

Mann ki Baat Episode 75

28 March 2021

My dear countrymen, Namaskar. This time when I was perusing the letters, comments; the varied inputs that keep pouring in for Mann ki Baat, many people recalled a very important point. On MyGov, Aryan Shri – Anup Rao from Bengaluru, Devesh from Noida, Sujeet from Thane – all of them said – Modi ji, this time, it's the 75th episode of Mann ki Baat; congratulations for that. I express my gratitude to you for following Mann ki Baat so minutely; for staying connected as well. For me, it's a matter of deep pride; it's a matter of joy. From my side, it's of course THANKS to you; I also express thanks to all the listeners of Mann ki Baat, since this journey just wouldn't have been possible without your support. It seems like just yesterday when we had embarked upon this journey of thoughts and ideas. Then, on the 3rd of October, 2014, it was the pious occasion of Vijayadashmi; look at the coincidence – today it is Holika Dahan. 'May one lamp light another, thus illuminating the Nation' – treading along this sentiment, we've traversed this way. We spoke to people across each and every corner of the country and learnt about their extraordinary work. You too must have experienced that even in the remotest corners of our country, there lies vast, unparalleled potential – myriad gems are being nurtured, ensconced in the lap of Mother India. Well for me, it has been a phenomenal experience in itself to watch society, know about society, realizing her strength. During these

75 episodes, one went through a multitude of subjects. At times, there was reference to rivers; at other times the peaks of the Himalayas were touched upon...sometimes matters pertaining to deserts; at other times taking up natural disasters...sometimes soaking in innumerable stories on service to humanity...in some, inventions in technology; in others, the story of an experience of doing something novel in an unknown corner! You see, whether it's about sanitation or a discussion on conserving our heritage; and not just that, reference to making toys, what is it that was not there? Perhaps, the sheer number of topics that we touched upon would turn out to be countless! During all this, from time to time, we paid tributes to great luminaries whose contribution in the building of India has been unparalleled; we learnt about them. We also spoke on many global matters; we've tried to derive inspiration from them. There were many points that you told me; you gave me many ideas. In a way, in this 'Vichar Yatra', journey of thought and idea, you kept walking together, kept connecting, adding something new throughout. During this 75th episode, at the outset, I express my heartfelt thanks to each and every listener of Mann ki Baat for making it a success, enriching it and staying connected.

My dear countrymen, you see how big a pleasant coincidence it is that today I got an opportunity to express my 75th Mann ki Baat! This very month is the one that marks the commencement of 'Amrit Mahotsav' of the 75 years of Independence. 'Amrit Mahotsav' had begun from the day of Dandi Yatra and will continue till the 15th of August, 2023. Programmes in connection with Amrit Mahotsav are being held throughout the country consistently; people are sharing information and pictures of

these programmes from a multitude of places. Naveen from Jharkhand has sent me a message on NamApp, along with some such pictures. He has written that he watched programmes on Amrit Mahotsav and decided that he would visit at least ten places connected with the Freedom Struggle. The first name on his list is that of the birthplace of Bhagwan Birsa Munda.

Naveen has written that he will disseminate stories of the tribal freedom fighters of Jharkhand to other parts of the country. Bhai Naveen, I congratulate you on your thought.

Friends, be it the struggle saga of a freedom fighter; be it the history of a place or any cultural story from the country, you can bring it to the fore during Amrit Mahotsav; you can become a means to connect the countrymen with it. You will see – by and by, Amrit Mahotsav will be filled up with similar inspiring drops of nectar...and then the elixir that will flow will inspire us till a hundred years of the Independence of India...it will elevate the country to newer heights, begetting a fervor to do something or the other for the country. In the struggle for freedom, our fighters underwent innumerable hardships since they considered sacrifice for the sake of the country as their duty. May the immortal saga of their sacrifice, ‘Tyaag’ and ‘Balidan’ continuously inspire us towards the path of duty. And as Bhagwan Krishna has said in the Gita, “Niyatam Kuru Karma Twam Karma Jyaayo Hyakarmanah| Along the same sentiment, may all of us fulfill our assigned duties faithfully. And the Amrit Mahotsav of our freedom implies that we make new resolves....and to realize those resolves, we persevere wholeheartedly with due diligence...and resolves should be such that are meant for welfare of society, for the good of the country, for a bright future for India...resolves should be such in which

the self assumes one responsibility or the other...intertwined with one's own duty. I do believe we possess this golden opportunity to embody, live the Gita.

