



English rendering of PM's address during the centenary celebrations of Shri Ram College of Commerce (SRCC)

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My colleagues in the Union Cabinet Shri Prahlad Joshi ji, DU Vice Chancellor Yogesh Singh ji, SRCC Principal Simrit Kaur ji, Ajay ji, Mallika ji, Rajat ji, all companions connected with SRCC, faculty, staff, SRCC alumni, and my young friends!

I am the sixth player. Today's occasion is very historic for Shri Ram College of Commerce, and equally important for the country's education world. Here, many generations who have been part of SRCC have gathered together. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to all of you for this centenary celebration of SRCC. I respectfully pay tribute to its founder, Sir Shri Ram ji, and bow to his vision.

Friends,

When a person lives for 100 years, he is considered an ocean of experiences. And when an institution completes 100 years, it becomes an ocean of achievements and inspirations. In its 100-year journey, SRCC has shaped generations, connecting them to a bright future. Those who came studied, and those who left went out as well-shaped individuals. The journey of this college began in Daryaganj, in a small place, and today that small college has become a huge tree. A tree that has given shade to many generations, and enriched them with its coolness. Even today, in DU, when someone asks which college, saying SRCC itself is a flex in itself.

Friends,

The alumni of SRCC have also been very special. If I say in your language, the alumni here are the OGs, who carried SRCC's name across the world, making their mark in different fields. Rajat ji mentioned a long list. And I too have had the opportunity to work with some of them. Our Arun Jaitley ji studied here. And I can say that perhaps there was never a meeting with him where he did not narrate some incident of SRCC. Sometimes I would get tired, because he would repeat the same incident again and again. In my team today, brother Sanjeev Sanyal also studied here. Many other companions are here too. And it is not that only people from the world of economics came out of here - many artists, leaders, lawyers, judges have also come from here. That is, SRCC people have created a stir in every field. They may not all be giants, but they certainly created a stir.

Friends,

For the past few days, this program has been much discussed. Especially people are remembering my 2013 address. People have listened to it again, read it again. It is possible that the new generation has also revisited it. That speech, I can say, became a wave, a movement. And even today, 13-14 years later, the impact of that gathering, that address, remains.

Friends,

Then, in your place, your seniors were sitting. And I was then a Chief Minister, but also a member of the country's main opposition party. And perhaps people then expected that I would make long attacks on the central government of that time, shower accusations.

But friends,

Even while being in opposition, even while being a critic of the then government, I did not use that platform for that. I placed a vision, spoke positive things. Whatever I said then was my conviction. I have always lived those words, those dreams. I have always walked that path - dedicating myself wholeheartedly for the country, living with the spirit of serving the nation. That inner world of mine, that emotional universe, on that day in 2013, from this very platform, came out one by one in a garland of words. And I spoke at length. Then I asked the students if I should continue, and they loudly said, "Yes, continue."

Friends,

That day I gave the example of a glass of water, and it was much discussed in the country. I explained the three perspectives of looking at a glass half-filled with water. One, those who see the glass as half full of water. Second, those who see the glass as half empty. And third, those who see the glass as completely full - half with water and half with air.

Friends,

This was the time when the country was sunk in the swamp of despair. Even then I said that I do not see the glass as half, I do not see it as incomplete - I see the glass as completely full. Half with water, half with air. And at that time you all must have been in school, but today if you go on the internet and read the news of 2013 and around that period, you will realize what the situation was. And I urge the youth - just look once at that period of 2013 on the internet, the headlines around my speech then. Whether newspapers or TV channels, what were the headlines then? Let me give you a glimpse of those headlines. Now there is a gang that will cut my words into small pieces and put them in my account, so I warn beforehand that what I am telling you is what dominated the media in 2013, such as:

- Indian soldiers killed on the LoC - today's generation may find it strange that such things happened, but they did.
- World Bank lowered GDP growth forecast.
- Current account deficit at an all-time high.
- Inflation rate around ten percent.
- Industrial sector caught in recession.
- Helicopter deal bribery exposed.
- Bomb blasts in Hyderabad.

These were the headlines of that time. I am sure today's students do not know all this. These things show what the condition of the country was then. Growth was on the floor and inflation was on the ceiling. Scams were at their peak and the corrupt roamed fearlessly. The economy was in bad shape, everywhere there was talk of policy paralysis. The world counted India among the "Fragile Five." Terrorists were unchecked and Pakistan was uncontrollable. That is, then there was nothing but despair and frustration.

Friends,

That was the day when on every front the country was struggling, and this is today - today those spreading terrorism are subdued. If Pakistan does any nefarious act, India's forces enter their home and strike. From Jammu & Kashmir to the North East, peace has increased. Maoist terror, Naxalism has been broken. The

world that was then worried about policy paralysis in India, today talks about India's policy dynamism. Then the world called India part of the Fragile Five, today the world sees India becoming the fastest-growing major economy. Just in the past week, many positive news items have come about India's economy. The 7.8 percent quarterly growth has boosted the nation's enthusiasm, and in the same period a Japanese credit rating agency has upgraded India's rating.

