



# Text of the PM’s address at the Inauguration of the 14th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention at Bengaluru on 8th January, 2017

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### Excellencies and friends,

To begin with, let me offer our deepest condolences to the people and government of Portugal on the passing away of Mr. Mario Soares, former President, Prime Minister, a great leader of Portugal and a global states-man. He was the architect of the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Portugal. We stand with Portugal in full support in this hour of grief.

**Your Excellency, the Vice President of Suriname, Shri Michael Ashwin Adhin, Excellency the Prime Minister of Portugal, Dr. Antonio Costa,**

**Shri Vaju Bhai wala, Governor of Karnataka Shri Siddaramaiah ji,**

**Chief Minister of Karnataka, Honourable Ministers, Dignitaries from India and Abroad,**

**And the most important of all, the global family of overseas Indians.**

It is a great pleasure for me to host you on this 14th Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas. Thousands of you have travelled from far-off lands to join us here today. Millions more are connected through digital platforms.

This day is a celebration to mark the return to India of one of the greatest Pravasi’s- Mahatma Gandhi.

ये एक ऐसा पर्व है जिसमें हमारे लिए बहुत-बहुत गर्वकी बात है। आप सब का वह दिल है जिसमें उसकी विदेशमें रहने वाली संतान से मिलने का अक्सर है। अपनों को अपनों से मिलना, अपने लिए नहीं सबके लिए मिलना। इस event कीअसली पहचान आन-बान-शान को कुछ भी है आप सब लोग हैं।

आप का इस पर्व में सम्मिलित होना हमारे लिए बहुत-बहुत गर्वकी बात है। आप सब का वह दिल है जिसमें उसकी विदेशमें रहने वाली संतान से मिलने का अक्सर है। अपनों को अपनों से मिलना, अपने लिए नहीं सबके लिए मिलना। इस event कीअसली पहचान आन-बान-शान को कुछ भी है आप सब लोग हैं।

We are celebrating this event in the beautiful city of Bengaluru. I wish to thank the Chief Minister, to the Ramayya Ji and his entire government for his assistance and efforts in organizing this event/ and making it a big success.

It is my particular pleasure to welcome Excellency the Prime Minister of Portugal, the Vice President of Suriname, the honourable Ministers from Malaysia and Mauritius to the event.

Their achievements, the name they have earned in their own societies and globally, are a great inspiration for all of us. It also reflects the success, glory and enterprise of Indian diaspora the world over. There are over 30million Overseas Indians living abroad. Their footprint is all over the world. But, Indians abroad are valued not just for their strength in numbers. They are respected for the contributions they make - to India and to the societies and countries where they live. In foreign lands and communities across the globe, irrespective of the path they take, and the goals they pursue, the Indian diaspora represents the best of Indian culture, ethos and values. Their hard-work, discipline, law-abiding and peace loving nature are role models for other immigrant communities abroad.

आप की प्रेरणा बाढ़ प्रकाश की है, उद्देश्य अनेक हैं, आपके मान् भिन्न-भिन्न हैं, हर किसी की मंजिल भी अलग है लेकिन हमसबके भीतर एक ही भाव विश्व है, और वो भाव जगत है भारतीयता। प्रवासी भारतीय जहां रहे उस घरती को उन्होंने कर्मभूमिमाना, और जहां से आए उसे मर्मभूमि माना।

आज आप उस कर्मभूमि की सरलताओं को, उसकी गहरी सीमा करके उस मर्मभूमि विचारों हैं जहां से आयेगे, आपके पूर्वजों को, अविश्व प्रेरणा मिलती रही है। प्रवासी भारतीय जहां रहे रहस्य विकास किया औरजहां के हैं वहां भी अपना अग्रिम रिश्ता जोड़ करके रखा, हो सके उतना योगदान किया।

Friends, for my governments and for me personally, engagement with the overseas Indian community has been a key area of priority. I have met and spoken to hundreds of thousands of our brothers and sisters during my travels abroad - in USA, UK, Australia, South Africa, UAE, Qatar, Singapore, Fiji, China, Japan, South Korea, Kenya, Mauritius, Seychelles, and Malaysia.

As a result, as a result of our sustained and systematic out-reach, there is new energy, keen desire and strong drive among Indian Diaspora to connect more extensively and deeply with India’s social and economic transformation.

The remittance of close to sixty nine billion dollars annually by the overseas Indians makes an invaluable contribution to the Indian economy.

