

Mann Ki Baat Episode no. 79

My dear countrymen, Namaskar. A few amazing pictures taken a couple of days ago, some memorable moments are still there in front of my eyes. Let us hence commence Mann Ki Baat this time, with those very moments. At the Tokyo Olympics, watching Indian sportspersons march carrying the Tricolour exhilarated not just me but the entire country...as if the whole country unitedly exhorted her warriors saying, "Vijayi Bhava – emerge victorious!" When these sportspersons had departed from India, I had the opportunity of chatting with them, knowing about them and conveying it to the country. These sportspersons have reached where they are after overcoming numerous hurdles in life. Today, they possess the strength of your love and support – that's why, come...let us together extend our good wishes to all of them; encourage them. On social media, our Victory Punch Campaign for the support of Olympics sportspersons has begun. Do share your Victory Punch with your team...Cheer for India.

Friends, it is but natural to get emotional in honour of the one who bears the Tricolour in honour of the country. This feeling of patriotism unites all of us. Tomorrow, that is the 26th of July is Kargil Vijay Diwas as well. The Kargil war is one symbol of the bravery and patience on part of India's Armed Forces which the whole world has watched. This time this pride filled day will be celebrated amid Amrit

Mahotsav. That is why this day becomes all the more special. I wish you read the enthralling saga of Kargil...let us all bow to the bravehearts of Kargil.

Friends, this time on the 15th of August, the country is entering her 75th year of Independence. We are indeed very fortunate that we are witnessing 75 years of Freedom; a freedom that the country waited for, for centuries. You may remember, to commemorate 75 years of Freedom, Amrit Mahotsav had commenced on the 12th of March from Bapu's Sabarmati Ashram. On this very day, Bapu's Dandi Yatra too was revived...since then, from Jammu-Kashmir to Puduchery; from Gujarat to the Northeast, programmes in connection with Amrit Mahotsav are being held across the country. There are many such incidents, such freedom fighters whose contribution have been huge, but had not been adequately discussed...today, people are able to know about them. Now, take Moirang Day, for instance...the tiny town of Moirang in Manipur was once a major base of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose's Indian National Army, INA. Here, even before Independence, Col Shaukat Malik ji of INA had unfurled the Flag. During Amrit Mahotsav, on the 14th of April, the Tricolour was once again hoisted at that very Moirang. Innumerable such freedom fighters and great men are being remembered by the country during Amrit Mahotsav. Programmes in that connection are being successively organized by the government

and social organisations. A similar event is about to take place on the 15th of August this time...this is an endeavour connected with the National Anthem. It's an effort on part of the Ministry of Culture to have maximum number of Indians sing the National Anthem together. For this, a website too has been created – Rashtragan.in. With the help of this website, you can render the National Anthem and record it, thereby getting connected with the campaign. I hope you connect yourselves with this novel initiative. In the days to come, you will get to see many such campaigns and efforts. Amrit Mahotsav is not a programme of any government; neither a programme of any political party...it is a programme of crores and crores of Indians...a bow to our freedom fighters by every independent and grateful Indian. And the extension of the basic sentiment behind this festival is immense...the spirit entails treading the path of our freedom fighters...building a country of their dreams. Just the way champion proponents of Freedom had joined hands for the cause, we have to come together for the development of the country. We have to live for the country, work for the country...and in that, even the smallest of efforts too produce big results. We can contribute to nation building even while performing our routine chores...such as 'Vocal for Local'. Supporting local entrepreneurs, artists, craftsmen, weavers should come naturally to us. The National Handloom Day on the 7th of August is an occasion when we can strive to attempt that. National Handloom Day has a remarkable

historic background. On this very day in 1905, the Swadeshi Andolan had begun.

