

English rendering of PM's speech at the launch of development works in Bhuj, Gujarat

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Bharat Mata Ki – Jai!

Our Tricolour should never be lowered.

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Chief Minister of Gujarat, Shri Bhupendrabhai Patel, my colleague in the Union Cabinet Shri Manohar Lal ji, all other members of the Cabinet, Members of Parliament, Members of the Legislative Assembly, all other respected dignitaries, and my dear brothers and sisters of Kutch!

Why have I come to the land of Kutch, the land of Sharad and the brave Kachchhi people? I offer my heartfelt salutations to the great son of Kutch and revolutionary hero, Shyamji Krishna Varma. And to all my Kachchhi brothers and sisters, I greet you warmly with 'Ram Ram' from the bottom of my heart.

Friends,

On this sacred land of Kutch, all our hopes are fulfilled with the blessings of Maa Ashapura. Maa Ashapura has always showered her grace upon this land. Today, I bow before Maa Ashapura with devotion and extend my greetings to all the people from the soil of Kutch.

Friends,

My bond with Kutch is very old, and the love you all have for me is such that I can never stop myself from coming here. Even when I was not in politics, had nothing to do with power, I used to come to the land of Kutch regularly — it was a natural part of my work and life. I've had the opportunity to visit every nook and corner of this region. The people of Kutch, your self-confidence, your determination despite all hardships — it has always guided my life. Those from the older generations know, though the current generation may not, life here has become much easier now, but the situation used to be very different back then. And I remember, as Chief Minister, the very first time when Narmada's waters reached the land of Kutch — it was as if Diwali had arrived for Kutch. I don't think Kutch had ever witnessed such a Diwali as we did on that day. Kutch, which had thirsted for water for centuries, was blessed by Maa Narmada. And I consider it my good fortune that I got the opportunity — thanks to all of you — to play a role in bringing water to this dry land. When I was the Chief Minister, people used to count how many times I visited Kutch — they would keep track! Some even said, "Modi ji has hit a century." Visiting many villages, going to the homes of my party workers, meeting people, sitting and working in local offices — all these were natural parts of my daily activities.

Friends,

I have seen that although there was no water in Kutch, the farmers of Kutch were full of spirit — their determination has always been remarkable. For years, whatever I experienced in Kutch, I always saw great potential for development in it. Kutch cannot be underestimated. A land that had Dholavira thousands of years ago must surely possess immense strength — we should revere and honour such a land.

And friends,

Kutch has shown that with hope and continuous hard work, circumstances can be turned around, adversity can be transformed into opportunity, and desired goals can be achieved. When the earthquake struck here, the

world thought — "It's over. Nothing can happen now." Kutch had wrapped itself in a shroud of death after the quake. But friends, I never lost my faith. I had faith in the indomitable spirit — the "Kachhi khameer" — of the people of Kutch. That's why I used to say: Children must be taught the 'K' of Kutch and the 'Kh' of Khameer (grit and spirit). I was confident that Kutch would overcome this crisis — that it would make even the earthquake tremble — and my Kachhimadu (beloved people of Kutch) would rise again. And you did exactly that. Today, Kutch is a major centre of trade, business, and tourism. In the times to come, Kutch's role will become even greater. That is why whenever I come to accelerate Kutch's development, I feel I must do more, do something new, do even better — my heart refuses to stop. Today, projects worth more than 50,000 crore rupees related to development have either been inaugurated or had their foundation stones laid here. There was a time when plans worth 50,000 crore rupees were not heard of in the entire state of Gujarat. Today, work worth that much is happening in just one district!

Friends,

These projects will also help Bharat become a major global force in the blue economy and a centre for green energy. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to all of you — my beloved people of Kutch — for these remarkable development efforts. Now, raise the Tricolour with pride, and express your joy and enthusiasm!

Friends,

Our Kutch is becoming the world's largest centre for green energy. Did you hear that? What did I say? The largest in the world — let's take a moment to celebrate that! Green hydrogen is a new type of fuel. In the times to come, cars, buses, street lights — all of these will run on green hydrogen. Kandla is one of the three green hydrogen hubs in the country. Today, the foundation stone for a green hydrogen plant was also laid here. You'll be proud to know, friends — the technology used in this plant is Made in India. Our Kutch is also at the heart of Bharat's solar revolution. One of the world's largest solar power projects is being built right here — in my Kutch. There was a time when, while describing Kutch, people would say, "What do you have there? It's just a desert. What can possibly happen there?" And even then, I used to say: "This is not just a desert — this is the gateway (toran) of Gujarat!" That very desert, once surrounded by dust storms and barren land, is now not just empowering us, but has begun to energize the entire nation. Thanks to the Khavda Complex, Kutch has now made its mark on the global energy map.

Friends,

Our government is working to ensure that you not only get sufficient electricity, but also that your electricity bill becomes zero. That's why we have launched the PM Suryaghar Muft Bijli Yojana. Millions of families in Gujarat have already become part of this initiative.