प्रवासी भारतीयों में देश के विकास के लिए अत्यन्त इच्छाशक्ति है; वे देश की प्रगति में सहभागी हैं। Co-traveler हैं। ह्यारीविकास वाता में आज हमारे एक Valuable साथी हैं, Partner हैं, stakeholder हैं। कभी चर्चा हुआ करती थी Brain-Drain. हरकोई सवाल पूछता था Brain-

Drain, और उस उस समय लोगों को कहता था; तब तो न मुकुलमंजी था न प्रथममंजी था: अब लोकमंजी है कि Brain-Drain, Brain-Drain हो रहा था तो मैं कह रहा था क्या बहुत लोग ही यहां बने हैं क्या? लेकिन आज मैं बड़ेविश्वास के साथ कहना चाहता हूं हम लोग जो Brain-Drain की चर्चा करते थे, वर्तमान सरकार के initiatives उस Brain-Drain में से भी Brain-Gain के लिए हैं। हम Brain-Drain को Brain-Gain में बदलना चाहते हैं, और वो सब आप सबकीसहभागिता से ही संभव होने वाला है, और होके रहने वाला है, ये मेरा विश्वास है।

NRIs’ and PIOs’ have made outstanding contributions to their chosen fields. Among them, there are politicians of stature, scientists of repute, outstanding doctors, brilliant educationists, economists, musicians, famous philanthropists, journalists, bankers, engineers and lawyers. And, sorry! Did I mention our well known Information Technology professionals? Tomorrow, 30 overseas Indians will receive from the President, the prestigious Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards, which recognize contributions made by them in various fields, both in India and abroad.

Friends, E-respective of their background and profession, the welfare and safety of all Indians abroad is our top priority. For this, we are strengthening the entire eco-system of our administrative arrangements. Whether it is on loss of their passports; need for legal advice, medical assistance, shelter, or even transportation of mortal remains to India. I have directed all Indian embassies to be proactive to address problems of Indian nationals abroad.

Our response to the needs of the Indian nationals overseas is defined by Accessibility, sensitivity, speed and promptness. 24 by 7, help-lines by Indian Embassies; ‘Open House’ meetings with Indian nationals; consular camps; twitter seva for passport services; and use of social media platforms for immediate access; are some of the measures that we have put in place to convey a clear message that we are there for you when you need us.

The security of Indian nationals abroad is of utmost importance to us. हम पासेगैट का colour नहीं देखते हैं, खुन कापिछला सोचते हैं। In institutions of distress faced by Indian nationals, we have reached out to ensure their safety, rescue and repatriation. Our External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj ji, has particularly been proactive and prompt in reaching out to distressed Indians abroad using social media.

Under Operation “संरक्ष पोषण” in July 2016, we evacuated over one hundred and fifty Indian nationals from South Sudan within 48 hours. Prior to that, we evacuated several thousands of our citizens from conflict situations in Yemen in well-coordinated, smooth and swift co-operations. And the last two years - 2014 and 2016, we facilitated the repatriation of over ninety thousand Indian nationals from nearly 54 countries. Through the Indian Community Welfare Fund we have assisted more than eighty thousand Indian nationals abroad who were in contingency situations.

Our aim is that for every Indian abroad, home should never be far away. हम लोग छोटे तब सुनते थे, मामा का घरकितना दूर तो बोले दीया जले उतना दूर। भारत कितना दूर, उसको लगना चाहिए दीया जले उतना दूर। इतनी निकटता उसकोहमसूस होनी चाहिए।

दुनिया के किसी भी देश में क्यों न रहता हो, उसको ये अपनापन महसूस होना चाहिए। For those workers who seek economic opportunities abroad, our effort is to provide maximum facilitation and ensure least inconvenience. Our motto is:

“सुरक्षित जाए, प्रशिक्षित जाए, विश्वास के साथ जाएँ” . For this, we have streamlined our systems and taken several measures to safeguard emigration of Indian workers. About six lakhEngineers emigrants have been granted Emigration Clearance online for overseas employment through registered recruitment agents. Online registration of foreign employers on e-Migrate portal has been made mandatory.

And, the grievances, complaints and petitions of the migrant workers continue to be addressed online through e-Migrate and “MADAD” platforms. We are also taking strict action against illegal recruitment agents in India. Prosecution sanctions by CBI or State Police against illegal agents; and increase in the amount of Bank Guarantee deposited by the recruiting agents from Rs.20 lakhs to Rs.50 lakhs; our some of the steps in this direction. To ensure that the migrating Indian workers enjoy better economic opportunities, we will shortly launch a skill development program - the “Pravasi Kaushal Vikas Yojana” targeted at Indian youth who seek overseas employment.

