



English rendering of PM's interaction with ICC Women's World Cup champions

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Prime Minister: Today is a very important day. It's Dev Diwali and also GURPURAB. Therefore, it is a very important occasion indeed.

Players: Happy GURPURAB, Sir!

Prime Minister: Many congratulations to all of you!

Coach: Hon'ble Prime Minister, thank you very much. We feel honoured and privileged to be here. I'd just like to tell you about one campaign. These girls have done wonders, truly amazing. For the past two years, they've worked so hard, shown tremendous effort. Every practice session, they played with full intensity and energy. I'd just say that their hard work has truly paid off.

Harmanpreet Kaur: Sir, I still remember when we met you in 2017. At that time, we didn't come with a trophy, but today it's a matter of great honour for us that we've been able to bring the trophy for which we worked so hard all these years. You've doubled our happiness today, and it's a huge honour for us. Our aim now is to keep meeting you again and again in the future every time with a trophy and to keep taking team photos with you.

Prime Minister: Truly, you all have done something remarkable. In Bharat, cricket is not just a sport. In a way, it has become a part of people's lives. When cricket goes well, Bharat feels happy; and if it falters even a bit, the whole country becomes disappointed. When you lost three matches in a row, the trolling army went after you.

Harmanpreet Kaur: When we met you in 2017, we had come back after losing the final, but you motivated us so much then. You told us how to play and give our best when the next opportunity comes. And today, when we finally returned with the trophy, it felt so good to talk to you again.

Prime Minister: Yes, Smriti ji, please tell us.

Smriti Mandhana: When we came in 2017, we couldn't bring the trophy, but I remember you asked us a question about expectations and your answer has stayed with me ever since. It really helped us. In the next 6-7 years, we made several attempts, but we faced many heartbreaks in World Cups, but I think it was destiny that the first Women's World Cup would come to Bharat. And, Sir, you've always been an inspiration to all of us. Especially now, seeing women shining in every field, whether it's ISRO's rocket launches or anything else. It's all so inspiring. Every time we see that, it motivates us even more to do better and to inspire other girls across the country.

Prime Minister: The whole nation is watching and feeling proud. I actually want to hear from all of you and your experiences.

Smriti Mandhana: Sir, I think the best thing about this campaign was that every player has a story to tell and no one's contribution was less than the others.

Smriti Mandhana: Last time, you spoke about how to deal with expectations. That answer has always stayed in my mind. And the way you remain calm and composed, that's also deeply inspiring for us.

Jemimah Rodrigues: Sir, when we lost those three matches ... I think a team is not defined by how many times you win, but by how you pick yourself up after a fall. And I feel that this team has done that and that's why this is a champion team. Another thing I would say about this team is the unity in the team. It's the best I've ever seen. Whenever someone did well, everyone was genuinely happy, clapping, celebrating as if they themselves had scored those runs or taken those wickets. And whenever someone was down, there was always someone to put a hand on their shoulder and say, "It's okay, you'll do it in the next match." That, I think, defines this team.

Sneh Rana: I agree with Jemmy. We had decided that everyone is together in success, but the real test is to stand by each other during a downfall. As a team, as a unit, we decided that no matter what happens, we won't leave anyone behind and we'll always lift each other up. I think that was the best part of our team.

Kranti Goud: Harman Di always says: "Keep smiling!" So, if anyone was sitting nervous or quiet, we'd make sure everyone smiled. Seeing each other laugh made us all feel lighter and more positive.

Prime Minister: But there must be someone in your team who makes everyone laugh, right?

Player: Jemmy Di!

Jemimah Rodrigues: Sir, actually Harleen too! She really values keeping the team together.

Harleen Kaur Deol: Sir, actually, I feel every team needs at least one person who keeps the mood light. Whenever I see someone sitting alone or quiet or maybe when I'm just feeling a bit too idle, I go around doing something funny or lighthearted. It makes me feel good when the people around me are happy.

Prime Minister: You must have done something here as well, right?