My dear countrymen, last year it was this very month of March when the country heard the term 'Janata Curfew' for the first time. Just have a look at the experience of the might of the great Praja, people of this great country...Janata Curfew had become a bewilderment to the entire world. It was an unprecedented example of discipline; generations to come will certainly feel proud at that. Similarly, expressing honour, respect for our Corona Warriors, ringing Thaalīs, applauding, lighting a lamp! You cannot imagine how much it had touched the hearts of Corona Warriors...and that is the very reason they resolutely held on the whole year, without tiring, without halting.

Steadfastly, they endured to save the life of each and every citizen of the country. Last year, around this time, the question that was looming was...by when would the corona vaccine come! Friends, it's a matter of honour for everyone that today, India is running the world's largest vaccination programme. Pushpa Shukla ji from Bhubaneswar has written to me about photographs of the vaccination programme. She urges that I should discuss in Mann ki Baat the enthusiasm visible in the elderly of the household regarding the vaccine. Friends, it is right, as well...we are getting to hear such news from all corners of the country; we are seeing such pictures that touch our hearts. 109 year old elderly mother from Jaunpur UP, Ram Dulaiya ji has taken the vaccination; similarly 107 year old Kewal Krishna ji in Delhi has taken the dose of the vaccine. 100 year old Jai Chaudhary from Hyderabad has taken the vaccine and it's an appeal to all to take the vaccine. I am observing on Twitter -

Facebook how after getting the vaccine for the elderly of their homes people are uploading their pictures. A youth Anandan Nair from Kerala in fact has given a new term to this- ‘Vaccine service’. Similar messages have been sent by Shivani from Delhi, Himanshu from Himachal and many other youths. I appreciate these thoughts of all you listeners. Amidst all these, do remember the mantra to fight corona- dawaayi bhi kadaayibhi. It is not that I have to just say; we have to live too, speak too, tell too and keep making people committed to ‘dawayi bhi kadayee bhi’ too.

My dear countrymen, today I have to thank Soumya ji who lives in Indore. She has drawn my attention to a subject and urged me to mention it in ‘Man kiBaat’. This subject is – the new record of Indian cricketer Mitaali Raaj. Recently Mitaali Raaj ji has become the first Indian woman cricketer to have made ten thousand runs. Many congratulations to her on this achievement. She also is the only international woman player to score seven thousand runs in one day internationals. Her contribution in the field of women’s cricket is fabulous. Mitali Raj ji has inspired millions during her more than two decades long career. The story of her perseverance and success is an inspiration not just for women cricketers but for men cricketers too.

Friends, it is interesting... in the month of March itself, when we were celebrating women’s day, many women players secured records and medals in their name. India bagged the top position during the ISSF World Cup shooting organised at Delhi. India also topped the Gold Medals tally. This was possible because of the fabulous display by Indian women and men shooters. Meanwhile P V Sindhu ji has won the Silver Medal in the BWF Swiss Open Super 300 Tournament. Today,

from education to entrepreneurship, armed forces to science and technology, the country's daughters are making a distinct mark everywhere. I am especially happy that daughters are making a new place for themselves in sports. Sports is coming up as a preferred choice in professional choices.

My dear countrymen, do you remember the Maritime India Summit held sometime ago? Do you remember what I had said at this summit? Naturally, so many programmes keep happening, so many things get said, how does one remember all and how does one pay attention either... naturally! But I felt nice that Guru Prasad ji carried forward one of my requests with interest. At this summit, I had talked of developing tourism facilities around the light house complexes in the country. Guru Prasad ji has shared experiences of his travel in 2019 to two light houses- Chennai light house and Mahabalipuram light house. He has shared very interesting facts which will astonish even the listeners of 'Man kiBaat'. For example, Chennai light house is one of those select light houses of the world which have elevators. Not only this, it is also the only light house in India which is within the city limits. It has solar panels too for electricity. Guru Prasad ji also talked about the heritage Museum of the light house, which brings forth the history of marine navigation. Giant wicks of oil lamps, kerosene lights, petroleum vapour, and electric lamps that were used in olden times are exhibited at the museum. Guru Prasad ji has also written in detail about the oldest light house of India- Mahabalipuram light house. He says that beside this light house there is the 'Ulkaneshwar' temple built hundreds of years ago by Pallava king MahendraVerman First.