कभी-कभी जो पहली बार विदेश जाते हैं, ज्यादा पढ़े-लिखे नहीं हैं; अगर उनका वहां के देश की आवश्यकता के अनुसार यहीं परउसका 15 दिन, एक महीने का कोर्स हो, उसकी development हो। मान लीजिए वो किसी देश में house keeping के काम केलिए जा रहा है, अगर वहां उसकी training होगी तो बड़े विश्वास के साथ जायेगा। और इसलिए ये “प्रवासी कौशल विकासयोजना” भारत से बाहर जाने वाले लोग एक value-added अवस्था में जाए जिसके कारण एक नया पहिना पड़ा हो, उस दिशामें हम प्रयास कर रहे हैं, और उससे मुझे लगता है जो गरीब तबके के लोग छोटे-छोटे काम करने के लिए जा रहे हैं, उनको ज्यादालभ होगा।

कुछ लोगों को उस देश के कुछ sentences हैं, कुछ उस देश के manners हैं, कुछ cultural चीजें सीखने की जरूरतीहोती हैं। वो भी कितने ही पढ़े-लिखे व्यक्ति क्यों न हों, उसको काम आती हैं; उस पर भी हम बल दे रहे हैं, जिसको हम soft-skill कहते हैं।

तो ऐसी व्यवस्थाएँ जिसके कारण भारत का व्यक्ति विश्व में पर रहते ही उसको कुछ भी परना न लगे; औरों को भीवो अपना लगे और उसका आत्मविश्वास उस उंचाईयों को पार करने वाला हो जैसे वो सालों से उस भूमि को जानता है, वहां केलोगों को जानता है; वो तुलत ही अपने आपको set कर सकता है, तो उस रूप में उसकी चिन्ता, व्यवस्था हम कर रहे हैं।

Friends, We have a special bond with the Indian Diaspora which is living in the Girmitya countries - who are deeply and emotionally attached with their place of origin. We are aware of difficulties faced by Persons of Indian Origin from these countries in obtaining an OCI Card if they moved abroad four or five generations ago. We acknowledge their concerns and have made efforts to address these issues.

I am glad to announce that starting with Mauritius, we are working to put in place new procedures and documentation requirements so that the descendants of Girmityas from this country could become eligible for OCI Cards. We remain committed to addressing similar difficulties of PIOs in Fiji, Reunion Islands, Suriname, Guyana and other Caribbean States.

Like my request at the last Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, I would again encourage all PIO Card holders to convert their PIO Cards to OCI Cards. मैं बोलता रहता हूं, आग्रह भी करता हूं, लेकिन मैं जानता हूं कि आप लोग बहुत व्यस्त हैंऔर इसीलिए ये शायद काम रह जाता है।

तो आपकी इस व्यस्तता को देखते हुए, I am happy to announce that we have extended the deadline for such conversion from 31 December 2016, until June 30, 2017 without any penalty. From least of January this year, beginning with airports in Delhi and Bengaluru, we have also set up special counters at immigration points in our airports for OCI Card holders.

Friends, Today, there are about 7 Lakh Indian students/ pursuing academic programs abroad. और मुझे भलीभांति ज्ञात हैकि विदेश में रह रहा हर भारतीय, भारत की प्रगति से जुड़ने के लए आतुर है। उनका ज्ञान, विज्ञान और भारत केज्ञान का मिलन, भारत कोआर्थिक प्रगति को असीम उंचाईयों पर ले जायेगा। मेरा संदेश यह प्रयास और विश्वास रहा है कि सक्षम तथा successful प्रवासियों को भारत की विकास गाथा से जुड़ने का सम्पूर्णनीका मिलना चाहिए, खास तौर से विज्ञान तथा तकनीकी क्षेत्रों में and technology के field में।

इसके लिए हमने कई कदम उठाये हैं। One of them is that the Department of Science and Technology is launching Visiting Adjunct Joint Research Faculty or VAJRA scheme which enables NRIs and overseas scientific community to participate and contribute to research and development in India. Under the scheme an overseas Indian can work for one to three months in an institution in India. And, that too, at good terms और सब समेहपूर्ण हैं कि प्रवासी भारतीय इसके द्वारा देश की प्रगति का एक अहम् हिस्सा बन सकता है। Friends, it is my firm belief that connect between India and over-seas Indians should be sustained and enriching for both. To meet this goal, in October last year, महत्मा गाँधी की जन्मदिन पर, I had the honour of inaugurating the Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra in New Delhi. This Kendra is dedicated to the over-seas Indian community. We want it to become a symbol of the global migration, experiences, struggles, achievements and aspirations of the Indian Diaspora. I am confident that the Kendra will become another important platform for crystallizing ongoing efforts of the government to redefine its engagement with the over-seas Indian community.