Friends, in the rural and tribal regions of our country, handloom is a major source of income. This is a sector that comprises lakhs of women, weavers and craftsmen. Even small efforts on your part will give rise to a new hope in weavers. Do purchase something or the other and share your thought with others as well...now that we are celebrating 75 years of Independence, it of course becomes our responsibility. You must have noticed that year 2014 onwards, we often touch upon Khadi in Mann ki Baat. It is only on account of your efforts that today, the sale of Khadi has risen manifold. Could anyone even think that in any Khadi store, the sales figure would cross one crore rupees...But you have made that possible too. Whenever, wherever you purchase a Khadi product, it does benefit our poor weaver brothers and sisters. That is why, in a way, buying Khadi is service to people, service to the country. I urge you my dear brothers and sisters, to make it a point to definitely buy Handloom products being made in rural areas and share it on #MyHandloomMyPride.

Friends, when one refers to the freedom movement and Khadi, remembering revered Bapu is but natural. Just the way the Quit India Movement, Bharat Chhoro Andolan steered under Bapu's leadership, every countryman today has to lead a Bharat Jodo Andolan. It is our duty to ensure that our work helps closely knit, bind our India which

is filled with diversity. Come, on Amrit Mahotsav, let us make a sacred Amrit resolve that the country remains to be our highest faith; our topmost priority. We have to move forward with the mantra 'Nation First, Always First'.

My dear countrymen, today I wish to express my special thanks to my young friends tuned in to Mann ki Baat. Just a few days ago, on part of MyGov, a study was conducted regarding the listeners of Mann ki Baat. In this study, primarily, people who send messages and suggestions were focused upon. The study revealed the fact that out of those sending messages and suggestions, close to 75% are below the age of 35...meaning thereby that the suggestions of the youth power of India are steering Mann ki Baat. I view this as a very good indicator. Mann Ki Baat is a medium which has positivity, sensitivity. In Mann Ki Baat, we talk about positive things; its character is collective.

This activism for positive thoughts and suggestions in the youth delights me. I am happy also about the opportunity that I get through 'Mann Ki Baat' to know of the minds of the youth.

Friends, suggestions received from you are the real strength of 'Mann Ki Baat'. It is your suggestions, through 'Mann Ki Baat', that express the diversity of India, spread the fragrance of service and sacrifice of Indians in all the four directions, inspire one and all through the innovation of our toiling youth. You send ideas of

various kinds in 'Mann Ki Baat'. We are not able to discuss all of them, but I do send many of them to related departments so that further work can be done on them.

Friends, I want to tell you about the efforts of Saayee Praneeth ji. Saayee Praneeth ji is a Software Engineer, hailing from Andhra Pradesh. Last year he saw that in his area farmers had to suffer a lot due to the vagaries of weather. For years he had interest in meteorology. So, he decided to use his interest and talent for the welfare of farmers. Now he purchases weather data from different data sources, analyses them and sends necessary information through various media to farmers in local language. Besides weather updates, Praneeth ji also gives guidance to people about what they should do in different climatic conditions... Especially how to be safe from floods or how to avoid storm or lightning, he talks about this too.

Friends, on the one hand this effort of a young software engineer touches our hearts; on the other the use of technology by one of our friends will amaze us. This friend Shriman Isaak Munda ji hails from a village in Sambalpur district of Odisha. Isaak ji once used to work as a daily wager but now he has become an internet sensation. He is earning a lot through his YouTube Channel. In his videos he shows prominently the local dishes, traditional ways of cooking, his village, his lifestyle, family and food habits. His journey as a YouTuber began

in March 2020 when he posted a video related to Pakhal, the famous local dish of Odisha. Since then, he has posted hundreds of videos. This effort of his is different for many reasons. Specially because through this, people living in cities get a chance to watch the lifestyle about which they don't know much. Isaak Munda ji is celebrating by blending culture and cuisine equally and inspiring us too.