Brothers and sisters,

In every country that has achieved prosperity, the sea has played a major role in that success. Here too, we have the example of Dholavira. Ancient port cities like Lothal existed here — these were centres of wealth and progress in Bharat's ancient civilization. Our vision of port-led development is inspired by this rich legacy. Bharat is developing cities around its ports. From seafood to tourism to trade, the coastal region is being developed into an entirely new ecosystem. The country is making major investments in expanding and modernizing ports, and the results have been remarkable. Some of the country's major ports have, for the first time, handled a record 150 million tonnes of cargo in a single year. This includes our very own Deendayal Port in Kandla. Nearly one-third of the country's total maritime trade is handled through the ports of Kutch alone. That's why the capacity and connectivity of Kandla and Mundra ports are being continuously enhanced. Even today, several new shipping-related facilities have been inaugurated here. A new jetty has been constructed. To store more cargo, modern storage facilities have been set up. In this year's Budget, we have announced a special fund for the maritime sector. Shipbuilding has also been given major emphasis. We will now build large ships in Bharat, both for our own needs and for the world's. There was a time when Mandvi was famous for exactly this — building massive ships. Our people used to construct them with great skill, and that strength still exists in Mandvi today. Now, we want to take Bharat to the world stage in modern shipbuilding, to manufacture and export these ships. This will also create thousands of employment opportunities for our youth. We already have the Alang ship-breaking yard here. Now, we are putting our full strength into shipbuilding — and this is one of the sectors with the highest potential for job creation.

Friends,

Our Kutch has always respected its heritage. Now, this heritage is also becoming an inspiration for Kutch's development. Over the past two to two-and-a-half decades, industries related to textiles, food processing, ceramics, and salt have seen significant growth in Bhuj. Kutch embroidery, block printing, bandhani fabric, and leatherwork — their popularity can be seen everywhere. And what to say about our Bhujodi — there is hardly any handloom or handicraft workshop that doesn't feature Bhujodi work. The tradition of Ajrakh printing is unique to Kutch, and now all these art forms from our Kutch have received the GI (Geographical Indication) tag. They've gained recognition — not just locally, but globally. This means it's now officially acknowledged that these art forms originate from Kutch. This is a huge recognition, especially for our tribal families and artisans. In this year's Budget, the central government has made several announcements for the leather and textile industries.

Friends,

I also salute the hard work of the farmers — both women and men — of Kutch. You didn't give up even in the face of tough challenges. There was a time when the water table in Gujarat had dropped hundreds of feet. With the grace of Narmada ji and the efforts of the government, the situation has changed today. The canal built from Kevadia to Mod Kuba in Kutch has transformed the fate of the region. Today, Kutch's mangoes, dates, pomegranates, cumin, and dragon fruit are performing exceptionally well. Many such crops are now reaching markets across the world. There was a time when people were forced to migrate from Kutch — we used to have negative population growth. But today, the people of Kutch are getting employment right here in Kutch. Not just that — even people from outside now see hope in Kutch, friends.

Friends,

Providing maximum employment opportunities to the youth of the country is a top priority for the BJP government. Tourism is one such sector that offers a huge number of jobs. Kutch has history, culture, and nature — all three. I'm happy to see that the Rann Utsav of Kutch is reaching new heights day by day. The Smriti Van built here in Bhuj has been recognized by UNESCO as the most beautiful museum in the world. Tourism in this region will expand even further in the coming days. The village of Dhordo has been listed among the best tourism villages in the world. Are the people from Dhordo here today? Please wave the national flag! Mandvi's sea beach is also becoming a centre of attraction for tourists. I would like to request Bhupendra Bhai, and all the leaders of Kutch who are present here — when the Rann Utsav is held, can we also organize beach competitions during the same period? Beach games are gaining a lot of popularity these days. Recently, a national-level competition was held in Diu, where thousands of children came to participate and play on the sandy beaches. I would love to see regular beach festivals and games held at Mandvi Beach during the Rann Utsav, attracting people from all over the country. This way, Kutch tourism will continue to scale new heights. And whatever support you need — I am always here for you.

Friends,

The Namo Bharat Rapid Rail between Ahmedabad and Bhuj has also given a strong boost to tourism.

Friends,

Today is the 26th of May — why so quiet all of a sudden? It was you, my brothers and sisters of Gujarat, who sent me off with full celebration from Gujarat to Delhi. And it was on this very day, 26th May 2014, around this very time, that I took the oath for the first time as the Prime Minister — as the 'Pradhan Sevak' of the country. With your blessings, the journey from serving Gujarat to serving the nation has now completed 11 years. And look at the hand of destiny — on 26th May, it has been 11 years in the Prime Minister's role. On the day I took the oath, the country's economy was ranked 11th in the world. And today, 11 years later, we have reached the 4th position.

Friends,

Bharat believes in tourism — tourism connects people. But there are countries like Pakistan, which consider terrorism as tourism, and this is a great threat to the world. People in Kutch, Gujarat, would know — 25–30 years ago, whenever a minister or chief minister used to visit from Gandhinagar, their speeches would begin with Pakistan and end with Pakistan. They would constantly remind the people of Kutch about Pakistan —

again and again. You must have noticed that in 2001, I made a decision: I wouldn't waste time on that. I stopped mentioning it altogether. I only talked about the strength of Kutch. I completely moved on — and the people of Kutch, with their full potential, built a Kutch that could make even Pakistan jealous, my friends!