Friends, हमारे प्रवासी भारतीय कई पीढ़ियों से विदेशों में हैं। हर पीढ़ी के अनुभव में भारत को और सक्षम बनाया है, जैसे नएपेक्षे पर हमारे भीतर अलग से एक स्नेह उभर आता है, उसी तरह विदेश में रह युवा प्रवासी भारतीय भी हमारे लिए अमोल हैं, विशेष हैं। हम प्रवासी भारतीयों की युवा पीढ़ियों से, young Pravasis से करीबी और मजबूत और संपर्क और गहरा बनानाचाहते हैं।

To provide the young Indian-origin youth an opportunity to visit their Motherland and reconnect with their Indian roots, culture, and heritage- we have expanded the Government’s Know India Program, under which for the first time, six groups of young over-seas Indians are visiting India this year.

I am very happy to know that 160 of these young over-seas Indians are here today to participate in the PravasiBharatiya Divas. A special welcome to the young Pravasis- I hope that on returning to your respective countries, you will remain connected with us, wherever you are, and visit again, again and again India. Last year, the first edition of the online quiz competition for young overseas Indians called “Bharat ko Jaano” saw participation of more than 5000 young NRIs and PIOs. In the second edition this year, I hope to see the participation of at least fifty thousand young overseas Indians.

Young Friends, will you please help me in this mission? Will you please help me in this mission? Are you ready to work with me? Then why we can stop at 50 thousands?

Friends, आज भारत एक नयी प्रातिशील दिशा की ओर अग्रसर है। ऐसी प्रगति जो न केवल आर्थिक है अपितु सामाजिक, राजनीतिक, और शासकीय भी है। आर्थिक क्षेत्र में, PIOs तथा भारत के लिए FDI norms पूरी तरह liberalized हैं और FDI कीमेरी दो परिभाषाएँ हैं, One definition is FDI means foreign direct investment, and second is first develop India. Investments by PIOs on non-repatriation basis; and by companies, trusts and partnerships owned by them, are now deemed to be domestic investment at par with investments made by resident Indians. हमारे कई ऐसाप्रोग्राम हैं, जैसे Swachh Bharat, Mission Digital India, Start up India, जिनसे प्रवासी भारतीय भारत के सामान्यव्यक्ति के प्रगति से सीधाजुड़ सकते हैं. There are some amongst you who like to contribute in businesses and investments. Others may feel more comfortable supporting through contributions made to Swachh Bharat, Namami Gange and others.

Some others may feel motivated to spare their valuable time and efforts in volunteering in India helping the under-privileged or contributing to capacity building programs in various sectors.

We welcome all your efforts that seek to strengthen India’s partnership with the over-seas Indian community. I also invite you to visit the exhibition in the Pravasi Bharatiya congention (PBD Convention) which gives you a glimpse of some of the flagship programs that we have been implementing and see how you can partner with us.

Friends, वहां अमेर के बाद अपने सुनने होगा, देखा होगा हमारे भ्रष्टाचार के खिलाफ, काले धन के खिलाफ corruption औरblack money के खिलाफ एक बहुत बड़ा बीहा उठायो है। black money तथा corruption हमारी राजनीति तथा देश तथासमाज तथा शासन को धीरे, धीरे, धीरे खोखला करता रहा है।

और ये दुर्भाग्य है कि black money के कुछ राजनीतिकजुगुराही हमारे प्रवासियों को जतना के विरोधी रहाहै है। corruption और काले धन को समाप्त करने में भारत सरकार की नीतियोंका जो समर्थन प्रवासी भारतीयों ने किया है उसके लिए मैं आपका अभिन्नन्दन करता हूं, आपका साधुवाद करता हूं, आपकाधन्यवाद करता हूं।

Friends, Finally, I would like to say that as Indians, we have a common heritage that brings us all together. And, no matter where we may be around? Where we may be around the globe, it is in that common bond that we are strong. और इसलिए मेरे एपारे देशवासियों आपने जो सपने सपने के रखे हुए हैं, आपके सपने हमारे संकेतए हैं और हमसब मिल करके उन सपनों को साकार करने के लिए और व्यवस्था में बदलाव जरूरी हो, अगर कानून नियमों में बदलाव कीजरूरत हो, साहसिक कदम उठाने की जरूरत हो, हर एक को साथ लेकर चलने के लिए जो कुछ भी करना पड़े, करने कीआवश् बहुत-बहुत समन्वय।

Thank You and Jai Hind.

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AKT/AK/NK

(Release ID: 1480162) Visitor Counter : 37