Friends, while we are discussing technology I want to discuss of an interesting subject. Recently you must have read, seen that a start-up established by an alumni of IIT Madras has made a 3D printed house. The construction of the house through 3D printing, how did this happen after all? Actually, this start-up first of all fed a 3 Dimensional design in a 3 D printer and then through a concrete of a special kind fabricated a 3 D structure layer by layer. You will be happy to know that many experiments of this kind are being done throughout the country. There was a time when it would take years to complete even a minor construction. But today due to technology the situation is changing in India. Some time ago we had launched a Global Housing Technology Challenge to invite such innovative companies from all over the world. This is a unique attempt of its kind in the country; hence we gave it the name Light House Projects. For now, work on Light House Projects is on at a fast pace at 6 different locations in the country. Modern technology and innovative methods are used in these Light House Projects. This reduces the

duration of construction. Along with that, the houses that are constructed are more durable, economical and comfortable. Recently, through drones, I also reviewed these projects and saw live their work progress.

In the project at Indore, Pre-Fabricated Sandwich Panel System is being used in place of Brick-and-Mortar Walls. In Rajkot, the Light House is being made with French Technology in which through a tunnel Monolithic Concrete construction technology is being used. Houses made with this technology will be lot more capable of withstanding disasters. In Chennai, the Pre-cast Concrete system technologies from America and Finland are being used. By this, houses will get built faster and the cost too will be low. In Ranchi houses will be built using the 3D Construction System of Germany. In this, every room will be constructed separately and then the entire structure will be joined together the way block toys are joined. In Agartala, using technology from New Zealand, houses that can withstand major earthquakes are being made with steel frame. Meanwhile, in Lucknow technology from Canada is being used. In this plaster and paint will not be required and walls prepared in advance will be used to build houses faster.

Friends, today an attempt is being made in the country to ensure that these projects work as Incubation centers. Through this our planners, Architects, Engineers and students will know of new

technology and experiment with them too. I am sharing these things especially with our youth so that in the interest of the nation they are encouraged towards technology in newer fields.

My dear countrymen, you must have heard of an English adage- “To learn is to grow” that is to learn is to progress. When we learn something new, doors to new advances open up automatically for us. Whenever effort to do something new, different from the rut, has been made, new doors have opened for humankind, a new era has begun. And you must have seen whenever something new happens anywhere, its result surprises everyone. Now, for example, if I ask you which the states that you would connect with Apples are? Obviously in your mind first of all the name of Himachal Pradesh, Jammu-Kashmir and Uttarakhand would strike. But if I ask you to add the name of Manipur too to this list you will probably be filled with surprise. Youths filled with passion to do something new have demonstrated this feat in Manipur. Nowadays apple farming is picking up fast in the Ukhrul district of Manipur. Farmers here are growing apples in their orchards. To learn apple farming these people have taken formal training by going to Himachal. One of these is T S Ringphami Young. By profession he is an aeronautical engineer. He along with his wife Shrimati T S Angel has grown apples. Similarly, Avungshee Shimre Augasteena too has grown apples in her

orchard. Avungshee had a job in Delhi. She returned to her village quitting this and started farming apple. There are many such apple growers in Manipur who have demonstrated something different and something new.

Friends, in our tribal communities, Ber fruit has always been very popular. The members of the tribal community have always been cultivating Ber. But its cultivation is increasing especially after the COVID-19 pandemic. Bikramjit Chakma of 32 years of age is my young friend from Unakoti, Tripura. He has not only earned a lot of profit by starting the Ber cultivation; Now he is also motivating people to do Ber cultivation. The state government has also come forward to help such people. Many special nurseries have been started by the government for this purpose so that the demand of the people associated with the cultivation of Ber can be met. Innovation is happening in agriculture, so creativity is also being witnessed in the by-products of agriculture.

