



# English rendering of the text of PM's address via video conference at the seventh centenary celebrations of Jagadguru Sri Madhavacharya, Udupi

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Sri Pejavar Math's most respected Sri Vishwesh Tirth Swami Ji,

Sri Vishwa Prasanna Tirth Swami Ji,

Sri Raghavendra Matt's Sri Sri Subhudhendra Tirth Swami Ji,

And all devotees present there on this occasion.

I am delighted to be present at the seventh centenary celebrations of Jagadguru Sri Madhavacharya Ji, India's one of the greatest philosophers of the Bhakti Aandolan era.

I could not reach Udupi due to busy work schedule. I have returned from Aligarh, just a little while ago. It is a great pleasure for me to have an opportunity today to get your blessings.

I welcome all Acharyas, Saints for spreading the messages of Sant Sri Madhavacharya for moral and spiritual upliftment of human being.

I also salute the holy land of Karnataka, where saint like Madhavacharya emerged in one hand and in other hand spiritual souls like Acharya Shankar and Acharya Ramanuj gave it special affection.

Udupi has been Sri Madhavacharya Ji's birth place and work place also. Sri Madhavacharya had written his renowned Geetabhashya on this holy land of Udupi only.

Sri Madhavacharya was also the founder of the Krishna Temple here. I have special relationship with the Krishna idol installed in this temple. I have special attachment with Udupi. I have got several opportunities to come to Udupi. From 1968 the Bharatiya Janata Party and Bharatiya Jansangh had been accomplishing the responsibility of Udupi Municipal Corporation for more than four decades. In 1968, Udupi become the first such Municipal Corporation, which had put a ban on manual scavenging. Udupi was honoured for cleanliness twice in 1984 and 1989. On the basis of cleanliness, this town has been a live example of our human values.

I am happy that Sri Vishwesh Tirth Swami Ji is himself present here in these celebrations.

After attaining Sannyas, in a very little age of 8 years, he dedicated 80 years of his life to strengthen his country and his society. He campaigned across the country against illiteracy, cow slaughter and caste feeling.

It is only the influence of Swamiji's good works that he has got the opportunity to become the fifth Paryay. I salute such great Saint. Brothers and sisters,

Our country's history is thousands years old. Motivated by thousands years old history, our country has been witnessing changes from time to time. There have been changes among people and society. But, sometimes, some evils find their place in society several times.

Our society has such characteristic that whenever any evil emerges, somebody from the society itself, start reformatory works. There was such a period also, when its leadership was in the hands of Saints of the country. This is unique capability of the Indian society that we have been blessed with such god-like great men from time to time, who identified these evils and shown the path for liberation.

Madhavacharya was also such a saint, social reformer and above all, a forerunner of his time. There are several examples, when he had expressed his views against the evils and shown the society a new direction. The social reforms to end the evil of animal slaughter during Yajnas also a gift from saints like Sri Madhavacharya.

Hundreds years back, our history has such example that our saints had started people's movement to bring reforms against evils in the society. They had connected this people's movement with devotion (Bhakti). This

Bhakti Aandolan had reached north India from south India via Maharashtra and Gujarat.

In that Bhakti Yuga, in that period, our saints had come out of Temples and Mutts and had moved across every part of India, whether it is east, west, north or south or areas associated with any language, they tried to bring awareness and made efforts to awaken the soul of India.

In south- Madhavacharya, Nimbakacharya, Vallabhacharya, Ramanujacharya, in West-Meerabai, Eknath, Tukaram, Ramdas, Narsi Mehta, in north-Ramanand, Kabirdas, Goswami Tulsidas, Surdas, Guru Nanakdev, Sant Raidas, in East-Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and Shankar Dev like saints' ideology had strengthened Bhakti Aandolan. In that phase, with the influence of these saints, these great men, India was able to move forward and save itself, despite a lot of adversities.

Adi Shankaracharya went to every nook and corner of the country and show the people the path to get united with God after leaving behind worldliness. Ramanujacharya had explained the specific Dwaitvaad. He had also shown the path that one can find God, if he comes out of cast boundary.

He said, God could be found only through Karma (duty), Jnan (enlightenment) and Bhakti (devotion). Following the path shown by him, Sant Ramanand had boldly attacked cast system by making people from all casts and religions his followers.

Sant Kabir had also tirelessly worked to liberate the society from cast system and karmakand.

He said- Paani kera bulbula-as manas ki jat (cast feeling is just like water bubbles).

He had presented such a big truth of life in such simple words for the society.

Guru Nanak Dev said- Manav ki jat sabho ek pahchanbo (Identify all human being as one cast).

Sant Vallabhacharya had shown the path of liberation by following the path of affection and love.

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu had also shown new direction against untouchability.

Such a chain of India's saints is reflection and result of the living society. Solutions emerge in spiritual forms for all challenges emerging in the society. Throughout entire country, there is perhaps any such rare district or taluka, where any saint's birth has not taken place. Saints came as the solution to the grief of the Indian society.

They transformed the society through their lives, their teachings and literature.

The foundation of religion, philosophy and literature established during the Bhakti Aandolan, inspires us even today. During the same phase, Raheem also said-

'Ve Raheem nar dhanya hain,

Par upkari ang,

Baantan ware ko lage,

Jyon mehendi ko rang...'

