



English rendering of PM's address during Veer Baal Diwas programme in Delhi

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Hon'ble colleagues in the Union Cabinet—Annapurna Devi, Savitri Thakur, Ravneet Singh, Harsh Malhotra, the respected Minister from the Delhi Government, other distinguished dignitaries, guests from every corner of the country, and my dear children!

Today, the nation is celebrating Veer Bal Diwas. Just now, we witnessed such a beautiful rendition of Vande Mataram—your hard work is clearly visible.

Friends,

Today, we remember those brave Sahibzadas, who are the pride of India. They embody the pinnacle of India's indomitable courage, valor, and heroism. These Sahibzadas broke the boundaries of age and circumstance, standing like a rock against the cruel Mughal empire, shaking the very existence of religious fanaticism and terror. A nation with such a glorious past, whose youth inherit such inspiration, is capable of achieving anything.

Friends,

Whenever this day of 26th December arrives, I feel a deep satisfaction that our government began commemorating Veer Bal Diwas, inspired by the bravery of the Sahibzadas. In the past four years, this new tradition has carried the inspiration of the Sahibzadas to the younger generation. Veer Bal Diwas has also created a platform for nurturing courageous and talented youth. Every year, children who achieve something remarkable in different fields for the nation are honored with the Prime Minister's National Child Award. This year too, 20 children from different parts of the country have received this award. They are all present among us, and I had the opportunity to interact with them. Some have displayed extraordinary bravery, some have done commendable work in social service and environmental protection. Some have innovated in science and technology, while many young friends are contributing in sports, arts, and culture. I would like to tell these award winners—this honor is not only for you, but also for your parents, your teachers, and mentors. It is a recognition of their hard work as well. I extend my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes for a bright future to all the award winners and their families.

Friends,

This day of Veer Bal Diwas is filled with emotion and reverence. Sahibzada Ajit Singh Ji, Sahibzada Jujhar Singh Ji, Sahibzada Zorawar Singh Ji, and Sahibzada Fateh Singh Ji—at such a tender age, they had to confront the mightiest power of that time. That battle was between the fundamental values of India and religious fanaticism; it was a battle of truth versus falsehood. On one side stood the Tenth Guru, Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji, and on the other side was the cruel regime of Aurangzeb. Our Sahibzadas were very young at that time. But Aurangzeb, in his cruelty, did not care about their age. He knew that if he wanted to frighten Indians into conversion, he would first have to break their morale. And that is why he targeted the Sahibzadas.

But friends,

Aurangzeb and his commanders had forgotten that our Guru was no ordinary man—he was the very embodiment of penance and sacrifice. The brave Sahibzadas inherited this legacy from him. That is why, even though the entire Mughal empire pursued them, not one of the four Sahibzadas wavered. The words of Sahibzada Ajit Singh Ji still echo the story of his courage: “I am Ajit by name, I shall never be conquered. And even if I am conquered, I shall never submit!”

Friends,

Just a few days ago, we remembered Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji on the 350th anniversary of his supreme sacrifice. A special program was also held in Kurukshetra on that day. To think that Sahibzadas, who drew inspiration from the sacrifice of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, would fear Mughal atrocities was itself a mistake.

Friends,

The valor and ideals of Mata Gujri, Shri Guru Gobind Singh Ji, and the four Sahibzadas continue to give strength to every Indian even today; they remain our inspiration. The saga of the Sahibzadas’ sacrifice should have been on the lips of every citizen of the country. But unfortunately, even after independence, the mentality of slavery continued to dominate. The seed of this mentality was sown by the British politician Macaulay in 1835, and even after independence, the nation was not allowed to free itself from it. That is why, for decades after independence, attempts were made to suppress such truths.

But friends,

Now India has resolved to rid itself of this mentality of slavery. The memories of our sacrifices and valor will no longer be buried. The heroes and heroines of our nation will no longer be pushed to the margins. That is why we are celebrating Veer Bal Diwas with full devotion. And we have not stopped here. The conspiracy that Macaulay hatched will complete 200 years in 2035—just 10 years from now. In these 10 years, we will ensure that the nation is completely free from the mentality of slavery. This must be the resolve of 1.4 billion Indians. Because when the nation frees itself from this mentality, it will take pride in its indigenous identity and advance further on the path of self-reliance.

