

**PM's address in the 9th Episode of 'Mann Ki Baat 2.0' – 23  
February, 2020**



My dear countrymen, I am fortunate to have got an opportunity once again to greet citizens from Kutch to Kohima, Kashmir to Kanyakumari; in fact across the length & breadth of the country. Namaskar to all of you. Reflecting on the expanse & diversity of our land, revering them fills each & every Indian with a sense of pride. And an opportunity to experience this varied diversity is one that touches the heart, filling it up with joy; it is a flower that radiates inspiration. A few days ago, at a small place at the Hunar Haat in Delhi, I witnessed hues of our country's diverse expanse, cultures, traditions, cuisines & the warmth of emotions. As a matter of fact the repertoire comprising traditional attires, handicrafts, carpets, utensils, Bamboo & brass products, Phulkari of

Punjab, exotic leatherwork of Andhra Pradesh, beautiful paintings from Tamilnadu, brass products of Uttar Pradesh, Bhadohi carpets, copper work of Kutch, a number of musical instruments & innumerable stories; the vivid mosaic of pan- Indian art & culture was truly unique. The stories of the artisans' perseverance, zeal & love for their skill are equally inspiring as well. Listening to a divyang woman at the Hunar Haat was a source of fulfillment. She told me that earlier she used to sell paintings on the pavement. Her life changed after she connected with Hunar Haat. Today, she is not only self- reliant; she has purchased a house too. At Hunar Haat, I got the opportunity to converse with many other artisans. I am told that over 50 per cent of the crafts persons participating at Hunar Haat are women. Also, during the last three years, through Hunar Haat, close to three lakh artisans & crafts persons have gained many opportunities of employment. Hunar Haat, of course, is a platform showcasing art & craft; it is also lending wings to people's dreams. It is a venue where it is impossible to overlook the country's diversity. Besides handicrafts, it displays the diversity of India's varied cuisine too. In a single row, one could savour the sight of Idli- Dosa, Chhole- Bhature, Daal- Baati, Khaman- Khandvi & what not! I thoroughly enjoyed having the delicious Litti- Chokha of Bihar. All over India, fairs & exhibitions such as this are organized from time to time. Whenever the opportunity arises, one should attend such events to know India, to experience India. Thus, not only would you be able to be a part of the country's art-culture canvas; you will also contribute in the progress & prosperity of hardworking crafts persons, especially women. Do make it a point to visit.

My dear countrymen, our country is bestowed with great traditions. The legacy that we inherited from our ancestors, the knowledge & values that have permeated entail compassion toward each & every living being and boundless love for nature. All this is a part of our cultural heritage. And to partake of this culture of hospitality in the Indian ethos, every year, numerous species of birds from across the world come to India. Throughout the year, India is home to many migratory species. We are told that more than 500 varieties of birds fly in from varied regions. Recently, Gandhinagar was host to the COP- 13 convention, where this phenomenon was mulled over, discussed and deliberated. India's efforts concerning the subject were lauded too. Friends, it is a matter of pride for us that for the next three years, India will chair the COP convention

on migratory species. Do send in your suggestions on lending more substance to this opportunity, making it more useful.

While discussing the COP convention with you, an important piece of information connected with Meghalaya drew my attention. Very recently, biologists have discovered a new species of fish whose habitat is within the caves of Meghalaya. It is believed that this fish is the largest among aquatic species found under the surface of caves. It lives in deep, dark underground caves, with little chance of light reaching in. Scientists are perplexed at the ability of this large fish to survive in such deep caves. It is a matter of joy that our India, and especially Meghalaya is home to a rare species. It lends a new facet to India's bio-diversity. We are surrounded by many such mysteries, which are still undiscovered. To discover such a phenomenal enigma calls for fierce detective passion.

The great Tamil poetess Avvaiyar writes: Kattat Kemaavoon Kalladaru Udgadvu, Kaddat Kamiyan Adva Kalladar Olaaadu.

This means, what we know is but just a handful of sand; what we do not know is like a universe in itself. Similar is the case with the biodiversity of this country. The more you know, the more you realize the magnitude of what you do not know. Our biodiversity too is a unique treasure for the entire human kind. We have to preserve it, conserve it & explore further. My dear young friends, children & the youth in India are increasingly taking a keen interest in Science & Technology. Record satellite launches into space, new records, new missions fills up every Indian heart with a sense of pride. When I was in Bengaluru during Chandrayan-2, I witnessed immense enthusiasm & fervor on the part of the children present there. There was no sign of drowsiness from any angle. In a way, they kept awake throughout the night. One can never forget their inquisitiveness when it came to Science, Technology and Innovation. To give a fillip to this very enthusiasm in children & young people; to encourage scientific temper in them, another system has been put in place. You can now sit & watch rocket launching at Sriharikota, taking place in front of your own eyes. Recently, the facility has been made open for all. A visitors' gallery has been erected, large enough to seat 10 thousand people. Online booking is also possible through a link provided on ISRO's website. I am told that many schools are arranging tour for their students to show them rocket launching and motivate them. I urge the Principals & teachers of all schools that they should avail of this benefit in times to come.