Friends, I have talked of different aspects of tourism several times during 'Man ki Baat', but these light houses are unique in terms of tourism. Because of their grand structures light houses have always been centres of attraction for people. To promote tourism 71 light houses have been identified in India too. In all these light houses, depending on their capacities, museums, amphi-theatres, open air theatres, cafeterias, children's parks, eco friendly cottages and landscaping will be built. By the way, as we are talking of light houses I would also like to tell you about a unique light house. This light house is at a place called Jinjhuwada in Surendra Nagar district of Gujarat. Do you know why this light house is special? It is special, because now the sea coast is more than a hundred kilometers away from where this light house is. You will find such stones too in this village which tell us that there must have been a busy harbour here in the past. That means, earlier the coastline was up to Jinjhuwada. Advancing, receding, moving back, retreating so far away of the sea is also a feature of it. This month it is going to be 10 years since the horrifying tsunami that hit Japan. Thousands of people had lost their lives to this tsunami. A similar tsunami had hit India in 2004. During the tsunami we lost 14 of our employees working at our light house; they were on duty at the light houses in Andaman Nicobar and Tamilnadu. I pay respectful homage to these hard working light keepers of ours and have high regard for their work.

Dear countrymen, novelty, modernization is essential in all fields of life, otherwise it becomes a burden at times. Modernization in the field of Indian agriculture is the need of the hour. It is already late. We have already lost a lot of time. Adopting new alternatives, new innovations, along with

traditional farming, are equally important to create new opportunities for employment in the agriculture sector; to increase the income of farmers. The country has experienced it during the white revolution. Now bee farming is emerging as a similar alternative. Bee farming is becoming the foundation of a honey revolution or sweet revolution in the country. Farmers, in large numbers, of farmers are associating with it; innovating.

Just as a village Gurdum in Darjeeling, West Bengal. There are steep mountains, geographical problems, and yet, people here started the work of honey bee farming, and today, there is a sizeable demand for honey harvested at this place. This is also increasing the income of farmers. The natural organic honey of the Sunderbans areas of West Bengal is in great demand in our country and the world. I also have had one such personal experience in Gujarat. An event was organized in the year 2016 in Banaskantha, Gujarat. In that programme, I had told the people that there were so many possibilities here... why not Banaskantha and the farmers here write a new chapter of the sweet revolution? You will be happy to know that in such a short time, Banaskantha has become a major centre for honey production. Today, farmers of Banaskantha are earning lakhs of rupees annually through honey.

There is a similar example too from Yamuna Nagar, Haryana. In Yamuna Nagar, farmers are producing several hundred tons of honey annually, enhancing their income by doing bee farming. The result of this hard work of the farmers is that the production of honey in the country is continuously increasing, and annually, nearly 1.25 lakh tons is produced, and

out of this produce a large quantity of honey is also being exported to foreign countries.

Friends, Honey Bee Farming do not lead to income solely from honey, but bee wax is also a very big source of income. There is demand for bee wax in everything...pharmaceutical, food, textile and cosmetic industries Our country currently imports bee wax, but, our farmers are now rapidly transforming this situation...that is, in a way contributing in the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' campaign. Today the whole world is looking at Ayurveda and Natural Health Products. In such a situation, the demand for honey is increasing even more rapidly. I wish more and more farmers of our country to join bee farming along with their farming. This will lead to an increase in the income of the farmers too and will also sweeten their lives!

My dear countrymen, World Sparrow Day was celebrated just a few days ago. Sparrow that is Goraiya, at places is also known as chakali, or it is also called chimni, or ghanchirika. Earlier, Goraiya would be found chirping on the boundaries of the walls of our houses or the neighbouring trees. But now people recollect Goraiya by telling you that last they had seen Goraiya was many years ago! Today we are required to make efforts to save it. My friend hailing from Benaras, Indrapal Singh Batra has initiated a novel effort in this direction that I would like to certainly tell this to the listeners of Mann Ki Baat. Batra Ji has turned his own house into home for the Goraiya. He got such wooden nests made in his house where the Goraiya could dwell easily. Today many homes in Benaras are joining this campaign. This has led to creating a wonderful natural environment in the houses. I would like that for nature,

environment, animals, birds or for whomsoever small or big efforts should be made by us.

Just as... a friend Bijay Kumar Kabiji. Bijayji hails from Kendrapada in Odisha. Kendrapada is on the sea coast. That's why there are many villages in this district, which are prone to the dangers of high tides and Cyclone. This also causes havoc at times. Bijoyji felt that if anything can stop this environmental devatation, the only thing that can stop it, it is only nature. That is when Bijayji began his mission from the village of Barakot and for 12 years... Friends, toiling for the next 12 years he raised a 25-acre mangrove forest on the outskirts of the village towards the sea. Today this forest is protecting this village. An engineer Amresh Samant ji has done similar work in Paradip district of Odisha. Amresh ji has planted micro- forests, which are protecting many villages today. Friends, in Endeavour's of these kinds, if we involve the society, great results accrue. For example, there is Marimuthu Yoganathan who works as a bus conductor in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. Yoganathan ji while issuing tickets to the passengers of his bus also gives a sapling free of cost. In this way, Yoganathan ji has got planted of innumerable trees! Yoganathan ji has been spending a big chunk of his salary towards this work .Now after listening to this story, who as a citizen will not appreciate the work of Marimuthu Yoganathan? I heartily congratulate his efforts, for his inspirational work.