And friends,

This 7.8 percent growth has come at a time when war is going on in West Asia, when there have been many trade-related obstacles. To achieve such growth at such a time shows India's capability in itself.

Friends,

I know, you also know, those who were infamous for pushing India into the Fragile Five, they cannot digest these figures. But you all understand the numbers seriously. Between April and June, electricity production increased by 9 percent, vehicle sales grew by more than 20 percent. In that too, two-wheelers grew by 20 percent, and three-wheelers by nearly 30 percent. That means consumer demand is running, and commercial activity is strong. Growth in steel and cement consumption increased by 8 percent. That means construction, housing, infrastructure, and industrial activity are all rising. That means India is growing, and creating new employment opportunities too. Despite this, for those who saw the glass half empty in 2013, their thinking remains the same even today. For them the glass will always be half empty. When I speak of the glass, I am not speaking of anything being empty.

Friends,

In 2013, speaking here at SRCC, I also spoke of P2G2 - Pro-People Good Governance. Those who ran governments for long had a style - wake up only when there is fire, dig a well only when there is drought. I spoke of changing this approach. And after forming government in 2014, we have shown this in action. Let me give you an example.

Friends,

Recently, the Jan Dhan Yojana completed 12 years. Today you are living in a completely different era of fintech, but those were also the days of 2013 when students from villages or small towns had to struggle a lot even to open savings bank accounts. At that time our population had crossed 1.25 billion, but by March 2014, more than 50 percent of the country's population did not even have bank accounts. And those outside the banking system were mostly the poor, women, migrant laborers, students. That is why we brought the Jan Dhan scheme, and in the past 12 years, because of Jan Dhan Yojana, nearly 600 million new bank accounts have been opened. Today almost every family in the country is connected to the banking system. This became the foundation of India's fintech revolution.

Friends,

Now think also about those people who opposed even connecting millions of people to the banking system. In fact, such people enjoyed only when the glass was half full, so that the poor ordinary citizens kept circling around them. This "mai-baap" culture they had continued for decades. But this is Modi - standing like a rock before those who liked the mai-baap culture.

Friends,

There is an old saying: truth fears no fire. I have courage, and that is why I am reminding you of what I said that day, bringing my report card before you. I know that before the roar of truth, the echo of lies cannot stand.

Friends,

In that 2013 program itself, when I said that we must work on Made in India, the people of the old ecosystem of that time could not even understand it. They thought that in that era of despair, Made in India would not be possible at all! And those who grew up in that thinking still mock Made in India.

But friends,

Today you are seeing the brand value of Make in India. Let me explain with an example. Today every hand has a smartphone. The world's biggest phone brands are making India their base. Made in India smartphones are reaching every corner of the world. In 2014, India imported most of its mobile phones. Today India exports mobile phones worth more than 2.5 lakh crore rupees.

Friends,

I am not a person who takes small and easy targets. I set big goals for the country, and I put my whole life into achieving them. Look at the defense sector. Earlier, most things for India's armed forces were bought from abroad. As soon as I came, I told the defense people - make a negative list. First they made a list of 500 items, saying these we will not bring from outside. Then they made 1,000, then 3,000. Army, Navy, Air Force - many times even for a small piece of equipment they had to wait for months. We made a plan together with the armed forces, made lists of items, then told Indian companies to make all these. And today you see, the country's defense manufacturing is at its all-time high. Today India is producing defense equipment worth nearly 2 lakh crore rupees. In 2013-14, we exported defense equipment worth 600-700 crore rupees. Today this figure has reached nearly 40,000 crore rupees. And these achievements are possible because today a vibrant defense manufacturing ecosystem is being built in the country.

Friends,

I have trust in the country, trust in the country's capability, trust in you youth. And on the basis of this trust I speak of a developed India. I am confident that we 1.4 billion Indians together will make our country developed and self-reliant.

- In the coming time, India will be a hub of manufacturing.
- In the coming time, Hindustan will be a hub of research and innovation.
- India will be a superpower of agricultural exports.

My young friends,

- India will have its own space station.

And you will also see the day when India will host an Olympics in such a way that the world will be left watching in awe.

And these are not just words, these are our resolutions. And to turn these resolutions into reality, continuous work is happening in the country.