Friends, I have also come to know about an attempt made in LakhimpurKheri in Uttar Pradesh. A unique initiative has taken place in LakhimpurKheri during the period of COVID itself. Here, the work of training women to manufacture fibre from the waste banana stems was started. The way to make the best out of the waste. Banana fibre is prepared by cutting the stem of a banana with the help of a machine, the fibre is like jute or flax. Handbags, mats, rugs,

many things are made from this fibre. Through this, the utilization of crop waste started, on the other hand our sisters and daughters living in the village acquired another source of income. Through this work of Banana fibre, a woman from the area earns four to six hundred rupees per day. Banana is cultivated on hundreds of acres of land in Lakhimpur Kheri. After the harvesting of banana, the farmers usually had to spend a separate sum to dispose of its stem. Now not only their money is being saved; and lending credence to the saying of 'Getting two of something, for the price of one!'

Friends, on the one hand products are being manufactured from banana fibre; on the other, delicious dishes like dosa and gulabjamun are also being made from banana flour. Women in Uttara Kannada and Dakshina Kannada districts of Karnataka are doing this unique work. This endeavour also began in the Corona period itself. These women not only prepared things like dosa, gulabjamun from banana flour; they also shared their pictures on social media. When more people came to know about the banana flour, its demand also increased and so did the income of these women. Like Lakhimpur Kheri, here too, women are leading this innovative idea.

Friends, such examples become the inspiration to do something new in life. There must be many such people around you too. When your family is involved in close conversations, you should also make

these a part of your chat. Take out some time and go to see such efforts with children and if you get the opportunity, do something like this yourself. And yes, I would like it if you share all this with me on Nammo App or MyGov.

My dear countrymen, there is a verse in our Sanskrit texts -

आत्मार्थम् जीव लोके अस्मिन्, को न जीवति मानवः ।

परम् परोपकारार्थम्, यो जीवति स जीवति ॥

Atmantharmjeevalokeasmin, ko na jeevtimanavah.

Paramparopkarathram, yojeevatisajeevati ॥

That is, everyone in this world lives for himself. But in actuality only the person who exists for the sake of others really lives. Talking about the philanthropic efforts of the sons and daughters of Mother India is what 'Mann Ki Baat' is all about. Today also, we'll talk about some of these friends. One of our friends hails from Chandigarh city. I too, have lived in Chandigarh for a few years. It is a very cheerful and beautiful city. The people of Chandigarh are also large hearted and yes, if you are a foodie, you will have more fun here. In Sector 29 of Chandigarh, Sanjay Rana ji runs a food stall and sells Chole-Bhature on his cycle. One day his daughter Riddhima and niece Riya

came to him with an idea. Both requested him to feed chole-bhature for free to those who had got the COVID Vaccine. He happily agreed to the suggestion and immediately started this good and noble effort. To eat Sanjay Rana ji's chole-bhature for free, you have to show that you have got the vaccine administered on the very day. As soon as you show the vaccination message he will give you delicious Chole-Bhature. It is said that for the welfare of the society, spirit of service and duty are required more than money. Our Sanjay Bhai is proving this saying to be right.

Friends, I would like to discuss another such work today. This effort is being attempted in Nilgiri of Tamil Nadu. Here Radhika Shastriji has started the AmbuRx (Amburex) Project. The purpose of this project is to provide easy transport for the treatment of patients in hilly areas. Radhika runs a cafe in Coonoor. She raised funds for AmbuRx from her cafe colleagues. Today six AmbuRx are serving in the Nilgiri hills and are coming to the aid of patients in remote parts during the time of emergency. An AmbuRx is equipped with a Stretcher, Oxygen Cylinder, First Aid Box and other things

Friends, whether it is Sanjay ji or Radhika ji, their examples demonstrate that we can render service while doing our routine work, our business or job.

