



English rendering of PM's speech at the Foundation Stone laying ceremony of Greenfield Airport for Rajkot, Gujarat

Posted On: 07 OCT 2017 8:04PM by PIB Delhi

My dear brothers and sisters of Surendranagar district who are present here in large numbers.

Whether Chotila would have ever thought that one day an airport will be built here? Whether Surendranagar district has ever thought this? Won't you feel good if an airport is being built here? Should an airport be built here or not, yes? Will it be called development if an airport is being built here, aircraft take off from here and all the arrangements are being made here? Do you like this development? Should development take place? Is development necessary? Whether the development will change the future of Gujarat? Will the development change the future of your children? Well done!

You ask the poorest of the poor, you ask him who don't have a house whether he needs a house and he will say: yes. And if a house is to be provided to him, if we need to make arrangements for his accommodation then it is not possible without development. The development used to take place earlier as well but at that time if a politician had arranged for installation of a hand pump in a locality in some village then he would keep reminding the people this thing for the next three elections 'that I had installed a hand pump at your place and please support me in the elections as I've arranged a hand pump for this place'. He used to ask for ensuring his victory in the elections as he has done developmental work at your place. And what was it? It was installation of a hand pump, installation of a hand pump for water. This was the definition of development.

Today, this is such a government that has been supplying the water of mother Narmada to every village, every household by building such a massive pipeline. And if any district is going to get the maximum benefit in the entire Gujarat due to Narmada scheme then; then the name of district is...what is the name of that district? What's the name? The name of that district is Surendranagar. The water of Narmada; mother Narmada has come to your homes to make this barren land a place of happiness. And it's not like that the impact of Narmada will only touch the rural and agricultural sector. The Narmada water has a sort of power, that due to this water Surendranagar district is going to become a very big hub of industrial development in the coming days. Maximum opportunities of employment will be generated in Surendranagar district. It will become big a centre for education because when water is available then the government's ability to development systems will go up. And this airport that is being built, will also contribute in the same manner. In the coming days it will create a competition for the development among Surendranagar, Rajkot or Morbi districts, whether whom should be developed faster than the other. And it's going to be a healthy competition. And that is why in the middle of Surendranagar district and Rajkot district, which are having the potential for fast development, the government is taking an important step today of laying the foundation for building a grand airport by spending hundreds of crore rupees. There will be some people who would not feel good even about this thing. But if you ask them to travel in bus, ask them why they travel in an aircraft then they will say that they need to reach early. So as if just they need to reach early and the rest of the people don't have to reach early!

It's not that old era when only kings used to travel by air. And that is why I've said that I'd like to develop the country's aviation sector in such a manner that a person wearing a hawai chappal (slipper) will be able to afford the air travel and you will be surprised to see this. These days aviation sector is getting importance world over. However, in India no aviation policy was made after the independence. Have you ever thought this thing? Government of India, did not have an aviation policy. We made the aviation policy after forming the government and it is not confined only to big places like Ahmedabad, Mumbai and Chennai, we have taken up this task of providing air connectivity to smaller places. Those places where there is no connectivity for long distances, and if the air travel to that place takes more than one hour, if the travel time is less than a hour then we have strengthened the aviation sector by fixing the ticket cost at Rs. 2,500. And so far 8 routes have become operational. Kandala is getting benefit in Gujarat, Mithapur is getting benefit. And small places will be connected in future due to this thing. Today, there are several states in India where two or three airports, airstrips are already present there. However, there will be a situation when in every state 10-15-20 airports will be operational. And that is why the way the number of air travelers are increasing, and you would be happy to note as I have got the latest information that the number of air travelers has gone up by 14%; and that is why I congratulate the people of Gujarat and people of this region for this work of Greenfield project that is being carried out in Rajkot. I'm happy that in this project, for this massive airport only 4% land was acquired from the farmers. Only 4% and the 96% land was barren land on which the airport will be constructed. That is why the barren land has been selected over the land of Surendranagar which is important from the point of agriculture. And we have used that land for the airport. As Vijay Bhai was talking about that the Rajkot airport has so many boundaries that these days its boundary wall is visible even from the bus stand. And that is why Rajkot and this

entire area are getting developed. So by keeping the future in mind, and that day is not far away when international service will operate from this place. If someone is required to visit anywhere in the world then this airport located between Chotila and Rajkot is going to be used. So this very important work is happening today.

Today, we have been conducting two other important programs in Surendranagar and Wadhwan. Soor-Sagar, it is going to become an ocean of happiness for you people in the future. Animal husbandry is going to develop due availability of water. Per capita milk production is also going to be increased. Our Soor-Sagar dairy; five-seven years ago. The earlier governments had made a law to prohibit the formation of dairies, I'm surprised why this thing would have been done! When I was chief minister then I had decided the government exchequer will help those who will come forward to form dairies and today the dairy industry has developed with full enthusiasm in almost every district of Saurashtra. There cannot be any greater help to cattle raisers than this thing. They should get the proper price for milk; and today I got the opportunity to dedicate the modernization work of a plant. And milk production is going to go up after the coming of this Soor-Sagar and mother Narmada and in the true sense of the work this has become the ocean of happiness for Surendranagar district and I wish you people that this ocean of happiness flourishes further.