Harleen Kaur Deol: Sir, they actually scolded us. They told us to stay quiet! If we made even a little extra noise, we got scolded.

Harleen Kaur Deol: Sir, I actually wanted to ask you about your skincare routine! You really glow, Sir!

Prime Minister: I've honestly never paid much attention to that subject.

Players: Sir, it's the love of millions of Indians that makes you glow!

Prime Minister: That's true, it really is. And it's a very powerful thing ... the love and blessings of people. You see, it's been 25 years now for me as Head of Government. That's a long time. And even after all this while, when people still shower such affection, it truly has a deep impact.

Coach: Sir, you saw how the questions come. They are all different characters! It's been two years since I became their head coach, and my hair has already turned grey! Let me tell you a story. We were in England in June, and we met King Charles there. But the protocol allowed only 20 people. So, the support staff couldn't go. Only the players and three skilled coaches were allowed. I told the support staff, "I'm extremely sorry, but the limit is only 20 people." And they said something that really struck me. They said, "That's okay, we don't want this photograph. We want a photograph with Modi ji on November 4th or 5th." And today, that day has come true!

Harmanpreet Kaur: Sometimes it felt like why does this always happen to us? Maybe it was written that way so we could become mentally and physically stronger.

Prime Minister: When you were saying that, Harman, what was going through your mind? Because what you said can really inspire people.

Harmanpreet Kaur: Somewhere deep down, we always believed that a day would come when we too would lift that trophy. And with this team, there was a special feeling that we could sense it from day one.

Prime Minister: But when that thought came to you that "Why does this keep happening to us?" and still, despite that, you gathered the courage to keep going and to give confidence to everyone else there must have been a strong reason behind that.

Harmanpreet Kaur: Yes, Sir. The credit goes to all our team members, because everyone had self-belief. In every tournament, we were improving. Like Sir (the coach) said, he's been with us for two years, and during this time we've worked a lot on our mental strength, because what had happened was in the past, and we couldn't change it.

Prime Minister: So you learned to live in the present.

Harmanpreet Kaur: Yes, exactly. That's why my question to you was about what extra you do something that could give our team members a message to believe even more strongly in this idea of living in the present. Because it has really helped us, and if it comes from you as well, it'll reinforce that we and our coaches are on the right path.

Prime Minister: So, DSP (Deputy Superintendent of Police), what did you do today? You must have been giving everyone instructions and controlling everybody, right?

Deepti Sharma: No Sir, I was just waiting to meet you! I've been waiting for this day, just enjoying the moment and waiting to see you. But I still remember, in 2017, you told me that a real player is the one who learns to stand up again after a fall, to rise above failure. You told me, "Keep working hard, never stop putting in the effort." Those words have always motivated me. I keep listening to your speeches, Sir, whenever I get time. You always stay so cool and calm, even when people say all sorts of things. The way you handle everything so calmly that really helps me personally in my game.

Prime Minister: And you walk around with that Hanuman ji tattoo. So tell me, does Hanuman ji help you in matches?

Deepti Sharma: Sir, actually, I have more faith in him (Lord Hanuman) than in myself. Whenever I face tough situations, I just take his name, and I feel that I'm able to come out of those difficulties. That's how strong my belief is in him.

Prime Minister: And you even write "Jai Shri Ram" on your Instagram account, right?

Deepti Sharma: Yes Sir, it's written there too. Yes, absolutely.

Prime Minister: Faith really helps a lot in life. The biggest advantage is that it gives you peace. You can hand over your worries to the divine and sleep peacefully, knowing He will take care of things. But on the field, people say you rule the game with a bit of 'dadagiri' (dominance). How true is that?

Deepti Sharma: No Sir, nothing like that! But yes, there's one thing people do fear a little and that is my throw! And sometimes even my teammates say jokingly, "Calm down, it's us. Don't throw that hard!"

Deepti Sharma: Sir actually asked me personally about the Hanuman ji tattoo on my hand. What's the secret behind it, how deeply I believe in Him. And what really touched me was that Sir even knew my Instagram tagline!