Friends,

A glimpse of this campaign to free ourselves from the mentality of slavery was seen recently in our Parliament. In the winter session, Members of Parliament delivered nearly 160 speeches in Indian languages other than Hindi and English. Around 50 speeches were in Tamil, more than 40 in Marathi, and about 25 in Bangla. Such a scene is rare in any parliament in the world. This is a matter of pride for all of us. Macaulay had tried to crush India’s language diversity, but now, as our nation frees itself from the mentality of slavery, linguistic diversity is becoming our strength.

Friends,

Here I see so many young people associated with Yuva Bharat Sangathan. In a way, you are Gen Z, and even Gen Alpha. It is your generation that will take India to the goal of becoming a developed nation. I see and understand the capability and confidence of Gen Z, and that is why I place great trust in you. Our tradition says: बालादपि ग्रहीतव्यं युक्तमुक्तं मनीषिभिः।, meaning, even if a small child speaks wisely, it should be accepted. In other words, no one is small or big by age; one becomes great through deeds and achievements. Even at a young age, you can accomplish things that inspire others. You have already shown this. But these achievements must be seen only as a beginning. You have to go much further. You have to take your dreams to the skies. And you are fortunate to be born in a generation where the nation stands firmly with your talent.

Earlier, young people were afraid even to dream, because the old systems had created an atmosphere where nothing good seemed possible. There was despair everywhere, and people even began to feel—what is the use of working hard? But today, the nation seeks out talent, gives it a platform, and places the strength of 1.4 billion citizens behind their dreams.

With the success of Digital India, you have the power of the internet, you have resources for learning. Those who want to enter science, technology, and the startup world have missions like Startup India. Those advancing in sports have missions like Khelo India. Just two days ago, I also participated in the Sansad Khel Mahotsav. There are countless platforms to help you move forward. You only need to remain focused. And for this, it is essential that you do not get trapped in the glitter of short-term popularity. This will happen when your thinking is clear, when your principles are clear. That is why you must learn from your ideals, from the great figures of our nation. You must not see your success as limited to yourself. Your goal should be that your success becomes the nation's success.

Friends,

Today, new policies are being framed with a focus on youth empowerment. The youth have been placed at the center of nation-building. Through platforms like Mera Yuva Bharat, efforts are being made to connect young people, provide them opportunities, and develop leadership skills among them. Whether it is advancing the space economy, promoting sports, expanding the fintech and manufacturing sectors, creating opportunities for skill development and internships—at the heart of every such effort are my young companions. In every sector, new opportunities are opening up for the youth.

Friends,

India today faces unprecedented circumstances. India is among the youngest nations in the world. The coming twenty-five years will determine the direction of our country. Perhaps for the first time since independence, India's capabilities, India's aspirations, and the world's expectations from India are all converging together. Today's youth are growing up at a time when opportunities are greater than ever before. We are committed to providing better avenues for the talent, confidence, and leadership abilities of India's youth.

My young friends,

For laying a strong foundation of a developed India, significant reforms have also been made in our education policy. The new National Education Policy focuses on new methods of learning for the 21st century. Today, the emphasis is on practical learning—developing the habit of thinking instead of rote memorization, encouraging children to ask questions and to seek solutions. For the first time, meaningful efforts are being made in this direction. Multidisciplinary studies, skill-based learning, promotion of sports, and the use of technology are greatly helping students. Across the country, millions of children are engaging in innovation and research through Atal Tinkering Labs. Even in schools, children are being introduced to robotics, AI, sustainability, and design thinking. Alongside these efforts, the National Education Policy has also provided the option of studying in the mother tongue. This is making learning easier for children and helping them better understand their subjects.

Friends,

The brave Sahibzadas did not look at how difficult the path was; they only looked at whether the path was right. Today, that same spirit is needed. I expect India's youth to dream big, work hard, and never let their confidence weaken. The future of India will shine only through the future of its children and youth. Their courage, their talent, and their dedication will guide the progress of the nation. With this faith, with this responsibility, and with this continuous momentum, India will keep moving forward towards its future. Once again, I bow in reverence to the Sahibzadas. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to all the award winners. Thank you very much to all of you.

MJPS/VJ/SR

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