



English rendering of the PM's speech at Foundation Stone ceremony of Bridge between Okha and Bet Dwarka in Dwarka

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My dear brothers and sisters present here in large numbers,

Today, I see Dwarka in a different mood altogether, everywhere there is enthusiasm and spirit is high, it's like I'm experiencing a new spirit in Dwarka. I convey my heartfelt regards to the people of Dwarka. I thank them. Today, the work that is being started in Dwarka Nagri, that is not just the construction of a bridge alone to reach Bet Dwarka. It's not like that it's just a structure made of bricks, stones and iron. Today, in a way, construction of this bridge, the work of linking the cultural heritage of Bet Dwarka with thousands of years old relations is happening.

Whenever I used to visit Bet and I used to see this bridge, used to see the clear water, I saw immense potential of tourism there. But, the government of India, you know it very well how much government of India liked Gujarat in the past. How many hardships we used to face? I still remember the condition of the people of Bet. They used to finish all the work before the sunset. Movement used to stop during the night time. Only water ways were available for the movement. It was a life of compulsions and hardships. My dear brothers and sisters of Bet know it very well if someone suddenly falls sick and he is required to be taken to hospital in the night then how difficult it was. And that is why this facility will be a big gift for the travelers from across the country.

Such a facility, which is going to meet the routine requirements of the people of Bet. Such a facility, that will strengthen the potential of development of tourism along the beaches, along the coast line of Bet. And if a traveler comes here but leaves immediately after offering obeisance to Thakur Ji then it doesn't benefit much to the economy of Dwarka. However, if he stays in the night, he stays for two days and spends thousand or two thousand rupees then it provides livelihood to the poorest of the poor in the economy of Dwarka. People come to Dwarka due to the grace of lord Dwarkadheesh. But if they stay in Dwarka, and they will certainly stay in Dwarka if we will provide facilities to them. And that is why we have given priorities to development of those facilities for a tourist that if he comes then he feels like staying, feels like staying for one or two days. He feels like spending the evening on sea beach, so that he feels delighted by seeing the sunset. The government is continuously working to create this kind of facilities.

Please imagine the Dwarka of 8-10 years ago and Dwarka of today. How much things have changed? And tourism doesn't develop by developing an isolated corner. It needs connectivity. The first place should be connected to the second, and the second should be connected to the third and so on. The entire world descends to watch the lions of Gir. However, after having seen the Gir lions if he gets the facility of wide roads or roads of two lanes, four lanes or six lanes to visit Porbandar and Dwarka then it becomes convenient for him. He feels like visiting. And the one who comes to see Gir lions, we should create a situation that he also feels like coming to pay respect to Dwarkadheesh. And who comes to pay respect to Dwarkadheesh then the facilities should be such that he feels like seeing the Gir lions. And that is why the government of India has modified the construction of national highway network in such a way that along with the construction of roads, in addition to providing speed and facility it should also be directly related to economic activity. And this facility should strengthen the economic activity.

Today, this work of widening of national highways up to Ghanutak and whenever I remember Ghanu, I'm reminded of my boys, we have very old workers there, farmers..., but they used to think about all these things. They used to think if we do this thing then it will be good, if we do that then it will be good. They consistently used to think about this thing. Today, we are going to spend a huge amount of money in widening of that road up to Ghanu. And today, in this programme, and one more district, even otherwise you can imagine about the project costing nearly Rs. 6,000 crore connecting Jamnagar, Junagadh to Porbandar districts. Please think of those days when Madhav Singh Solanki used to be the chief minister. At that time a photo was published on the front page of a news paper. And I still remember that image, at that time I was not in politics, I was working in social sector. At that time the then chief minister Madhav Singh came either in Jamnagar or somewhere in Jamnagar district to inaugurate a water tank. It was the concept of the governments at that time and please look at the concept of this government that what kind of bridges and roads are constructed by it. Getting your image published in a full page ad on the front page for inauguration of a water tank, their concept of development was limited to this thing.

