



English rendering of PM's address during the launch of development projects in Chennai

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Governor of Tamil Nadu Shri Rajendra Arlekar ji, Chief Minister Shri C. Joseph Vijay ji, my colleague in the Union Cabinet Shri L. Murugan ji, Shri Nainar Nagendran ji, my Tamil brothers and sisters, Vanakkam.

It is a pleasure to be in Chennai with all of you. This is a historic day for Tamil Nadu. Today's programme involves projects worth thirteen thousand crore rupees. We are inaugurating many completed projects and laying foundations for new ones. Some will make daily travel easier. Others will strengthen industry and trade. Together, they will create jobs for young people across Tamil Nadu. I congratulate the people of the state on this occasion.

Today marks the beginning of the sacred festival of Navratri. On this auspicious occasion of Navratri, and in Tamil Nadu, the sacred land of both Shiva and Shakti, I also had the good fortune of receiving the blessings of Lord Shiva at the Jalakandeshwar Temple before coming to this programme. From this sacred land of pilgrimage in Tamil Nadu, I extend my heartfelt greetings for Navratri to all the people of the country.

Friends,

Today is also the birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna Jayaprakash Narayan ji and Bharat Ratna Nanaji Deshmukh. The lives of both these great personalities inspire us to work with even greater dedication towards the service of the nation. From this stage, I pay my respects to both these great personalities.

Friends,

A short while ago, I had the opportunity to visit the Brain Research Centre at IIT Madras. The research taking place in this field can create many new opportunities in the area of public health. Apart from this visit, I also had the opportunity to dedicate another stretch of the Chennai Metro to the people.

Friends,

From temple to metro, these experiences of Tamil Nadu reflect the spirit of today's India. India draws inspiration from its cultural strength, advances through scientific progress, and creates new opportunities through modern infrastructure. Our heritage and our aspirations for the future are moving forward together.

Friends,

A few days ago, with your blessings and the love of the people of the country, I crossed an important milestone of twenty-five years as Head of the Government. In October 2001, I took oath as Chief Minister. Since then, the people of the country have given me the opportunity to serve first as Chief Minister and then as Prime Minister. During these twenty-five years, my faith in two strengths of democracy has continuously grown stronger. First - the people of the country. Second - cooperative federalism. I have always followed the mantra that the development of the nation comes through the development of the states.

Friends,

As Chief Minister, I personally understood the expectations of states. Therefore, after becoming Prime Minister, I not only tried to fulfil those aspirations, but also made every effort to ensure that every state could achieve its own aspirational goals.

Friends,

As Chief Minister, I had the opportunity to interact many times with Karunanidhi ji and Amma Jayalalithaa ji. And after becoming Prime Minister, I had the opportunity to work with Jayalalithaa ji, O. Panneerselvam ji, E. Palaniswami ji, and M. K. Stalin ji. Governments changed, but my commitment to the development of Tamil Nadu and service to its people always remained unwavering. And today, with that same commitment, we are moving this journey of Tamil Nadu's development forward together with Chief Minister Joseph Vijay ji.

Friends,

Today, urban development is one of our major priorities in Tamil Nadu. I have always believed that urbanisation is not a challenge, but an opportunity. And public transport plays a very important role in this. When transportation is good, it improves people's ease of living. We all know that merely widening roads is not enough to create better transportation. In modern cities, we need holistic infrastructure. And therefore, over the past decade, we have undertaken a massive expansion of metro networks across the country. In 2014, metro services operated in only five cities of the country. Today, metro services operate in twenty-five cities across the nation. In 2014, India's metro network was about 250 kilometres. Two hundred and fifty kilometres. Today, this network has crossed 1,100 kilometres. I am pleased that with this expansion of Chennai Metro, this network is growing even further. This work has been carried out so that ordinary citizens living in Chennai, working families, students, and senior citizens can all travel with greater ease and complete their journeys in less time.

Friends,

We have to strengthen India by empowering our states. Therefore, the central government is promoting manufacturing in states like Tamil Nadu. Every Indian takes pride in Tamil Nadu's manufacturing sector, its small industries, and every individual working in them. Today, initiatives of the central government, whether Make in India or Vocal for Local, are also benefiting Tamil Nadu.

Friends,

Today, from components to technology and finished products, the central government is strengthening the entire product chain in every state. As a result of these efforts, today we are the world's second-largest mobile manufacturer. Since 2014, our electronics exports have increased elevenfold. Our defence exports have increased fiftyfold. And our engineering exports have also set new records.

Friends,

Because of this growth in manufacturing, millions of direct and indirect jobs have been created for the youth of the country. And in this manufacturing growth of India, the people of Tamil Nadu have made a highly commendable contribution. Today, we are laying the foundation stone for an advanced lubricant base oil project. This will create new employment opportunities here and will also greatly help in reducing the country's imports. To build a strong manufacturing sector, we need good roads. We need railways and ports for the transportation of raw materials. And when such infrastructure is built, it creates a large number of employment opportunities at different levels.

When construction takes place, engineers get work, technicians get work, workers get work, everyone gets employment. Employment opportunities are also created in factories connected with cement, steel, and equipment, as well as in smaller companies. And when a project is completed, improved connectivity helps industries and services move forward. That is why the rail and road projects being inaugurated and launched today are going to be extremely important for the progress of Tamil Nadu.

Today, port infrastructure is also being strengthened across the country so that the shipping sector can reach new heights. Tamil Nadu has a very important role in this as well. In this direction, the central government has recently taken a significant decision. With an investment of about seventeen thousand crore rupees, the VOC Port at Thoothukudi is being developed as a world-class mega container and green energy hub. Once this project is completed, even the world's ultra-large container vessels will be able to dock here easily. This will help transform Tamil Nadu into a global hub for industry and transportation.

Over the past few years, both the speed and efficiency of Indian ports have improved. Because of increased speed, the turnaround time of ships at ports has been reduced by half. As a result, Indian products are now reaching global markets faster than before.

In our vision for the ocean economy, our fishermen play a very important role. Therefore, through the PM Matsya Sampada Yojana and several other schemes, projects worth thousands of crores of rupees have been approved for Tamil Nadu. Fishing harbours are being upgraded here. Fishing landing centres are being developed. Focus is being placed on cold chain facilities. Assistance is also being provided for purchasing transport vehicles to keep fish fresh.

Friends,

Whether it is modernising the Chennai Fishing Harbour for our fisherman brothers or developing the Seaweed Park in Tamil Nadu, the central government is supporting these efforts as well. Through the Kisan Credit Card scheme, fishermen are now also able to access working capital more easily. Today, fish production in the country has grown rapidly.

Last year, our seafood exports reached their highest levels ever, both in quantity and value terms. This has improved the lives of our fishing families and people living in coastal communities.

Friends,

We want to build a Tamil Nadu that keeps reaching new heights. And for this, whatever support is needed from the Centre, we stand with you with full commitment. Let us together realise the resolve of a developed India through a developed Tamil Nadu. With this spirit, once again, I extend my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to all of you for these projects.

Nandri, Vanakkam!!! (Thank You, Namastey).

DISCLAIMER: This is the approximate translation of Prime Minister's address. Original address was delivered in Hindi.

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