

English rendering of PM's address at the launch of various development projects in Katra, Jammu and Kashmir

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Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir Manoj Sinha Ji, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Ji, my colleagues in the Union Cabinet Ashwini Vaishnav Ji, Jitendra Singh Ji, V Somanna Ji, Deputy CM Surendra Kumar Ji, Leader of Opposition in Jammu and Kashmir Assembly Sunil Ji, my colleague in Parliament Jugal Kishore Ji, other public representatives and my dear brothers and sisters. This is the land of Veer Zorawar Singh Ji, I salute this land.

Friends,

Today's program is a huge celebration of India's unity and India's willpower. With the blessings of Mata Vaishno Devi, today the valley of Kashmir has been connected to India's rail network. While describing Maa Bharati, we have been saying with reverence - Kashmir to Kanyakumari. This has now become a reality for the railway network as well. Udhampur, Srinagar, Baramulla, these rail line projects, these are not just names. These are the identity of the new strength of Jammu and Kashmir. It is a proclamation of India's new strength. A short while ago I had the opportunity to inaugurate the Chenab Bridge and Anji Bridge. Today itself, Jammu and Kashmir has received two new Vande Bharat trains. Here in Jammu, the foundation stone of a new medical college has been laid. Projects worth Rs 46 thousand crores will give new impetus to the development of Jammu and Kashmir. I congratulate all of you for the new era of development. This is the land of Haji. I salute this land.

Friends,

Many generations of Jammu and Kashmir have passed away dreaming of rail connectivity. Yesterday I was watching a statement by CM Omar Abdullah ji and also mentioned in the speech that he had also said that he was waiting for the completion of this project since the time he was studying in 7th-8th standard. Today the dream of millions of people of Jammu and Kashmir has come true. And this is also true that all the good work is still left for me.

Friends,

It is the good fortune of our government that this project gained momentum during our tenure and we completed it. In between, many difficulties came due to the period of Covid, but we stood firm.

Friends,

Difficulties in commuting, weather problems, stones constantly falling from the mountains, it was difficult and challenging to complete this project. But our government has chosen the path of challenging the challenge itself. Today, many all-weather infrastructure projects being built in Jammu and Kashmir are an example of this. Sonmarg tunnel was started only a few months ago. Just a while ago, I came among you through Chenab and Anji Bridge. While walking on these bridges, I have experienced the strong resolve of India, the skill and courage of our engineers and workers. Chenab Bridge is the world's highest railway arch bridge. People go to Paris, France to see the Eiffel Tower. And this bridge is much higher than the Eiffel Tower. Now people will not only go to see Kashmir via Chenab Bridge, but this bridge will also become an attractive tourist destination in itself. Everyone will go to the selfie point and take selfies. Our Anji Bridge is also a great

example of engineering. This is India's first cable-supported railway bridge. Both these bridges are not just structures of brick, cement, steel and iron, they are a living symbol of India's power, standing on the inaccessible hills of Pir Panjal. This is the roar of India's bright future. This shows that as big as the dream of a developed India is, so high is our courage and our capability. And the most important thing is good intention and immense effort.

Friends,

Be it Chenab Bridge or Anji Bridge, these will become a means of prosperity for both the regions of Jammu and Kashmir. This will not only increase tourism but will also benefit other sectors of the economy. Rail connectivity between Jammu and Kashmir will create new opportunities for businessmen of both regions. This will give impetus to the industry here, now Kashmir's apples will be able to reach the big markets of the country at a low cost and will be able to reach on time. Be it dry fruits or pashmina shawls, the handicrafts here will now be easily able to reach any part of the country. This will also make it very easy for the people of Jammu and Kashmir to travel to other parts of the country.

Friends,

I was reading a comment in the newspaper by a student from Sangaldan here. That student said that only those people of his village who had gone out of the village had seen the train till now. Most of the people of the village had only seen the video of the train. They still can't believe that a real train will pass in front of their eyes. I also read that many people are remembering the arrival and departure timings of the trains. Another daughter said a very good thing, that daughter said – now the weather will not decide whether the roads will open or remain closed, now this new train service will keep helping the people in every season.

Friends,

Jammu and Kashmir is the crown of Maa Bharati. This crown is studded with beautiful gems. These different gems are the strength of Jammu and Kashmir. The ancient culture here, the traditions here, the spiritual consciousness here, the beauty of nature, the world of herbs here, the abundance of fruits and flowers, the talent that is present in the youth here, in you people, it shines like a jewel in the crown.

Friends,

You know very well that I have been visiting Jammu and Kashmir for decades. I have had the opportunity to visit and live in interior areas. I have constantly seen and felt this potential and that is why I am working with full dedication towards the development of Jammu and Kashmir.