Friends, a few days back a very interesting and very emotional event occurred, which imparted new strength to India-Georgia friendship. In this ceremony, India handed over the Holy Relic or icon of Saint Queen Ketevan to the Government of Georgia and the people there, for this mission our Foreign Minister himself went there. The ceremony, which took place in a very emotionally charged atmosphere, was attended by the President of Georgia, the Prime Minister, many religious leaders, and a large number of Georgians. The words that were said in praise of India in this ceremony are indeed very memorable. This single ceremony has not only strengthened the relations between the two nations but as well as between Goa and Georgia. This is because these holy relics of Saint Queen Ketevan were found in 2005 from Saint Augustine Church in Goa.

Friends, the question arising in your mind must be...what is this matter all about and when and how did this happen? Actually, this is an incident about four to five hundred years ago. Queen Ketevan was the daughter of the royal family of Georgia. In 1624 after ten years of imprisonment she was martyred. According to an ancient Portuguese document, the mortal remains of Saint Queen Ketevan were kept in the Saint Augustine Convent of Old Goa. But, for a long time it was believed that her remains buried in Goa were lost in the earthquake of 1930.

After decades of tireless efforts by the Indian government and Georgia's historians, researchers, archaeologists and the Georgian Church, the relics were successfully discovered in 2005. This is an extremely emotional topic for the people of Georgia. That is why keeping in mind their historical, religious and spiritual sentiments, the Government of India decided to gift a part of these relics to the people of Georgia. Today, I would like to thank the people of Goa for preserving this unique side of the shared history of India and Georgia. Goa has been the land of many a great spiritual heritage. Saint Augustine Church is a UNESCO's World Heritage Site – a part of the Churches and Convents of Goa.

My dear countrymen, let me now take you straight from Georgia to Singapore, where another glorious opportunity arose earlier this month. The Prime Minister of Singapore and my friend, Lee Hsien Loong inaugurated the recently renovated Silat Road Gurudwara. He also wore the traditional Sikh turban. This Gurudwara was built about a hundred years ago and there is also a memorial dedicated to Bhai Maharaj Singh. Bhai Maharaj Singh ji fought for the independence of India and this moment becomes more inspiring when we are celebrating 75 years of independence. The people to people strength between two countries gets a boost with such initiatives and efforts. These also show how important it is to live in a

harmonious environment and understand each other's culture.

My dear countrymen, today in 'Mann Ki Baat' we have discussed many topics. There is another subject which is very close to my heart. It is the topic of water conservation. The place where I spent my childhood, there was always shortage of water. We used to yearn for rain and thus saving every drop of water has been a part of our traditions, our sanskar. Now this mantra of "Water conservation through public participation" has changed the picture there. Saving every drop of water, preventing any kind of wastage of water... it should become a natural part of our lifestyle. Such a tradition should be made in our families, which would make every member proud.

Friends, the protection of nature and environment is embedded in the cultural life of India, in our daily lives. At the same time, rains and the monsoon have always shaped our thoughts, our philosophy and our civilization. In 'Ritusanhar' and 'Meghdoot', the great poet Kalidas has beautifully described the rains. These poems are still very popular among literature lovers. The magnificence of rains is also beautifully described in the Parjanya Suktam of Rigveda. Similarly, the relationship between the earth, the sun and the rain has been elaborated in a poetic form in the Srimad Bhagavata.

अष्टौ मासान् निपीतं यद्, भूम्याः च, ओद-मयम् वसु ।

स्वर्गोभिः मोक्तुम् आरेभे, पर्जन्यः काल आगते ॥

That is, the Sun has exploited the earth's wealth in the form of water for eight months, now in the monsoon season, the Sun is returning this accumulated wealth to the earth. Indeed, the monsoon and rainy season is not only beautiful and pleasant, but it is also nurturing, life-giving. The rain water that we are getting is for our future generations, we should never forget that.

Today a thought came to my mind that why not end my talk with such interesting references. My very best wishes to all of you for the forthcoming festivals. At the time of festivals and celebrations, you must remember that Corona has not yet gone from amongst us. You must not forget the protocols related to Corona. May all of you be healthy and happy.

Many many thanks!