



English rendering of Prime Minister's speech at the Indian Community event in Yangon, Myanmar on 06 September, 2017

Posted On: 06 SEP 2017 10:40PM by PIB Delhi

My greetings to the Indian community and people of Indian origin living in Myanmar!

My best wishes to you all for Ganesh Chaturthi and Eid. May your lives get filled with happiness, peace and prosperity.

I am very happy to be here with you today. I have always wanted to visit this historical and spiritual city of Yangon which is famous for its rich heritage and which has age old links with India. And I also wanted to meet you all, who have deep relations with both India and Myanmar, at this historical and spiritual gateway to the East. I can see a mini India here. You all who have come here from different parts of India are residing in the heart of a great Nation in the form of the Heartbeat of another Nation. I am all the more happy because you all are the manifestation of those cultural traditions that have been nurtured by benevolent mothers like Ganga, Godavari, Krishna, Kaveri, Brahmaputra and Iravati.

You represent thousands of years of the shared culture and Civilization, geography and history, aspirations and achievements of the great sons and daughters of India and Myanmar.

For the past thousands of years India and Myanmar share not only the boundary but also the emotions. In India Myanmar is also known as Brahmadesh or the place that belongs to Lord Brahma. Friends, this is that place that nurtured Buddha and his teachings. The Buddhist monks and the Buddhist texts, for several years, have propagated not only the religion but also Pali language and teachings at every corner of India. The holy land of Myanmar has gifted India and the whole world the art of meditation through Late Goenka ji. And I am happy that his son is present here among us today.

In Myanmar even today, Ramayana is presented by the name of Yama. And goddess Saraswati is known as Tharuthari, Siva as Parvijwa and Vishnu as Vithano.

The history of India's struggle for independence will be incomplete without the reference of Myanmar. This is that sacred soil from where Subhas Chandra Bose had raised his slogan, "You give me blood, I will give you freedom". On hearing this slogan, several youngsters - who loved India more than their lives and were ready to sacrifice their lives for the motherland - came in large numbers to support the Azad Hind Fauj. I feel privileged to meet and seek the blessings of those young fighters in the Azad Hind Fauj who have now become old. The foundations of the British rule had shaken when Netaji had announced the formation of Azad Hind Government. This is that very sacred soil where Bal Gangadhar Tilak had written his work, Geeta Rahasya inside the Mandalay jail. This is that very sacred land where great personalities like Mahatma Gandhi, Lala Lajpat Rai, Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore had set their feet on.

Whenever the great sons of India had to leave the country in order to fight the British forces, Myanmar used to be their second home. After the first war of independence in 1857 the ruler Bahadur Shah Zafar was given two yards of land in Myanmar.

Whenever I visit any country I get the opportunity to seek the blessings of the Indian community residing there. Few days back I visited Jaffna on my Sri Lanka tour. That was the first time when an Indian Prime Minister had visited Jaffna. There I met the people of Tamil origin. I also got the opportunity to handover to them the houses constructed with Indian aid. When I again visited Sri Lanka in the month of May this year I received an invitation to participate in an international conference. At that time I met Tamil brothers and sisters of Central Sri Lanka. I received so much love from thousands of people there after the inauguration of one hospital that was made with Indian aid that I can never forget the day. My Tamil brothers had showered a lot of love on the soil of Sri Lanka. Whenever I meet the Indian community abroad, be it the construction workers of Saudi Arabia or the Farmers and traders of Kenya or the professionals of Silicon Valley, I feel deeply attached to them. In a way they are government's ambassadors; you all are our ambassadors. I feel proud of you because wherever you all go, you not only contribute to the development and harmony of that place but also protect the Indian culture, which is a great thing.

3 years ago United Nations had passed the proposal for International Yoga Day under India's initiative in record time with record support. June 21st is being celebrated worldwide as International Day for Yoga for the past 3 years. Whenever we talk of yoga a reference to India is always made.

This global recognition of yoga is your achievement because it was taken to all corners of the world by the people of India.