Friends, I would like to convey to you another exciting piece of information. I'd read the comment of Paras from Dhanbad, Jharkhand on Namo App. Paras wants me to tell our young friends about ISRO's 'Yuvika' programme. 'Yuvika' is a very commendable effort on part of ISRO to integrate the youth with science. This program was launched for school students in the year 2019. 'Yuvika' is an acronym for ' Yuva Vigyani Karyakram and this program is in consonance with our vision, "Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan, Jai Vigyan, Jai Anusandhaan'. In this programme, students, after their exams, during their holidays, visit different centres of ISRO and learn about Space Technology, Space Science and Space Applications. If you want to know how training is imparted, what its nuances are, how exciting it is, then you must read the experience of those who have attended its earlier sessions. If you wish to be a participant of this training, you can register by visiting the website of 'Yuvika' linked to that of ISRO. My young friends, I'm telling you the name of the website which you can write down, and must visit today itself. It is – [www.yuvika.isro.gov.in](http://www.yuvika.isro.gov.in). Have you written it down?

My dear countrymen, the beautiful valleys of Ladakh witnessed a momentous event on the 31<sup>st</sup> of January 2020, for History was made when an Indian Air Force AN-32 aircraft took off from Leh's Kushok Bakula Rimpoche Airport. A mixture of 10% Indian Bio-jet fuel was used in this flight and this was the first time that this mix was used in both engines. Not just that, but the airport from which this plane took off from Leh is not only one of the highest altitude airports in India but also in the world! Notably, the bio-jet fuel is prepared from non-edible tree borne oil. It is procured from various tribal areas of India. These efforts will not only reduce carbon emissions but may also reduce India's dependence on crude oil imports. I congratulate all the people involved in this significant mission, especially the scientists of CSIR and Indian Institute of Petroleum, Dehradun, who made it possible to develop the technology to fly an aircraft with bio-fuel. Their efforts also empower the 'Make in India' mission.

My dear countrymen, our new India is not willing to tag along with the old approach. In particular, our sisters and mothers of New India are going ahead and grasping the challenges hands on thus setting a pace for a positive transformation in the entire society. The region of Purnia in Bihar is an inspiration for people across the country. This area has been grappling with the havoc caused by floods for decades together. In this

backdrop, it has been very difficult to do farming and mobilize other sources of income. But under these very circumstances, some women of Purnia chose a different path. Friends, earlier the women of Purnia used to cultivate cocoons from silkworms obtained from Mulberry trees, and received very nominal price for their produce, while merchants who bought this raw silk made huge profits by spinning it into silk yarn. But today, the women of Purnia have taken a new initiative that has changed the entire scenario. These women formed mulberry-production co-operatives with assistance from the Government. After that, they spun silk yarn from the cocoons, and also started getting saris made with those threads. You will be surprised to know that the very cocoons were sold for a nominal amount earlier; saris made from them are fetching thousands of rupees now. The Didis of the 'Adarsh Jeevika Mahila Mulberry Production Group' have performed miracles that are being witnessed across many villages. The Farmer Didis of many villages of Purnia are not only getting saris produced, but are also selling them in big fairs by putting up their own stalls – an example of how today's women fortified with new power, new thinking are achieving new targets. My dear countrymen, the entrepreneurship of women and daughters of our country, their courage, are a matter of pride for each one of us. We find many such examples around us which illustrate the manner in which our daughters are breaking age old shackles and attaining new heights. I would particularly like to share with you, the achievement of twelve-year-old daughter Kamyaa Karthikeyan. Kamyaa, at the age of just twelve years, has conquered Mount Aconcagua. This is the highest peak of the Andes Mountains in South America, which is about 7000 meters high. Every Indian will be touched by the fact that at the beginning of this month, when Kamyaa conquered the peak, the first thing she did was to hoist our tricolour there. I have also been told that Kamyaa, who has made the country proud, is now on a new mission, which is called 'Mission Saahas'. Under this she is trying to conquer the highest peaks of all the continents. Also, under this mission she will also be skiing on North and South poles.