Dhoridhaja Dam, I still remember when I came here to welcome the Narmada water in Dhoridhaja Dam then the entire district was happy. Only a thirsty person knows the yearning for water, these people of Kutch-Saurashtra and Gujarat know that what availability of water means to them. There was a time, and in Wadhwan earlier the water was supplied once in 15-20 days. If the guests were expected then they were asked to please visit during the noon time as if they come during the night then host won't be able to arrange water for their bathing the next morning. This region has faced this kind of days. And today, this kind of 300-350 kilometers long, this kind of water pipes are laid here to provide more water easily to people of Wadhwan Nagar. The newly constructed water tank and because of it the facility of potable water; and I believe that no matter how many blessings the sisters of this region give that will not be enough. These sisters who have been liberated from this hardship, whatever blessings they give that is not going to be enough. Today, the latest rebuilding of the road along Morbi, the widening of the road between Ahmedabad and Rajkot; and today's generation can't easily grasp these things but if you have time then please refer to the news papers of the time when BJP government was not in power. There were road accidents at least four times in a week on Ahmedabad-Rajkot highway. Several mothers lost their young children. Families were spoiled. There will be more than 100 big accidents in a year and it was due to the fact that the road was very narrow. And I still remember, at that time I was not in Rajkaran. We used to receive phone calls from Limbadi-Bagodara, and at that time mobile phones were not there, old phones were there, that a big accident has taken place and I used to rush our Ashokbhai from Ahmedabad. We were required to do this thing at least 2-4 times in a week. If you ask the people of Rajkot, if you ask the people of Surendranagar then there will be several families who would have lost some family members in the road accidents.

When the BJP government was formed in 1995 and Keshubhai became chief minister then the first thing that was decided was to build roads to save those innocent people who had been dying in road accidents. And this thing was done by BJP government and as a result of that the numbers of road accidents have come down. And today the traffic has increased further. Government of India has decided that we should make it a modern six lane highway as roads and highways are essential for development. Speed is necessary for progress and when speed is essential then be it making the arrangements for the aircraft or be it widening of the roads, we should simultaneously focus on these things. Be it the road towards Morbi and widening of road to Morbi means strengthening the industrial activity. An industrial belt has been developed up to Kutch and this structure is going to help in that thing.

And that is why today when I got the opportunity for simultaneous dedication and laying of the foundation stones for five projects in Panchal Panthak; and in just a few days, and the government of Gujarat is giving importance to Panchal Panthak for pilgrimage as well, and due to that thing the mother Goddess Chamunda of Chotila, Trinetreshwar Tarnetar, Sundari Bhawani, Surajdeval, Bandiaveli, Jaria Mahadev, Gebinath, Avaliathakar, these all are our religious places in Panchal Panthak region, and the government of Gujarat has begun a great work for their development by connecting them with each other as Yatratham. We were thinking how to bring foreign tourists to our Tarnetar fair? But when an airport will be constructed in Chotila then it will not take much time for your Tarnetar fair to develop as an international fair. So in way, the development work should be directly related to the economy, it should cause economic progress. With this clear approach, Government of India has been placing emphasis on the journey of development in several corners of the country. I also welcome the Gujarat government for the consistent momentum that it has provided, for the new dimensions that it has provided to this developmental journey and today we are moving forward with the pledge of a developed Gujarat, a modern and prosperous Gujarat.

We are completing 75 years of our independence in 2022. We have time of five years with us. Every citizen of the country should decide what he wants to contribute in these five years. It should not be like this that someone else should do something, government or municipality should do this or that thing. I will do it, I will certainly do this thing in next five years for my country, every citizen of the country should take this pledge. I request Surendranagar district that at a time when there is a possibility of a bumper crop, when mother Narmada has come to our homes then at this time there should not be a single farm in Surendranagar district that doesn't use drip irrigation. And we should make our farming modern by using this drip-irrigation, by using micro-irrigation

and sprinklers. If the farmers of Surendranagar district adopt drip-irrigation for farming then you just can't imagine the kind of revolution we can bring. And it will be useful for us to judiciously use the water of mother Narmada and that is why the question of water has always been a question of life and death for Gujarat and when water has become available then we should love it more than our lives. We should not waste a single drop of it, we should not spend it without properly using it. This is the responsibility of every citizen of Gujarat.

When we will celebrate 75 years of our independence in 2022, for that occasion we should make a solemn pledge, and this drip-irrigation, this micro-irrigation, scientific methods, use of technology, these all are going to play a very important role in our pledge of doubling the farmer's income by 2022.

I once again express my heartfelt gratitude for showering this amazing love, for your presence in such a large numbers, for your blessings and I see you people in such large numbers, I see people everywhere as far as I can see from Chotila.

Bharat Mata Ki Jai (Hail mother India)

Please say it aloud with your full strength by clenching your fists.

Bharat Mata Ki Jai (Hail mother India)

Bharat Mata Ki Jai (Hail mother India)

Bharat Mata Ki Jai (Hail mother India)

AKT/AK/KT/RSB/AK

(Release ID: 1505243) Visitor Counter : 117

Read this release in: Tamil