Prime Minister: So Harman, after the victory, when you put the ball in your pocket ... what was the reason behind that? Was it something you had planned, or did someone tell you to do it?

Harmanpreet Kaur: No Sir, I'd say that was also God's plan. It's not like I ever thought the last ball, the last catch, would come to me, but it did. And after so many years of hard work and waiting, when it finally came into my hands, I just felt it should stay with me. I still have that ball in my bag.

Prime Minister: Shafali, you're from Rohtak. It is a place that's where all the wrestlers come from! How did you end up in this world (of cricket)?

Shafali Verma: Yes Sir, wrestling and kabaddi are really popular there. But I think my father had the biggest influence, because ...

Prime Minister: Wait, you never tried wrestling yourself?

Shafali Verma: No Sir, never.

Prime Minister: Never at all?

Shafali Verma: No Sir, never.

Prime Minister: Oh, I see.

Shafali Verma: My father wanted to become a cricketer himself, but couldn't. So he passed that dream on to his children. My brother and I used to play together, and we would keep watching matches and that's how I developed a deep interest in cricket and became a cricketer.

Prime Minister: Shafali, I had a question in my mind when I saw that catch of yours. I can understand someone smiling after catching the ball, but you were smiling before catching it! What was the reason?

Shafali Verma: Sir, I was just saying to myself, "Come to me, catch — come into my hands!" And then when it actually came to me, I just couldn't help but laugh!

Prime Minister: I felt like you were so confident that the ball couldn't possibly go anywhere else. Was that it?

Shafali Verma: Sir, even if it had gone somewhere else, I would've jumped there too!

Prime Minister: Can you describe the emotions of that moment?

Jemimah Rodrigues: Actually, sir, it was the semi-final, and we've always lost very closely against Australia. So, when I went in to bat, my only thought was that we have to win this for the team. No matter what, I have to stay till the end. When we were in that situation, we just kept saying to each other: one long partnership, just one solid partnership, and they will go down. That's what we were trying to do. And I would say that moment was a collective team effort, sir! Yes, maybe I scored a century, but I feel that if the partnership between Harry Di (Harmanpreet Kaur) and me hadn't happened or if Deepti hadn't played that impactful innings, and then Richa and Aman hadn't played those 8 balls for 15 runs, maybe we wouldn't have won the semi-final. But everyone collectively had that belief that, "Yes, our team can do this and we will!"

Jemimah Rodrigues: He (the Prime Minister) wanted to motivate us more than anything. He wanted to know our experience, how it felt to win the World Cup, how it felt after losing three matches, and how we bounced back.

Kranti Goud: When I became the Player of the Match in a World Cup game, I felt extremely proud and I knew my village would feel proud too.

Kranti Goud: When I bowl, Harman Di always tells me, "You just have to get the wicket. You're the one who will take the first wicket." So that's what I would focus on, to take that first wicket. I would bowl thinking, "I'll get that first wicket." I have an elder brother and he too loves cricket. He admires you a lot, sir. He used to love playing cricket, but when my father lost his job, he couldn't join an academy. So he just played casually. Since childhood, I used to love watching him play and used to play with the boys tennis-ball cricket. Later, a leather-ball tournament called the MLA Trophy was organized in our village and I participated in that. Two teams had come. One of the girls in a team suddenly fell ill, and I had long hair, so the coach came up to me and asked, "Will you play?" I said yes. He let me play for the team. That was my first leather-ball match. I became Player of the Match. I took two wickets and scored 25 runs. That's how my cricket journey began.

Prime Minister: Shafali also got a chance to play in the last two games, right?

Shafali Verma: Yes sir. Before that, I was playing domestic matches. But when I got the call-up ... of course, what happened with Pratika was something no player would want for anyone, but when I was called up, I just showed confidence in myself, and the team showed confidence in me too. I was only thinking that I have to make the team win, no matter how.

