



# English rendering of the text of PM's Speech at the inauguration of Chenani - Nashri Tunnel in Jammu & Kashmir on 02 April, 2017

Posted On: 02 APR 2017 8:04PM by PIB Delhi

This longest tunnel of India has been inaugurated today, the ceremony is being performed by me but I want all the citizens present here today to jointly inaugurate the tunnel and I tell you the way to do this thing.

All of you please bring out your mobile sets and all of you should together turn on the flash lights while hailing the victory for mother India (Bharat Mata Ki Jay). See! All the cameramen are taking your pictures now! All of you who have mobiles please bring them out, please turn on your flash lights. What a wonderful sight! I see this wonderful sight before me. You people have really inaugurated the tunnel by turning on the flash lights of your mobile phones. The entire country is watching this.

Bharat Mata Ki Jay.

Bharat Mata Ki Jay.

Brothers and sisters, the holy festival of Navratri is going on and I'm fortunate that I got the opportunity to pay my obeisance at the feet of mother goddess.

Nitin Gadkari Ji told us just now that the tunnel has been constructed as per the global standards. He has informed that in some cases we have surpassed the global standards. I offer my respect, my heartfelt congratulations to Nitin Gadkari Ji and his entire team. He has successfully completed the work of this tunnel in the stipulated time by using the modern technology. But brothers and sisters, this is just not a tunnel. This tunnel hasn't just reduced the distance between Jammu and Srinagar. But, I can clearly see that this tunnel is a giant leap for the development of Jammu and Kashmir.

Brothers and sisters, in any case, this tunnel will get the due attention in India, but I'm also confident that all the environmentalists of the world, who are concerned about the climate change and global warming, the construction of this tunnel is a big news for them, it will give them a new hope. Had this tunnel been built in any other corner of the country then there was a possibility of receiving less attention. However, we have also protected the Himalaya by constructing the tunnel through it. We're protecting the environment. India has conveyed the message of protecting the Himalaya to the world that is worried over global warming. The government of India has successfully completed the important task of protecting the environment of Himalaya.

Brothers and sisters, this tunnel has been built at a cost of thousands of crores of rupees. But today I can say this thing with pride though it's true that Government of India has incurred the expenditure for construction of this tunnel but I'm happy that the smell of the sweat of the hard work of the youth of Jammu and Kashmir along with the money spent by Government of India. More than 2,500 youth, more than 90% of the total 2,500 youth who worked for the construction of the tunnel are from Jammu and Kashmir. We can think about how many opportunities for employment have been created.

And brothers and sisters, the youth of Jammu and Kashmir those who have hewed these stones to construct the tunnel they kept working day and night for more than thousand days to construct the tunnel. I'd like to tell the youth of Kashmir Valley about the power of the stone; there are some misguided youth who have been engaged in the stone pelting and there are some other youth from Kashmir are busy making their future by cutting the stones.

Brothers and sisters, this tunnel is going to play its historic role in creating a new history for the tourism in the Kashmir valley. A traveler, a tourist gets worried after getting the news about poor facilities. If there is a hailstorm at the Patnitop that closed the roads for five days, if the tourists are stuck then they don't have the courage to visit again. But brothers and sisters, the tourists from every nook and corner of the country, those who want to visit Kashmir valley as a tourist, will not face any problem now due to this tunnel, they will be directly able to reach Shrinagar.

I'd like to say one thing to people of Kashmir valley: it's true that the tunnel is being constructed between Udhampur and Ramban but please never forget one thing that this tunnel is the line of fortune for Kashmir valley.

Why this is the line of fortune for Kashmir valley because my brother farmers from Kashmir valley work very hard amidst the natural calamities, he tills the land and works in orchards, even if there is a good rain as required, even if the weather was favorable and there was a bumper crop but if there is incessant rain for five days when he was about to leave for Delhi to sell his produce and half of his produce will perish here only if the road is blocked for five days. And his entire hard work will be wasted by the time he reaches Delhi. This tunnel has come as a boon for the farmers of Kashmir valley. Now he can take his produce, his flowers and fruits, and his vegetables to Delhi very easily. Now he won't incur the loss as was the case earlier, this is the benefit for the Kashmir valley.