(those people are great,

who do good to others,

as the person who distributes henna,

gets its colour free.)

It means as the henna colours the hands of its distributor, similarly, those persons are themselves benefited, who do good to others, who help others.

During this span of Bhaktikaal, many great souls like Raskhan, Surdas, Malik Mohammad Jaysi, Keshavdas, Vidyapati had emerged, who had not only shown the society its truth, but also made efforts to reform it through their speeches and literature.

Our saints kept the importance of karma (action) in human life, human character, at highest of all. A great saint of Gujarat, Narsi Mehta said-

wach-kachh-mann nishchal rakhe, par-dhan nav jhale haath re.

it means, a person should always keep his words, works and thoughts sacred, should not touch others property with his hand. This thought has become very much relevant at this moment, when the country has such a big fight against the black money and corruption.

A great social reformer, Vaseshwar, who gave the world the ideology of Anubhav Mantap or the first Parliament, said that human lives could only be enlightened through selfless Karma yoga. Involvement of self interest in social and personal conduct is the first cause of corruption. As much the selfless Karma yoga is encouraged, the corrupt conduct will come down in the society.

Sri Madhavacharya always stressed on the fact that no work is inferior or superior.

Works performed with honesty and sincerity is like the worship of God.

He said that paying tax to the Government and serving the humanity are parallel to paying tax to the God.

We can proudly say that India has such a great tradition. It has such great saints, great men, who utilised their devotion, their knowledge to change the fate of the nation, to build the nation.

Our saints inspired the whole society to move:

From individual to the world

From self to the community

From I to We

From Jeev to Shiv

From Jeevatma to Paramatma.

Innumerable saints like Swami Dayanand Saraswati, Swami Vivekananda, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Jyotiba Fule, Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar, Mahatma Gandhi, Pandurang Shastri Athawale, and Vinoba Bhave have always kept India's spiritual flow alive. They started people's movement against evil traditions of the society.

They left the indelible marks on peoples' opinion from ending cast feeling to people's awareness, from devotion to peoples' power, from ending Sati Kupratha to enhancing cleanliness, from social harmony to education and from health to literature and brought changes there.

The great stalwart like them have given such strength to the country, which is unique and incomparable.

Brothers and sisters,

Due to such a great saint tradition of continuous efforts to end social evils, we have been able to keep our cultural heritage intact for centuries. Due to such a great saint tradition, we have been continuously realising the concept of national unification and nation building.

Such saints are not limited to any particular era, but they have been influencing from era to era.

The saints of our country have always inspired the society that if any religion is superior to any other religion, that is human religion.

Our country, our society is facing challenges even today. Saint community and Mutts are giving huge contribution in meeting these challenges. When the saint society says that the cleanliness is God, it has more impact in comparison with any Government campaign.

This inspires towards economic cleanliness also. If the malpractice is a challenge before the society, the modern saint community can also provide its solution.

The saint community plays a very important role with regard to environment protection. In our culture, the trees have been considered as sensitive and alive. Subsequently, a India's son and great scientist Dr Jagdish Chandra Bose had also proved it before the world.

Otherwise, the world had no belief in it and they used to make fun of us.

For us, the nature is mother, it is not for exploitation, but it is for service. At our land, there has been tradition to sacrifice own life for the sake of trees, people perform prayer prior to break even a single branch from a tree. We are being taught from childhood to be sensitive towards flora and fauna.

After performing daily Aarati, we chant peace mantra- **vanaspatayah shanti aapah shanti**. But it is also a truth that this tradition has been adversely affected gradually with times. Today, the saint community will have to come forward towards this end also. The challenges of climate change can be tackled by adopting the solutions in our conduct, which have been mentioned in our epics and those are the parts of our traditions.

Today also, you can observe that whenever the countries across the whole world find any kind of obstruction in path of the life, they ultimately look towards India's culture and civilisation.

In one way, the Indian culture possesses every answer to entire problems of the world. In India, it is easily acceptable that one God could be worshiped in various forms. It has been told in Rig-Veda- ekam sat vipra bahudha vadanti...one super truth is being called in different names. We not only accept diversity, but celebrate it.

We believe in 'Vasudhaiv kutumbakam'- entire world as one family. We say- sahnastu-sah nau bhunaktu...all are nourished, all are having power, no one has enmity to anyone. It is the only solution to radicalism. The radicalism is the root cause of terrorism, claiming its path to be only right. While in India, people of various faiths have been living for centuries, not only in principles but in practical also. We are the people who believe in equal value for all beliefs.

I believe that if we are living together in this age of today, if we are trying to end the evils of the society, if we are making efforts towards country's growth, its major cause is our saints' inspiration of enlightenment, works and devotion.

It is the need of today's time that we must talk about the God of worship and nation God together; during worship we should remember our God of worship and Mother India together. I wish the saint community may continue showing the path to liberate our country from the evils, like illiteracy, unawareness, mal-nutrition, black money, corruption, which have gripped our Mother India.

I wish that all of you will continue to let the people experience the power of life of our country through the spiritualism. All of you will be continuously strengthening the power of the people through the feeling of - Vayam amritasya putraha. With these words, I express my gratitude to all of you.

Thanks a lot !!!

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