Pratika Rawal: From this video, sir, I just want to tell you that when I got injured, many people in the team said, "We want to win this World Cup for Pratika." I didn't know that at the time, someone outside the team told me later. When I was sitting out and we won the World Cup, technically I wasn't in the final squad. I was the 16th player. But, sir, even though I was in a wheelchair, they made me stand on the stage and gave me the same respect and honour. This team is truly like a family, sir. When you respect every player equally and make everyone feel included, that's when the team becomes a real family. And when such a family plays together sir, that team becomes very hard to beat. That's why this team truly deserved to win the final.

Prime Minister: You're absolutely right. In the end, team spirit matters the most in sports. And it's not just about team spirit on the field. When you spend all 24 hours together, a kind of bonding is formed. You get to know each other's weaknesses and try to cover them, and you also recognize each other's strengths and try to support and highlight them. Only then does true teamwork happen.

Prime Minister: Tell me that catch of yours became the most famous one, didn't it?

Amanjot Kaur: Yes, sir! I've taken many blinders before, but none became as famous as that one. And for the first time, it actually felt good to fumble a little before completing the catch!

Prime Minister: When you took that catch, it became a kind of turning point, didn't it?

Amanjot Kaur: Yes, sir.

Prime Minister: Until you actually took the catch, you must have only seen the ball. But after that, I'm sure you could already see the trophy!

Amanjot Kaur: Sir, I could literally see the trophy in that catch! After that, so many teammates jumped on me, I could barely breathe. I didn't even know how many people were on top of me!

Prime Minister: You know, right? Last time, Suryakumar Yadav also took a similar catch.

Amanjot Kaur: Yes, sir.

Prime Minister: I think one of you had taken a catch earlier too, which I had retweeted. I remember it. It was a very impressive moment.

Harleen Kaur Deol: Yes, sir! We were in England at that time when I took that catch. We had been practicing such catches for a long time. I remember I was fielding, and a catch came forward. I ran, but I missed it slightly. Harry Di scolded me, saying, "What's the point of being a good fielder if you can't take catches like that?" Then Jemmy, who was standing behind me, said, "It's okay." I asked her, "Do you think I could've caught it?" She said, "Yes, you could have." So I told her, "Two overs are left and I'll show you by taking a good catch." And sir, just after it that ball came, and I caught it!

Prime Minister: Oh, so you worked on a personal challenge I see! Richa, wherever you play, you end up winning matches, isn't it? You always find a way to make an impact!

Richa Ghosh: I don't know, sir, but yes whether it was the Under-19, the senior team, or the WPL, we've won trophies and I've hit some really long sixes!

Prime Minister: Alright, tell me more.

Richa Ghosh: When I was batting ... hitting those sixes ... I think Harry Di, Smriti Didi, and everyone else trusted me. The whole team had faith that no matter what the situation even if there are fewer balls and more runs needed I can handle it. That trust gave me confidence too that yes, I can do it. I think that's why my body language always shows that confidence in every match.

Radha Yadav: We lost three matches, sir. But the best part was that even in defeat, we stayed together supporting each other, talking to each other. It was genuine and pure. Maybe that's why God blessed us with this trophy.

Prime Minister: No, no, it's not just God, it's your hard work that earned this victory. Tell me how did you all prepare yourselves in this field?

Radha Yadav: As Sir (coach) said, we've been playing very good cricket for quite some time now. We were preparing for every kind of situation whether in terms of fitness, fielding, or skills. We had been working hard for a long time. And like I said, when everyone stays together, things become easier. But if someone is left alone, it becomes very difficult to work that way.

Prime Minister: But I heard that when you first received a prize, you spent it to help your father.

Radha Yadav: Yes, sir.

Prime Minister: And your father always encouraged you fully?

Radha Yadav: Yes, sir, all the time. It wasn't easy for our family back then, but my father never made me feel that way, and neither did my mother.