Friends,

Jammu and Kashmir has been the pride of India's education and culture. Today, our Jammu and Kashmir is becoming one of the biggest knowledge hubs of the world, so the participation of Jammu and Kashmir in this is also going to increase in the future. There are institutions like IIT, IIM, AIIMS and NIT here. There are central universities in Jammu and Srinagar. The research ecosystem is also expanding in Jammu and Kashmir.

Friends,

Along with studies, unprecedented work is also being done here for medicine. In the last few years, two state level cancer institutes have been established. Seven new medical colleges have been started here in the last five years. You also know that when a medical college opens, not only the patients but also the youth of that area get the most benefit from it. Now the number of MBBS seats in Jammu and Kashmir has increased from 500 to 1300. I am happy that now Reasi district is also going to get a new medical college. Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Institute of Medical Excellence, this is not only a modern hospital, it is also an example of our culture of charity. The money spent to build this medical college has been donated by people coming to pay obeisance to the feet of Mata Vaishno Devi from every corner of India. I convey my best wishes to Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board and its Chairman Manoj Ji for this sacred work. The capacity of this hospital is also being increased from 300 beds to 500 beds. This will also be very convenient for the people coming to visit Mata Vaishno Devi in Katra.

Friends,

The BJP-NDA government at the Centre has been in power for 11 years now. These 11 years have been dedicated to the welfare of the poor. The dream of a concrete house for 4 crore poor people has been fulfilled through Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana. The Ujjwala Yojana has ended the smoke in 10 crore kitchens, our sisters and daughters have been protected. The Ayushman Bharat Yojana has provided free treatment up to Rs 5 lakh to 50 crore poor people. The Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana has ensured enough food in every plate. For the first time, the Jan Dhan Yojana has opened the doors of banks for more than 50 crore poor people. The Saubhagya Yojana has brought electricity to 2.5 crore families living in darkness. The 12 crore toilets built under the Swachh Bharat Mission have freed people from the compulsion of open defecation. The Jal Jeevan Mission has brought tap water to 12 crore new homes, making life easier for women. The PM Kisan Samman Nidhi has provided direct financial assistance to 10 crore small farmers.

Friends,

Due to many such efforts of the government, in the last 11 years, more than 25 crore poor people, our own poor brothers and sisters, have fought against poverty and 25 crore poor people have come out of poverty by defeating and conquering poverty. Now they have become a part of the new middle class. Those who consider themselves experts of the social system, big experts, those who are immersed in the politics of the past and the future, those who have been making political gains in the name of Dalits, just take a look at the schemes that I have just mentioned. Who are the people who have received these facilities, who are those people who were deprived of these basic facilities for 7-7 decades after independence. These are my Dalit brothers and sisters, these are my tribal brothers and sisters, these are my backward brothers and sisters, these are the people who live in the mountains, these are the people who live in the forests, these are the people who spend their entire lives in slums, these are the families for whom Modi has spent his 11 years. The central government is trying to give maximum strength to the poor, the new middle class. Be it one rank one pension, making salary up to Rs. 12 lakh tax free, giving financial assistance for buying a house, helping for cheap air travel, in every way, the government is walking shoulder to shoulder with the poor and the middle class.

Friends,

Helping the poor to get rid of poverty, but also increasing the potential of the middle class, who live honestly and pay taxes for the country from time to time, for the first time in independence, so much work has been done for this, which we have done.

Friends,

We are continuously increasing new employment opportunities for our youth. And one important means of this is tourism. Tourism provides employment, tourism connects people. But unfortunately, our neighbouring country is against humanity, against harmony, against tourism, not only this, it is also against the livelihood of the poor. What happened in Pahalgam on 22 April is an example of this. Pakistan attacked both humanity and Kashmiriyat in Pahalgam. His intention was to create riots in India. His intention was to stop the earnings of the hard-working people of Kashmir. That is why Pakistan attacked the tourists. The tourism that was growing continuously in the last 4-5 years, every year a record number of tourists were coming here. The tourism that sustains the households of the poor in Jammu and Kashmir, was targeted by Pakistan. Some were horse riders, some were porters, some were guides, some were guest house owners, some were shop-dhaba owners, Pakistan's conspiracy was to destroy all of them. The young man Adil who challenged the terrorists, he too had gone there to do labour work, but he was working so that he could take care of his family. The terrorists also killed Adil.

Friends,

The way the people of Jammu and Kashmir have stood up against this conspiracy of Pakistan, the power that the people of Jammu and Kashmir have shown this time, the people of Jammu and Kashmir have given a strong message not just to Pakistan but to the terrorist mentality of the whole world. The youth of Jammu and Kashmir have now made up their mind to give a befitting reply to terrorism. This is the terrorism that burnt down schools in the valley, and not just schools or buildings, it burnt the future of two generations. Hospitals were destroyed. It ruined many generations. The people here could choose representatives of their choice, elections could be held here, this too had become a big challenge due to terrorism.