It's not only an emotional connect with India but you all are also associated with India's development. The Indian diaspora is cooperating with India for its development. They are aiding in the development projects of their or their ancestor's States. The youngsters are all the more active, not only through social media but also through the deep interests that are developing every

day to know more about India. Last year we had organised a quiz titled 'Know India' for the overseas youth. I was very happy and pleasantly surprised to know that youth from about hundred countries had participated in the quiz. This means that the second and the third generation Indian kids had participated in large numbers.

When I meet you, I also feel that communication of our people living in foreign countries with government authorities in India is not a 'one-way-traffic' anymore.

Before coming here I had requested you all to provide your suggestions through the Narendra Modi app. I am really thankful to you all that you have given me extremely good suggestions.

From the very first day after coming to power the welfare of the Indian diaspora has been our government's priority. We have taken several initiatives such as merging the PCI and PIO Schemes, freeing the long term visa holders from police reporting, easy access to passport, efficient utilisation of community welfare fund, re-energizing the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas and organising Pravasi Bharatiya Divas in different parts of the world, according to the needs and feedback of the overseas Indian community.

And I believe that there is no other foreign minister like Sushma Swaraj ji who is so active in solving the issues of Indian diaspora.

Whenever any Indian or person of Indian Origin abroad faces any problem, she immediately contacts that person through Twitter and resolves the issue at the earliest. Whenever you have any difficulty while obtaining passport or visa or you need any legal assistance, the doors of the Indian Embassy are open for the Indian community 24/7, 365 days.

Friends, today the entire world is looking up to India; and the reason being you all. You all are the true ambassadors of India because India is transforming at a rapid pace and moving ahead.

We are not merely reforming our country, we are transforming India. We are not merely changing India; we are building a new India. We celebrated 70 years of India's Independence, last month. After five years, in 2022 it will be seventy five years of India's Independence. We have pledged to build a new India by the time Independent India turns 75 years.

We have taken a resolution to make India clean and poverty free, terrorism free, communalism free, casteism free, corruption free. I appeal to you all to visit the new India website and be a part of this great mission.

Friends, I believe that the 19th Century design cannot be used for 21st century infrastructure and infrastructure does not mean only road and rail network. The 21st century infrastructure includes everything that connects the people with modern techniques; transform their lives and quality of life. India has taken the lead to increase the solar energy capacity in the world.

Today a lot of investments are being made in railways, roads and airports like never before. The work of connecting every gram panchayat to the optical fibre network is progressing at a rapid pace. Coastal cities and ports are being developed at a rapid pace with the help of Sagarmala project.

I believe that with these efforts a new 'Infra culture' will also develop along with new infrastructures in the country and agriculture will be an inherent part of the same. Our government is aiming at doubling the farmer's income. For this we are making efforts to help them right from the sowing stage to the marketing stage like soil health card, neem coated urea, micro irrigation, crop insurance, food processing park, cold storage chain and so on and so forth. We all are well aware of the Green Revolution and The White Revolution. But today we have to focus on two more revolutions - Blue Revolution and Sweet Revolution as well. Blue revolution is for the welfare of not only the fishermen but also for developing the marine economy. Similarly sweet revolution which is beekeeping can help to increase the income manifold.

Also we are not afraid to take tough decisions for the welfare of the country. This is only because for us the country comes before the party. For us the country is everything. The government has taken every decision without any hesitation for the welfare of this Nation, be it the surgical strike or demonetisation.

We took the tough decision of demonetizing rupees 1000 and rupees 500 notes in order to eliminate black money and corruption. We could not have allowed the 125 crore people to bear the burden of the sins committed by handful of corrupt people. Black money does not have any address. It is not traceable.

Friends, after demonetization we caught hold of lakhs of people whose bank accounts had crores of rupees but they had never filed income tax return. We also got to know about lakhs of companies that were involved in money laundering cases. My friends, you will be happy to know that within 3 months the registration of more than 2 lakh companies were cancelled and their bank accounts were freed.