My dear countrymen, we have all seen, heard and mention to others about converting waste into wealth! In the same way, efforts of converting Waste to Value are also being attempted. One such example is that of St. Teresa's College in Kochi,

Kerala. I remember that in 2017, I attended a programme centred on book reading on the campus of this college. Students of this college are making Reusable Toys, that too in a very creative manner. These students are converting old clothes, discarded wooden pieces, bags and Boxes into making toys. Some students are making a puzzle while another make a car or construct a train. Here, special attention is paid to ensure that the toys are safe as well as child friendly. And a good thing about this whole effort is that these toys are given to the Anganwadi children for them to play with. Today, while India is moving much forward in the manufacturing of toys, these campaigns from Waste to Value, these ingenious experiments mean a lot.

There is Professor Srinivasa Padkandlaji in Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh. He is doing very interesting work. He has created sculptures from Automobile Metal Scrap. These huge sculptures made by him have been installed in public parks and people watch these with great enthusiasm. This is an innovative experiment with Electronic and Automobile Waste Recycling. I once again applaud these efforts of Kochi and Vijayawada and hope that a greater number of people will come forward in such efforts.

My dear countrymen, when people of India visit any corner of the world, they proudly say that they are Indians. We have a lot to be proud of... Our yoga, Ayurveda, philosophy and what not! That we talk about with pride. We are as well proud of our local language, dialect, identity, dress, food and drink. We have to attain the new... for that is what life is but at the same time we don't have to lose our past! We have to work really hard to

enrich the immense cultural heritage around us, for it to be passed on to the new generation.

Today, Sikari Tissau, who lives in Assam, is doing this very diligently. Sikari Tissau ji of Karbi Anglong district has been documenting the Karbi language for the last 20 years. Once upon a time, in another era, 'Karbi', the language of 'Karbi tribal' brothers and sisters...is now disappearing from the mainstream. Shriman Sikari Tissau decided that he would protect identity of theirs... and today his efforts have resulted in documentation of much information about the Karbi language. He has also received accolades at many places for his efforts, and has also received awards. I of course congratulate Shriman Sikari Tissau ji through 'Mann Ki Baat', but in many corners of the country, there will be many seekers like this slogging in such initiatives and I also congratulate them all.

My dear countrymen, any new beginning is always very special. New beginning means new possibilities - New Efforts. And, new efforts mean new energy and new vigor. That is the reason it has been a tradition to observe any new beginning as a celebration in different states and regions and in our culture full of diversity. And this time is the beginning of new beginnings and arrival of new

Festivals. Holi too is a tradition to celebrate Basant, spring as a festival. When we are celebrating Holi with colors, at the same time, even spring spreads new colours all around us. At this very time, flowers start blooming and nature comes alive. New year will also be celebrated in different regions of the country soon. Be it Ugadi or Puthandu, Gudi Padwa or Bihu, Navreh or Poila, or Boishakh or Baisakhi - the whole country will be drenched in

the color of zeal, enthusiasm and new expectations. At the same time, Kerala also celebrates the beautiful festival of Vishu. After this, soon the holy occasion of Chaitra Navratri will also come. On the ninth day of the month of Chaitra, we have the festival of Ram Navami. It is also celebrated as the birth anniversary of Lord Rama and the beginning of a new era of justice and Parakram, valour. During this time, there is an atmosphere of devotion along with pomp around, which brings people closer, connects them with family and society, strengthens mutual relations. On the occasion of these festivals, I congratulate all the countrymen.

Friends, during this time on April 4, the country will also celebrate Easter. The festival of Easter is observed as a celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Symbolically, Easter is associated with the new beginning of life. Easter is a symbol of the resurrection of expectations.

On this holy and auspicious occasion, I greet not only the Christian Community in India, but also Christians globally.

My dear countrymen, today in 'Mann Ki Baat' we talked about 'Amrit Mahotsav' and our duties towards the country. We also discussed other festivals and festivities. Meanwhile, another festival is arriving which reminds us of our constitutional rights and duties. That is 14 April - Birth anniversary of Dr. Baba Saheb Ambedkar ji. This time in the 'Amrit Mahotsav', this occasion has become even more special. I am sure that we will make this birth anniversary of Babasaheb a memorable one by taking a resolve of our duties and thus paying tribute to him. With this very belief, wish you all the best for the festivals once

again. You all be happy, be healthy, and rejoice. With this wish, I remind you 'dawai bhi, kadaai bhi'!

Thank you very much.