to save the environment and to save the mankind. I congratulate Shivrji Ji, his entire team and also the people of Madhya Pradesh for spearheading this mammoth task.

I was born in Gujarat. Gujaratis know very well the value of every single drop of Narmada's water. And today when you people have embarked upon a gigantic mission for the future of Narmada then I thank and appreciate the people of Madhya Pradesh, government of Madhya Pradesh and Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh on behalf of farmers, villages and people of Gujarat, and also on behalf of farmers, villages and people of Rajasthan, and also on behalf of farmers, villages and people of Maharashtra.

Clean India Mission has now obtained a systematic process. The Clean India Mission is consistently being evaluated by a third party about what is happening in which state, which city is clean. People's participation is the biggest strength of a democracy. And if we ignore the people's strength, people's power and people's participation then the governments will not be able to achieve anything. Nothing will succeed without people's participation no matter how good the idea may be, howsoever capable leadership may be, howsoever good the system may be. And Madhya Pradesh has set an example as to how these projects succeed with people's participation.

Last time when a survey was conducted to assess the cleanliness in the country then Madhya Pradesh was on the verge of losing its reputation, however, the state made a determination to get rid of this stigma, generated awareness among its people, encouraged people's participation, people were associated with the mission and today I congratulate the state of Madhya Pradesh. Out of the 100 cities in the country that were assessed for cleanliness twenty two are from Madhya Pradesh. It's a big achievement. In the area of cleanliness, Madhya Pradesh has set an example for other states by involving its people in the clean India mission. Indore and Bhopal respectively secured the first and second spot in the country in terms of cleanliness.

Out of total 100 cities in the country if 22 cities from one particular state secure the leading spots it means that the state administration and people of the state considered it as their own work. And it also led to the success of Narmada Yatra project. And this was accomplished due to the people's power, it was not accomplished due to the government power. And people's participation results in big achievements, Shivraj Ji has set a target to plant 6 crore saplings on July 02. Every necessary arrangement has to be made in the nurseries for this purpose, only then it can succeed. We need to tend these saplings the way we take care of our children, only then these saplings will grow into massive banyan trees.

It is said in our scriptures that the one who thinks for next one year plants crops, but the one who thinks of future plants fruit bearing trees. And this task of planting fruit bearing trees will provide economic security to many families in future. I have studied the booklet of the scheme prepared by MP government and I believe that the program undertaken by Madhya Pradesh government and the scheme prepared by it has a very detailed account of the what needs to be done, how it is to be done, who will do what and it has something for everyone, it's a perfect document for the future vision. I will urge upon other states and I'd also urge upon Shivraj Ji to send a copy of the booklet to each state of India to guide them how to protect their natural resources by giving example of Madhya Pradesh so that they can prepare their schemes accordingly.

Water is source of life, when we say: mother river, then it means that our entire economy is based on the river. Our economy will be ruined without that. If the agriculture sector of Madhya Pradesh has grown at the rate of twenty per cent then the biggest credit for this growth goes to mother Narmada. This is the power, the power to change the life of a farmer is in mother Narmada.

India has embarked upon a mission to double the farmer's income by 2022, Madhya Pradesh has prepared a comprehensive scheme for this purpose. And I believe that every single village will be able to take the benefit of that scheme.

My dear brothers and sisters, we will complete seventy five years of our freedom in 2022. Can't the 125 crore Indians always keep in mind the 75th year of our independence? Those great men that sacrificed their lives for the country, spent their entire youth in jail, some embraced martyrdom, others sacrificed their family for the freedom of mother India; can't we take a solemn vow that as an individual, as a family, as a society we will complete this or that for our country by 2022. We the people of our village will do this, as a city we will do this, as an institution we will do this, as a society, as a state and as a country we will do this.

We should carry forward the dream of making a 'New India' by 2022. We need to engage every Indian. We need to engage every single Indian to scale new heights, to make a 'New India' as we had done during the freedom movement. Therefore I'd urge my countrymen, I'd urge every organisation of Madhya Pradesh that by 2022 what will you do as an institution, as a family, as a society, as an organisation or as a group; you decide this. We have five years once we have galvanised the country. We can scale new heights in these five years. I believe that if the 1.25 billion people of this country take just one step forward then in the next five years the country would march ahead by 1.25 billion steps.

I'm specially indebted to revered Avadeshnand Ji for the blessings that he bestowed upon me, his love for me; I pray to God that He give us those capacities, those virtues, those feelings of dedication; so that we can prepare ourselves to serve the country in the right way. I convey my deep regards and bow down to him for his kind words and blessings.

I also warmly congratulate all of you, and as Shivraj Ji said that the journey takes a pause here, however, it's the time to implement whatever we thought, we saw, we did during the journey. The journey is over but the Yajna begins. We need to make offerings in the Yajna, take out time for it; we need to sacrifice all our wishes and desires for the society. I believe that this Yajna for the bright future of the river Narmada will achieve great heights through your hard work. With this feeling, I urge you to join me in chanting with clenched fist and raised hands. I will say 'Narmade' and you will add 'Sarvade'.

Narmade – Sarvade.

Your collective voice should reach to the other end of mother Narmada, to the gulf of Khambat.

Narmade – Sarvade.

Narmade – Sarvade.

Thank you very much.

Read this release in: Tamil