I wish Kamyaa all the best for 'Mission Saahas'. By the way, Kamyaa's achievement also motivates everyone of us to stay fit. Fitness has also contributed in great measure in Kamyaa's achieving great heights at such a young age. A Nation that is fit, will always be a nation that is a hit. By the way the oncoming months are very opportune for adventure sports.

The geography of India is such that it provides many opportunities for adventure sports in our country. On the one hand, we have high mountains, on the other, there is a desert spread far and wide. Similarly on the one hand we have a network of dense forests, on the other, there is an infinite expanse of the sea. Therefore, I make a special appeal to all of you to visit the place of your choice, pick up the activity of your interest and ensure integrating of your life with adventure. Shouldn't there always be adventure in life? And on top of that friends, after knowing the success story of our twelve-year-old daughter Kamyra, you will be astonished, once you hear the success story of 105-year-old Bhagirathi Amma.

Friends, if we wish to progress in life, develop ourselves, wish to achieve something in life, the first pre-condition for that is the student within us must never die. Our 105 year old Bhagirathi Amma, also gives us this inspiration. Now you would be wondering, who Bhagirathi Amma is! Bhagirathi Amma lives in Kollam in Kerala. She lost her mother when she was very young. Soon after her marriage at a young age, she lost her husband as well. But Bhagirathi Amma did not let go of her courage, did not lose her spirit. She had to quit school before she was 10-years-old. She restarted her school education at the age of 105! She started studying again! In spite of her advanced age, Bhagirathi Amma wrote her level 4 exam...and then eagerly awaited her results. She scored 75 percent in her exams. Not just that, she scored cent per cent marks in Mathematics. Amma now wants to continue her studies; wants to appear for higher exams. It's obvious that people like Bhagirathi Amma are the strength of this country; a great source of inspiration for all of us. Today I specially salute Bhagirathi Amma.

Friends, our courage, our determination during adverse circumstances in life can help us completely alter the situation. Recently, I read one such story in the media, which I would surely like to share with you. This is the story of Salman who lives in Hamirpur village of Moradabad. Salman is divyang by birth. He is unable to stand on his feet. Despite this hardship, he hasn't lost hope, and decided to start his own business. On top of that, he resolved to help other divyang people too. And soon enough, Salman started manufacturing slippers and detergent in his village itself. And in no time, 30 divyang people joined him. Do also note, that while Salman himself found it difficult to walk, he decided to manufacture slippers, that help others walk easily. The important thing is

that Salman trained his divyang colleagues himself. Now all of them jointly not only manufacture the products, but also market them. By dint of their hard work, they not only ensured employment for themselves, but also turned their venture into a profit-making one. Today, all of them together manufacture 150 pairs of slippers a day. Not just that, this year Salman has resolved to provide employment to 100 more such divyang mates. I salute their courage and their enterprise. A similar determination has been manifested by residents of Ajrak village in Kutch area of Gujarat. In 2001, after the devastating earthquake, most villagers were migrating from the village. However, one person by the name of Ismail Khatri, decided to stay back and nurture his traditional art form of 'Ajrak print'. And in no time at all, everyone was enchanted by the natural colours used in the Ajrak art. And the entire village joined in on their traditional handicraft category. The villagers not only nurtured their ages-old art form, but also fused it with modern fashion. Now major designers and Design Institutions have started using the Ajrak Print. The hardworking village folk have today turned 'Ajrak print' into a major brand. Large international buyers are now getting attracted towards this print.

My dear countrymen, recently the festival of Maha Shivaratri was celebrated throughout the country. The blessings of Lord Shiva and Mother Parvati has kept the ethos of this nation awakened. On the occasion of Mahashivaratri, may you continue to be blessed by Bhole baba...may Lord Shiva fulfill all your wishes...may you be energetic, healthy...and continue to do your duties unto the country.

Friends, along with Mahashivaratri, now the splendour of spring will keep blooming day by day. In the coming days, we will celebrate Holi and soon after that, Gudi Padva will be celebrated. The festival of Navaraatri is also associated with spring. Ram Navami will also be celebrated. Festivals and celebrations are an inseparable part of the social fabric of our country. Every festival has a hidden social message which binds not just the society, but the entire country into a spirit of unity. After Holi, from the Chaitra Shukla Pratipada, the Indian Vikrami New year also begins. For that too, please accept my greetings in advance.

My dear countrymen, I think students will be busy with their examinations till the next Mann Ki Baat. Those who have completed their examinations, will be carefree. My heartiest wishes to those who are

busy, and also to those who are carefree. We will meet again in the next edition of Mann Ki Baat with lots of new topics.  
Many many thanks. Namaskaar.