Sneh Rana: Sir, it's all the result of years of hard work. I've also been constantly in touch with my bowling coach, Aavishkar sir. We discuss how to tackle specific batters. All those strategies are made with the captain, vice-captain, and head coach, and we try to replicate them on the field. Thankfully, most of the time, they work. Of course, there are matches where things don't go as planned, but we always motivate ourselves to do even better next time.

Uma Chetry: Sir, I honestly don't know what to say standing in front of you.

Prime Minister: Just say whatever comes to mind.

Uma Chetry: Sir, that was my debut match. And every time I make my debut, somehow it rains! It happened that day too. It rained, so I could only do wicketkeeping. But still, I was really happy because making a debut for India and that too in a World Cup was a huge thing for me. I was very excited about that match, determined to give my best for the country. I wanted to make sure that my efforts helped India win. The best part was that the entire team trusted me, everyone was coming up to talk to me, guide me, support me and that meant a lot.

Coach: She's the first girl from the North East to play for India.

Prime Minister: From Assam, right?

Renuka Singh Thakur: Yes, sir. To keep the dressing room atmosphere light and positive, we thought of doing something creative. So I drew a peacock, it's a sign of positivity. Then we thought, what else can we make it more interesting? Like when Smriti scored her fifty, we said, "Alright, next we're going for a hundred!"

Prime Minister: So, when you came here, you must have seen peacocks everywhere too!

Renuka Singh Thakur: Yes, sir! I even said: I've spotted another one here. Actually, drawing a peacock is the only thing I know how to do, so I drew that. I don't know how to draw anything else!

(Another player): Next, she tried to draw a bird, but we told her not to!

Prime Minister: Still, I must especially bow in respect to your mother. Despite all the hardships, she played a huge role in your success. Even as a single parent, she worked tirelessly to shape your life and that's truly remarkable. Please convey my respectful regards to her.

Renuka Singh Thakur: Yes, sir, I will.

Arundhati Reddy: Sir, first of all, my mom wanted me to give you a message. I didn't think I'd get the chance to talk to you, but she told me to tell you that you are her hero. She's already called me four or five times asking, "When are you meeting my hero? When are you meeting my hero?"

Prime Minister: What do you all feel now that you've achieved success on the sports field, what do you think the nation expects from you next? What more can you contribute?

Smriti Mandhana: Sir, whenever we go for any World Cup, the first thing we all talk about is the kind of impact winning that World Cup would have, not just on women's cricket, but on women's sports as a whole. It would be massive, and it could start a real revolution in India. Going forward,

our effort will always be to not just uplift women's cricket, but to revolutionize women's sports in India. And I truly believe this team has the capacity to do that.

Prime Minister: I think you all can become a huge source of motivation for others, because success gives you great power. For instance, when you go home, naturally there will be celebrations and excitement. But after a few days, visit your school, the school where you studied. Spend just one day there. Talk with the children; they'll ask you all kinds of questions. Just interact with them freely. I'm sure that school will always remember you, and those children will never forget that day. The same school where you studied. If you enjoy the experience, then choose three schools and in a year, whenever possible, spend one day at each. You'll see, it will not only inspire them, but also motivate you in return. Secondly, there's the Fit India Movement. As you know, obesity is becoming a major problem in our country. Fitness is the best way to counter it. Like I always say even small things matter, such as reducing your cooking oil by 10%. Make that choice when you buy it. When people hear these small, practical suggestions from you, they take them seriously. And if you encourage young girls to join the Fit India campaign, it will make a huge difference. So, I really enjoyed this casual, heartfelt conversation with all of you. Some of you I've met before, and some for the first time. But I always look forward to meeting you all. And to you (Pratika), I wish you recover fast.

Smriti Mandhana: Sir, we'll definitely remember what you said. Whenever we get the opportunity to talk to people, we'll make sure to pass on this message. And from our whole team, sir if ever you need us to spread this message anywhere, just call us we'll be there anytime, because of course, it's an important cause.

Prime Minister: Together, we all have to take the country forward.

Smriti Mandhana: Yes, sir.

Prime Minister: Alright then. Many, many best wishes to all of you.

MJPS/VJ/VK/AK

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