The world has changed and we have to scale new heights of development in this changed world so that every Indian can face the world with confidence. This is the dream of every Indian to make this kind of India. This is not a dream of Narendra Modi alone. I'm just trying to fill colors in your dreams, I'm just trying to realise this thing. I'm working hard for this thing. As Nitin Ji told just a while ago that in the context of blue economy there is a region that has capability to give immense strength to the sea capital of Gujarat and also to the economy of the country. Gujarat has a coast line of 1600 kilometers. Our fishermen brothers and sisters live along that coastline. Full potential of a blue economy is available on our sea shores. We want to develop our ports but we also want to follow the development model based on ports. We want to develop that kind of infrastructure that connects ports with roads, with rails and also with air strips, where ware houses and cold storages are available and the products produced by Indian farmers reach to the world market in the shortest possible time. And the farmers of the country get the maximum price. And that is why we are taking one step after another for development of these facilities. We have launched a new scheme and that is formulated under the blue economy for my fishermen brothers and sisters. And that scheme is; today our fisherman who has a small boat, he goes out in the ocean for fishing but he cannot go beyond 10-12 nautical miles and he is not able to catch enough fishes in this area; he works hard for long hours but comes back after catching half the fishes than required. Shall I allow my fishermen brothers and sisters to lead this kind of difficult life? Should I leave them on their fate? Whether our fishermen brothers and sisters do not have a desire to progress in life? Whether my fishermen brothers and sisters will not have a desire to provide

good education to their children? Whether my fishermen brothers and sisters would not like to lead a good life by coming out of their shanties? And if we need to provide all these things then we will have to empower him financially. We will have to empower him. And that is why we have come out with such a scheme that some of our fishermen brothers and sisters who come forward collectively then the government will grant them loan on a concessional rate, will grant them a loan of Rs. 1.5-2 crore. So that he can afford to buy a big boat costing Rs. 1.5-2 crore, and the government will make arrangements for this thing. And if he has a big boat costing Rs. 1.5 crore, Rs. 2 crore then he can go beyond 10-12 nautical miles, he can go deep inside the ocean and there are plenty of fishes in the deep sea and if he is able to go into the deep sea then he will be able to catch three-four times more fish in half a day than what he usually catches in 3-4 days and he can come back to the shores by ensuring the earnings equal to three-four days. And there should be all the arrangements like cold storage etc. This kind of facilities we want to provide to our fishermen. We are taking it forward so that every fishermen brother can take advantage of it. It will change the lives of fishermen.

Kandla Port, the way it has been developed. When I was Chief Minister of Gujarat even then the Kandla port was there and I know very well what was its condition? We used to ask government of India to accord some priority to it. It was an opportunity but Kandla port was not in their priority list. And since the time we got the opportunity to work in the Government of India we have equally focused on the development of the ports of Gujarat as well. And as a result of that Kandla port has developed much more than it had developed in the last 25 years. And people get employment due to this thing. Our Alang, Alang was complaining from how many years? The development of Alang was discussed, hygiene of Alang was discussed. In a way, Bhavnagar's Alang was a reason behind our identity in the world. At the same time, hundreds of questions were raised in the name of environment. National, international organisations used to raise questions. And it was the responsibility of government of India to think about it, to help in that thing, do something for laborers working in the Alang, to bring about some changes in their lives. And despite my continuous efforts at that time I wasn't able to wake up the government of India. But today when we have got the opportunity to serve then we prepared a big scheme with the help of Japan; people only remember Japan for Bullet Train, these people forget that we have been moving ahead by devising a big scheme for development of Alang with Japanese collaboration. And due to that thing a big change is going to be brought about in the lives of my worker brothers and sisters of Alang.