Brothers and sisters, every citizen of India has a dream to visit Kashmir at least one. He wants to visit these valleys as a tourist. And the work of development of infrastructure taken by us is going to facilitate the tourists from across the country to come here. It's certain that the tourism will grow and the more the tourism grows I'm confident that the economy of Jammu and Kashmir will surpass the rest of India in terms of economic growth.

Brothers and sisters, I'd like to tell the youth of Jammu and Kashmir that there are two ways before them to decide their destiny. On one hand is tourism and on the other terrorism. It's been forty years, several innocent people lost their lives but no one benefitted from it, if anything has been deeply wounded then it is the Kashmir valley. If someone is being killed then we have lost the son of a Kashmiri mother, we have lost the son of an Indian mother.

Brothers and sisters, this bloodbath has not benefitted anyone in the last forty years. However, had anyone focused on tourism in these forty years then the entire world would submit itself before Kashmir valley, this is the strength of Kashmir valley. Therefore we should recognize the strength of tourism, whatever facilities are required to strengthen it; central government in Delhi is with Jammu and Kashmir for that; we are with you to encourage the tourism.

I offer my kind regards to Mehbooba Ji, I congratulate her and I appreciate her. This is not a mean achievement that half of the special package of Rs. 80 thousand crore announced by the government of India for the state of Jammu and Kashmir last year has been implemented on the ground in such a small time.

Otherwise most of the packages remain on paper and it takes years to implement them. However, Mehbooba Ji and her government have carefully worked very hard to implement it on the ground and its results are there for anyone to see. I offer my heartfelt congratulations to the government of Jammu and Kashmir, to the chief minister, to her council of minister for this thing.

Brothers and sisters, today, if there is one state capable of rapidly increasing the per capita income of its people then it's Jammu and Kashmir. I'm very well aware about its strength. I had the opportunity to visit and stay in these valleys for several years for the organization work. I'm aware about the large hearted people of this place. I'm aware about the Sufi culture of this place.

Brothers and sisters, if we forget this invaluable legacy then we will lose our present and will completely destroy our future. This land belongs to that legacy that was able to guide India for thousands of years. We should associate ourselves with that legacy, we should take pride in that and we should move ahead with the government to make our future brighter by means of hard work. It will very soon change the fortune of Jammu and Kashmir.

Brothers and sisters, whenever the issues of Jammu and Kashmir are discussed, then every Kashmiri, everyone from Jammu, everyone from Laddakh remembers Atal Bihari Bajpayi's name. We are committed to take Kashmir's development, the environment of harmony, the atmosphere of brotherhood to a new height, we are committed to take continuous steps for the welfare of the youth of Kashmir by following the mantra given by Atal Bihari Bajpayi Ji, and no obstacle can stop us. And people sitting on the other side of the border are not even able to take care of themselves.

Brothers and sisters, we also want to demonstrate it to the other side of the Kashmir across the LoC how the Kashmir will be developed. And we are going to show them that those people who have subjugated them how they have ruined them. Development is our motto and people's participation is our way and we want to follow that path only. We want to make a brighter future by taking the young generation along with us.

Brothers and sisters, if one tunnel becomes the line of fortune for Kashmir then it can change the lives of farmers of Kashmir, it can boost terrorism in the valley. We have plan to construct 9 such tunnels in the future. It will connect you with the entire India and it will not only be a network of roads but it is going to connect hearts as well, I'm confident of this thing.

Brothers and sisters, we should take the journey of development forward. The youth of Jammu and Kashmir should take advantage of employment schemes of government of India to change the fortune of this region. They should take advantage of the new sectors of education in this area; they should scale new heights of development. And my brothers from Jammu; this Jammu region is also witnessing rapid development.

Whether it is Smart City scheme, or be it Hriday Yojana or be it Amrit Yojana, or the schemes in the education sector or be it development of infrastructure or be it rejuvenation of ponds, in every sector be it Laddakh or the Valley or Jammu, every region should be developed in balanced manner and this development should benefit the future generation of the entire Jammu and Kashmir, we should move forward with this preparation, we should take the development of Jammu and Kashmir forward; we should move forward with these dreams.

I once again congratulate Nitin Ji, his entire team and to Dr. Jitendra Singh Ji and also to the government of Jammu and Kashmir. Thank you very much.

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(Release ID: 1498229) Visitor Counter : 75