Just 2 months back GST was implemented. I call GST as Good and Simple Tax in a simpler language. GST has created a new culture of doing business with honesty. Those businessmen who were out of the tax system for the past 6 years have been linked with it within two months after the implementation of GST. Which could not be accomplished in 6 years has been accomplished in 60 days only. A new era began 3 years ago. Following the principle of 'minimum government, maximum governance', all the procedures have been simplified, the laws have been changed, rules for ease of doing business have been simplified; the people have gained the confidence back that India can transform and move ahead and that India is now capable of getting rid of the decades-old evils that had held India back.

Friends, India believes in sharing the fruits of its development with other countries. We believe in sharing our experiences with other developing countries of Africa, South Asia or Pacific Island. I had promised for a South Asian satellite in 2014 and we launched it this year. Not only India but all those neighbouring countries that are associated with it are gaining with this satellite.

We have been the first responders at the time of a natural disaster or any crisis, not only for Indians but also for all those who are in need of help. When we reach out for help we never ask for the nationality of that person. We have tried to fulfil our responsibility of a good neighbour at times of crises, be it the Nepal earthquake or water crisis of Maldives or typhoon in Fiji or evacuation of Indians and foreigners during West Asian violence or rehabilitation work after the cyclone had hit Myanmar.

Friends, ' Vasudev kutumbakam' that is, 'the whole world is a family' has been our cultural tradition and we are proud of it. Today the entire world considers India as the third leader. Today India has a significant position in the world order; be it the International Day of Yoga or the International Solar Alliance or the agenda on Golden decade of BRICS; the voice of India echoes at every corner of the world. A new hope and expectation has developed among the countries of the world towards India.

Brothers and sisters, India considers the North Eastern states as a gateway to the South East Asia. The Gateway opens towards Myanmar. Hence, India is making efforts towards developing the roads connecting India to this gateway. Few months back 1600 crore rupees were sanctioned to upgrade the Imphal-Moreh section. An integrated check post is also being made at Moreh. Now the trade and people to people contact will also enhance between Manipur and Myanmar on the completion of this project. We have progressed upon the Kaladan project after completing the Sittwe port and Paletwa inland water terminal. The work on the road component has already begun. I have no doubt about the fact that the transport corridor will emerge as the development corridor for the nearby areas. India has started providing truck-loads of high speed diesel to fulfil the needs of upper Myanmar. We want to increase our cooperation by signing the border crossing agreement and the motor vehicles agreement thereby increasing the power and energy trading. India is proud of the achievements in the field of development cooperation and capacity building partnership.

We are sharing India's democratic experiences with Myanmar. The people to people connect and the social culture of India is our greatest strength and to strengthen it further we have decided to provide gratis visa to the people of Myanmar who are interested in coming to India. We have also decided to release forty fishermen of Myanmar. We hope that they will soon be united with their families.

Today I had visited the Ananda Temple in Bagan. India is helping in renovation of Ananda Temple as well as other historical structures that were destroyed last year due to earthquake. India and Myanmar have a deep historical connect with which the future generation should be aware of. I believe research should be done in this matter.

During our discussions I have put forward a proposal in front of the Myanmar government. We can conduct the survey on INA memorial together and a joint history project can be established. This can help in strengthening people to people contact between the two countries.

I am delighted to inform you that we have decided to provide OCI based on National Registration Card. The government has also decided to increase the number of scholarships for Indian Council for Cultural Relations in order to strengthen the cultural relations between the two countries.

Friends, once I read that the India and Myanmar's relation is based on 5Bs - Buddhism, Business, Bollywood, Bharatnatyam and Burma teak. But I think they have missed one B here; which is Belief or trust; trust between the two countries. Trust between the two countries has been developing over the years.

Brothers and sisters, our motto of Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas is not limited to our country's boundaries; because it also means every country's cooperation as well and every country's development. India is obligated to co-operate in the development projects of Myanmar.

I bow to you for showering your blessings. I feel privileged to have met you all. Thanks a lot for coming here in large numbers to listen to me and for your attachment with India. Once again I thank you all from the bottom of my heart and I salute this land. Thanks a lot!

AKT/AK/MG

(Release ID: 1505229) Visitor Counter : 113