The direction of change that we have been following, the efforts that we have been making to bring about development in the new and newer areas for changing the common man's lives that is going to produce these results. Mangrol and Veraval have been our traditional fishing hubs. Recently President of India visited that place. I'm extremely grateful to him for laying the foundation stone in Mangrol for such a massive scheme to speed up this project. In the coming days, this fishing hub is going to emerge as a very powerful factor for our fishing industry in this entire Bet region. Our entire coastal region is developing due to this blue economy and due to this tourism based economy and with them development of human resource is also taking place.

Today, I want to announce a gift for the people of Gujarat. And this thing is going to be useful for the country, it's not only for Gujarat. It will take place on our coast and it will happen on the divine land of Dwarka. India is working in the direction of making its marine police extremely modern for the protection of our coastal borders. Their training will be different from the regular police as they will be completely responsible for the safety of coast line for up to five kilometers in the sea. So in order to provide the training and research to marine police of the entire country and the biggest and the first such institute will be established in Mojar near the divine land of Dwarka. As we have a training institute inside the Jamnagar airport and people from all over the country take its advantage for air force. Similarly this training institute, this marine police training institute in the divine land of Dwarka for marine police, and this will be such an institute where thousands of people will stay and the training and visits of police personnel from all over the country would be an ongoing thing. You can imagine it very well what kind of huge economic activity will be related to this thing.

Brothers and sisters,

you people are busy in preparing for Diwali. And the festival of Diwali is very special in Gujarat and it is even more special for business community. And today I browsed the news papers of the entire country and they had this headline that Diwali had come 15 days in advance. And there is a Diwali like atmosphere everywhere when we took important decisions about GST yesterday. And we have said this thing on the day one that we would study the GST during the first three months of its implementation and whatever difficulties will be faced in those three months, whatever problems will be with the technology, with the rules; whatever problems will be regarding the rates and also the practical problems faced by the trading community; because we do not want the businessmen of the country to get stuck in red-tapism, get stuck in files and appeasing the officials; we would never want this kind of situation in India. And that is why yesterday our finance minister was able to get the approval for several important decisions on the basis of the information gathered in the last three months by convincing the GST council. And I'm happy that this decision has been welcomed by every corner of the country in one voice and this thing is the strength of the country. When people have faith in a government, when honesty is reflected behind decisions then despite the difficulties the country supports them fully. I am experiencing this thing and that is why I'm grateful to the fellow countrymen for welcoming our effort to make a simple tax GST even more simpler, and for this thing I am grateful to my countrymen and I welcome them.

Brothers and sisters of Dwarka,

Shrikrishna's Dwarka is submerged and it was the desire of the people of the country and the world that to sanctify themselves by touching the original Dwarka by diving deep into the ocean. I have asked several experts to explore its possibility so that people can go to that ancient city where Lord Shrikrishna had lived and reigned and come back after touching its stones. And then you will see that entire India will be standing here in a queue in Dwarka. Development does not take place only due to talks. It requires a vision, a foresight. It requires a solemn pledge and in order to fulfill that pledge one has to completely dedicate himself and use his full strength. And today, ordinary people in any corner of the country have faith in our government; have expectations of development and expect to get benefits of that development. They don't want their future generations to get stuck in the vicious circle of poverty and lead the life of penury. It's our effort even if their current generation has been forced to live in the penury but their children should not be forced to lead the life in poverty. This kind of developmental journey is ongoing today and we have been establishing new benchmarks of development. Today, India has attracted the attention of the entire world towards itself. People of the world have come forward for making investments and as a result of this thing new employment opportunities will be created for the youth of the country. It has generated a possibility of changing the lives of farmers of this country. Several initiatives have been taken to empower the villages of Gujarat. Today, Gujarat is playing an important role in this journey of

development; today Gujarat is playing an important role in the development of the country and for this thing I bow down to millions and millions of people of Gujarat and I thank them. And I also convey my heartfelt good wishes to the government of Gujarat for taking forward this process of development.

Jay Dwarkadheesh.

Jay Dwarkadheesh.

Jay Dwarkadheesh.

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