Friends,

Our policy against terrorism is one of zero tolerance. Operation Sindoor has made that policy crystal clear. Anyone who attempts to spill the blood of Indians will be answered in their own language. Anyone who dares raise an eye against Bharat will not be spared at any cost.

Friends,

Operation Sindoor is a mission to protect humanity and eliminate terrorism. After May 22, I never hid anything. I stood tall and declared in a public rally in Bihar: "I will reduce the hideouts of terrorists to dust." We waited 15 days, expecting Pakistan to take some action against terrorism. But perhaps terrorism is their source of livelihood. When they did nothing, I gave full freedom to our armed forces. The targets were terrorist headquarters, located hundreds of kilometres deep inside. Our forces struck directly, without harming anyone nearby, and delivered precise blows. This shows how capable and disciplined our military is. We have shown the world that we can eliminate terrorist hideouts while sitting here in Bharat.

Friends,

We have all seen how rattled Pakistan became after Bharat's action. On the night of the 9th, drones appeared even along our Kutch border. They thought that since Modi is from Gujarat, they would try to make a mark here — but they didn't know who they were dealing with. Just remember 1971 — the brave women who are here today, they made Pakistan bite the dust back then! These mothers and sisters built a runway in just 72 hours, and we resumed our attacks. Today, I am fortunate that these warrior women from the 1971 war have come to bless me. Not only that, they also gave me a plant of the Sindoor tree. Mothers and sisters — this plant that you've given me will now be planted at the Prime Minister's House. This Sindoor tree will grow and stand tall like a 'Vat Vriksha' (great banyan tree).

Friends,

While we attacked terrorist hideouts, Pakistan tried to attack our innocent civilians. And when their drones started appearing, they were taken down one after another in the blink of an eye — you saw it yourself. Bharat then launched a double-strength counterattack on their military. Bharat's precise strike on Pakistan's airbases and military installations left the world stunned. As I said — you witnessed the war of 1971 — but this time, all of Pakistan was trembling, my friends, they were terrified. In 1971, they had attacked our Bhuj airbase, and our sisters set an example of unmatched bravery.

And friends,

We responded to Pakistan's attacks with such power that their air bases are still in the ICU — even today, they haven't recovered! And finally, Pakistan was forced to surrender. They realized there was no escape — Bharat had shown its formidable strength. Ultimately, it was the valour, courage, and precision of our armed forces that brought this about. Within a few hours, Pakistan began waving the white flag, saying they didn't want to fire any more shots. We said, "Well, we had already made that clear! Our goal was to destroy terrorist hideouts, to strike, to teach a lesson." But since you made the mistake, you had to pay the price.

Friends,

Bharat's fight is with the terrorism that is being harboured across the border. Our enmity is with those who nurture and support terrorism today. From this soil of Kutch, which borders Pakistan, I want to say something to the people of Pakistan as well: What have you gained? Bharat has become the world's fourth-largest economy, and what is your condition? Who has ruined the future of your children? Who has forced them to wander hopelessly? It is the masters of terrorism; it is the army of your own country with its own agenda. To the citizens of Pakistan, especially the youth and children — listen carefully to Modi. Your government and your army are supporting terrorism. Terrorism has become a money-making business for the Pakistani army and government. The youth of Pakistan need to make a decision. The children of Pakistan must ask themselves: Is this the right path? Is this really benefiting them? This game of power politics — Will it ever

improve the lives of Pakistan's children? I say to the children of Pakistan: Your rulers, your army, by living under the shadow of terrorism, are putting your lives in danger, destroying your future, and pushing you into darkness. To free Pakistan from the disease of terrorism, the people of Pakistan must rise. The youth of Pakistan must take a stand — Live a life of peace and dignity, eat your bread in peace, otherwise — my bullet is ready.

Friends,

Bharat's direction is crystal clear. Bharat has chosen the path of development, the path of peace and prosperity. I firmly believe that the spirit of Kutch will inspire Bharat to become a developed nation.

To my Kutchi brothers and sisters, the festival of Ashadhi Bij — the Kutch New Year — is just a few days away. Earlier, I used to come here to celebrate Ashadhi Bij with you. But this time, as I may not be able to come, I want to extend my best wishes today itself. To my dear brothers and sisters of Kutch — Your love, your blessings, and the roadshow today — Wow! In such heat, from the airport to here, crowds of people turned out. A hundred salutes to Kutch, my friends — a hundred salutes! Once again, I extend many congratulations for all the development projects. Now, raise the Tricolour high, and say loudly with me—

Bharat Mata Ki – Jai!

Bharat Mata Ki – Jai!

Bharat Mata Ki – Jai!

Bharat Mata Ki – Jai!

Vande Mataram! Vande Mataram!

Vande Mataram! Vande Mataram!

Vande Mataram! Vande Mataram!

Thank you very much.

Disclaimer: Some portions of the Prime Minister's speech are in Gujarati language, which has been translated here.

MJPS/VJ/VK

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