Friends,

After enduring terrorism for years, Jammu and Kashmir had seen so much destruction that the people of Jammu and Kashmir had stopped dreaming, and had accepted terrorism as their fate. It was necessary to get Jammu and Kashmir out of this situation, and we have done it. Today, the youth of Jammu and Kashmir are dreaming new dreams and are also realizing them. Now the youth of Kashmir are happy to see the markets, shopping malls, cinema halls buzzing. The people here want to see Jammu and Kashmir become a major center for film shooting again, want to see this region become a hub of sports. We have seen the same sentiment in the fair of Mata Kheer Bhavani as well. The way thousands of people reached the temple of Mata, it shows the picture of new Jammu and Kashmir. Now the Amarnath Yatra is also going to start from the 3rd. We are also seeing the excitement of Eid everywhere. The environment of development that was created in Jammu and Kashmir is not going to be shaken by the Pahalgam attack. Narendra Modi's promise to all of you in Jammu and Kashmir and to all of you is that I will not let development stop here. If any obstacle comes in the way of the youth here from fulfilling their dreams, then Modi will be the first one to face that obstacle.

Friends,

Today is 6th June, remember a month ago, exactly a month ago, on that night of 6th May, Pakistan's terrorists were doomed. Now whenever Pakistan hears the name of Operation Sindoor, it will remember its shameful defeat. The Pakistani army and terrorists had never imagined that India would attack terrorists like this by going hundreds of kilometers inside Pakistan. The buildings of terror that they had built with years of hard work have turned into ruins in a few minutes. Seeing this, Pakistan got very agitated and it vented its anger on the people of Jammu, Poonch and other districts too. The whole world saw how Pakistan destroyed homes here, threw shells on children, destroyed schools and hospitals, shelled temples, mosques and gurudwaras. Every citizen of the country has seen the way you countered Pakistan's attacks. That is why every citizen of the country stands with their families with full strength.

Friends,

A few days ago, appointment letters were handed over to the family members of those who died in cross border firing. The suffering of more than 2 thousand families affected by shelling is also our own suffering. These families were given financial help to repair their houses after the shelling. Now the Central Government has decided to increase this assistance further. In today's program, I also want to give you information about this.

Friends,

Now, those houses which have suffered extensive damage will be given Rs 2 lakhs and those houses which are partially damaged will be given Rs 1 lakhs as additional assistance. This means that now they will get this extra amount after the first-time assistance.

Friends,

Our government considers the people living on the border as the first sentinels of the country. In the last decade, the government has done unprecedented work for development and security in the border districts, during this period about ten thousand new bunkers have been built. These bunkers have helped a lot in saving lives in the situation created after Operation Sindoor. I am happy to tell you that two border battalions have been formed for the Jammu and Kashmir division. The work of forming two women battalions has also been completed.

Friends,

Even in the remote areas near our international border, new infrastructure is being built by spending hundreds of crores of rupees. The Kathua to Jammu highway is being made a six-lane expressway, the Akhnoor to Poonch highway is also being widened. Under the Vibrant Village Program, development work in border villages is also being accelerated. 400 villages of Jammu and Kashmir that did not have all-weather connectivity are being connected by laying 1800 kilometers of new roads. The government is going to spend more than 4200 crores on this too.

Friends,

Today I have come to make a special request to you people of Jammu and Kashmir, especially the youth here, and from the land of Jammu and Kashmir, I want to make a request to the country as well. You have seen how Operation Sindoor has shown the power of self-reliant India. Today the world is discussing India's defence ecosystem. And there is only one reason behind this, our forces' faith in 'Make in India'. Now every Indian has to repeat what the forces have done. In this year's budget, we have announced Mission Manufacturing. Under this mission, the government is working to give a new impetus to manufacturing. I would like to tell the youth of Jammu and Kashmir, come and be a part of this mission. The country needs your modern thinking, the country needs your innovation. Your ideas, your skills will give new heights to India's security and India's economy. In the last ten years, India has become a big defence exporter. Now our goal is to include India's name among the top defence exporters of the world. The faster we move towards this goal; the faster millions of new employment opportunities will be created in India.

Friends,

We have to take another pledge that we should first buy only those products which are made in India and in which the sweat of our countrymen is used and this is patriotism, this is service to the nation. We have to enhance the honour of our forces at the border and we have to enhance the pride of Made in India in the market.

Friends,

A golden and bright future awaits Jammu and Kashmir. The central government and the state government are working together for development and are supporting each other. We have to continuously strengthen the path of peace and prosperity on which we are moving ahead. With the blessings of Maa Vaishno Devi, may this resolution of developed India and developed Jammu and Kashmir be fulfilled. With this wish, I once again congratulate all of you for these numerous development projects and for so many wonderful projects. Close both your fists and say with me with all your strength -

Bharat Mata ki Jai! The voice should reverberate in every corner of India.

Bharat Mata ki Jai!

Bharat Mata ki Jai!

Bharat Mata ki Jai!

Bharat Mata ki Jai!

Thank you very much!

MJPS/VJ/SS

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