Friends,

Right now your life is running in SRCC mode. Whether it is tea at the co-op, discussions over cold coffee, last-minute notes for exams, rushing for printouts, or the hard work put into Crossroads and the Business Conclave - you have made every moment here a memory of your life. But outside this campus, a new world awaits you. You will meet two kinds of people. One, those who positively transform the power of society into the power of the nation. The second species are those who, whenever any work begins, become the "angry uncle." Their favorite job is to oppose everything. Their permanent dialogue is: "What is the need for this? What is the need for this?" That is the permanent line of every such uncle. When we were building the world's tallest statue, these uncles tightened their belts and said, "What is the need for this?" When we started work on the high-speed train, they again said, "What is the need for this?" When

we brought UPI, these same people said, “Why UPI? What is the need for UPI?” When we spoke of making chips, again they said, “What is the need for this?” When we built the new Parliament building, they said, “What is the need for this?” When we built a memorial for our brave military commanders who gave the supreme sacrifice for the nation, again they came out saying, “What was the need for this?” But India has answered all such uncles - whatever is necessary for the country, no one can stop India from doing it.

Friends,

Today India is moving forward with a different temperament. Work that earlier took decades is now happening within just a few years. Let me give you another example with full facts. India's first electric train ran in 1925. Your college started in 1926, but the train ran in 1925. After that, until 2014 - that is, 90 years - less than 30 percent of railway lines were electrified. In just 12 years, we have shown nearly 100 percent electrification of railway lines.

Friends,

This speed in India's policy decisions is being seen and understood by the rest of the world. That is why they are increasing their partnerships with India. In the past decade, trade agreements and free trade agreements have been signed with nearly 40 countries. Because of this, new markets are opening for leather, textiles, fruits and vegetables, our processed food, shrimp, and many other products. Who better than you knows what it means when new markets open, when tariffs are reduced for India's goods and services. This is creating a new sky of opportunities for India's youth.

Friends,

Today, compared to 2013, the country is far more secure economically and socially. But seeing this, some people's restlessness and frustration are increasing. You must have heard my speech on 15th August. For such people, I gave a dose of homeopathy from the Red Fort - a small homeopathy pill. And you know, they say the nature of homeopathy is that when you start the medicine, at first the illness flares up even more. That is the nature of homeopathy. So from the Red Fort I gave a homeopathy pill - “mental Naxal.” This mental Naxal treatment, as I said, first flares up the illness for some time, and then begins the cure. In the same way, as soon as I gave the mental Naxal pill, all the mental Naxals started coming out. And those who are promoting this illness, now the public is seeing their true colors too.

Friends,

I have said so many things, some people may think - oh, what is the big deal, it was a country of 1.4 billion, it was easy, what new did Modi do? But was it really so easy? Let me take you back once again to the old days. Remember when you were in school. In 2013, when the disaster struck Kedarnath, the entire government was shaken. They did not know what to do, how to do it. In 2008, when the banking crisis came, the government of that time tried to hide behind that crisis until 2014, not daring to even touch it. India's entire banking system was brought to the brink of collapse. In 2008 itself, when the horrific terrorist attack happened in Mumbai, the government then came under external pressure, but did not even show the courage to teach Pakistan a lesson.

Friends,

In the past 12 years, many disasters have struck the country, we have faced huge cyclones, but the nation has faced them strongly. In the past 6 years, very big crises have come. First the pandemic of corona, which shut down the whole world. Then the war broke out between Russia and Ukraine. After that, the era began of weaponizing trade and supply chains. Then came the crisis in West Asia. Every time it was said,

now India will not survive. And those who are my “special admirers” were happy thinking - now Modi is trapped, now Modi will fall, now he will be crushed. But the blessings of my country’s people have such strength, such strength, that every wish of those who wanted India’s downfall has been left unfulfilled.

Friends,

Now in the 21st century, a world of new opportunities is before us. I am happy that you are ambitious, because ambition cannot be taught from a textbook. Ambition comes from the environment that inspires you to dream big. Today our young companions say - if I do something, I will start a startup, if I build a company, I will make it a unicorn. I will join sectors like space and drones, I will do something big. I will build cutting-edge AI solutions, I will innovate in agriculture. Thirteen years ago, your seniors could not even dream such dreams. But today you are dreaming them, because in today’s India an ecosystem has been built to support those dreams.

Friends,

Now is the time to set big goals and achieve them. Just recently from the Red Fort I said some things. I want to repeat them among you. Take a pledge - why can’t India have global consulting firms? Why can’t our accounting firms, our legal firms, our financial firms become global leaders? We proudly say that today Indians are leading the world’s top companies. If Indians are leading the world’s top companies, then why can’t companies created by Indians lead the world?

Friends,

All this is possible. For this you have both networks and knowledge.

Friends,

Our inspiration, your inspiration, is also the SRCC college crest. It has two beautiful symbols. One is the rising sun, and the other is the ship moving forward in the sea. The sun, which shows direction, and the ship, which moves forward in that direction. We must walk on such new paths, where the sun is ours, the sea is ours. The boat is ours, the sailor is ours. The courage to write victory on the waves is ours. The flight is ours, the sky is ours. The spirit to face strong winds is ours. The dream is ours, the resolve is ours, the banner of self-reliant India is ours. On the path of developed India, every step rising swiftly is ours. Once again, on this special occasion, I extend my many best wishes to all connected with SRCC.

Vande Mataram.

MJPS/SS/VJ/ST

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