

# English translation of PM's address in Mann Ki Baat Programme on All India Radio

My dear countrymen, Namaskar. Just a while ago, from the 4<sup>th</sup> of April to the 15<sup>th</sup> of April, the 21<sup>st</sup> Commonwealth Games were held in Australia. 71 countries, including India, participated therein. With an event of such scale & magnitude, which saw the participation of thousands of sportspersons from myriad corners of the world, can you imagine the mood that must have pervaded the atmosphere there? An air of excitement, zeal, enthusiasm, hope, aspirations, the determination to achieve – who would want to stay away from an atmosphere like that? These were the times when people all over the country pondered eagerly everyday on the line-up of sportspersons, scheduled for their respective performances. How will India's performance be, what will our medal tally look like? These questions were but natural. Our sportspersons too lived up to the countrymen's expectations and displayed stellar performances, winning one medal after another. Shooting or Wrestling, Table Tennis or Badminton, it was a record performance for India. 26 Gold, 20 Silver, 20 Bronze, India bagged a tally of around 66 medals. This success makes every Indian swell with pride. Of course, winning medals is a moment of joy & glory for a sportsperson; it is equally so as a festival of laurels for the country & her countrymen. After the conclusion of a match, representing India, when the athletes draped in the tricolor sash, displaying their medals, the notes of the National Anthem being played evoke a sense of joy and fulfillment, glory and honour. This is very, very special in itself. It is a touching moment that fills one's heart with thrill; it is a moment full of zest & warmth. It is a wave of emotions that engulfs all of us simultaneously. Perhaps, to express those sentiments I'll run short of words. But I want to share with you what I heard from these heroes. I feel immensely proud; you too will feel so.

India's performance in the Commonwealth Games was par excellence. At the same time, it was special. Special in the sense that this time there were many pathbreaking 'firsts'. Are you aware that out of the wrestlers who represented India, each one of them returned with a medal? Manika Batra won a medal in each of the events that she competed in. She is the first Indian woman to win gold in the individual table tennis category too. India clinched the maximum number of medals in shooting. Deepak Lather of Haryana became the youngest Indian Weight-Lifter to win a medal at Commonwealth games. 15 year old Indian shooter Anish Bhanwala became the youngest sportsperson to win a gold for India. Sachin Chowdhary is the sole Indian Para Power Lifter to win a

medal at the Commonwealth Games.

This edition of the games was special on one more count - a majority of the medalists were women athletes. In squash, boxing, weightlifting and shooting – the performance of women turned out to be par excellence. The final contest in Badminton took place between two Indian Shuttlers, Saina Nehwal and P.V. Sindhu. Everyone was thrilled for the fact that despite there being competition, the ultimate medal winner had to be India. The whole country watched it with abated breath. I too enjoyed watching the match. This year, India fared well in Athletics too. Indian sprinters Mohammad Anas & Hema Das missed a medal narrowly, but their record performance has brought glory to the nation. I congratulate them too... my best wishes to them. Athletes who participated in these games hail from various parts of the country, even from smaller towns. They have reached this pinnacle, crossing a great deal of hurdles and hardships. Today, the positions they have secured for themselves, the targets they have achieved, owes a lot to the efforts & contribution of their parents, guardians, coaches, support staff, schools, teachers, the atmosphere provided by their Schools, during this journey in their lives. Even their friends have contributed by boosting their morale under all circumstances. I also congratulate them along with the sportspersons, my good wishes to them. I feel all these athletes have brought laurels to the country with their stellar performances; the fact is, their performances are not mere displays... they are sources of encouragement for upcoming Sportspersons and the young generation of the country alike.

Last month during 'Mann Ki Baat', I had urged our countrymen, especially the youth to espouse 'Fit India'. I had invited everyone to join 'Fit India', lead 'Fit India'. I was overjoyed to see people getting connected to it with a lot of enthusiasm. Expressing support for this, many people have written to me, sent me letters, shared 'fitness mantra- Fit India' stories on social media. A gentleman Shriram Shashikant Bhonsale, sharing his photo by the swimming pool, has written, 'My weapon is my body, my element is water, my world is swimming'.

Rooma Devnath writes, "I truly feel happy & healthy through my Morning Walks. She further adds, "For me, fitness comes with a smile and we should smile, when we are happy.

Devnathi, indeed, happiness is fitness, and there's no doubt about it. Dhawal Pranjati, sharing a photograph of himself trekking, has written; 'For me, travelling & trekking is 'Fit India'.

It was heartening to see many eminent personalities encouraging our youth in interesting ways for Fit India. Cine artist Akshay Kumar has shared a video on Twitter. Even I have gone through it, you too should view it - it shows him exercising with wooden beads. He has mentioned that this exercise benefits muscles of the back and the stomach, to a great extent. Another video of his has gained popularity; in this he's trying his hand on the volleyball with others. Many other young people have shared their experiences, having joined the 'Fit India' efforts. I feel movements like these are beneficial for all of us, for the entire country. I would additionally like to mention, that the movement of 'Fit India', without any expense, is called 'YOG'. Yog has a special significance in the 'Fit India' campaign. You too must be busy with preparations... the significance, the merit of 21<sup>st</sup> June, International Yog Day has been accepted & welcomed globally. Do begin preparing for the Day rightaway. And not just yourself- your city, village, neighbourhood, school, college, men, women, everyone should make an attempt to connect with yog. Nowadays, the benefits of yog in one's holistic physical & mental development does not need to be told... neither in India nor elsewhere in the world. You must have viewed an animated video depicting me, that has been widely circulated. I congratulate those from the field of animation for highlighting nuances, just the way a teacher does. You too will benefit from it.

My young friends, you now must be out of the tread mill of exams, exams & more exams; you must be wondering about spending your holidays. You must be contemplating on ways to enjoy your vacations and places to travel to! I would like to talk to you today, to invite you on a new task. I've seen a lot of young people these days, spending time in learning new things. The significance of Summer Internship is soaring; as it is, an altogether new experience in itself. One gets an opportunity to experience life anew, away from closeted walls, away from paper & pen and computers. Dear young friends, today I urge you to undergo a special internship. Three Ministries of the Government of India; maybe four- Sports, BHRD, Department of Drinking water have come together to launch a 'Swachh Bharat Summer Internship 2018'. College students, young people from the NCC and Nehru Yuva Kendra, whoever want to do something substantial & learn something for the sake of society, & the country, those who want to get connected with transforming the country and be a reason for it, those who want to do something or the other for society with a positive energy- for them, there is a great opportunity! Even the cause of the cleanliness campaign will get a boost, and when we celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, we'll surely attain a sense of fulfillment. And let me tell you, the best out of the best interns who have strived in schools & colleges with excellent work will be rewarded with recognition at the national level. Not just that, those interns who accomplish their tasks well, will be awarded two credit points each, by the UGC. Once again, I invite students & young people, boys & girls to avail of the benefits of the Internship. You can register yourselves for the 'Swachh Bharat Summer Internship' on Mygov.

Recently, I saw that they were presenting the story of some youth from Delhi who are selflessly working in a dedicated manner to help in educating the poor children. This group of youngsters has started a big campaign in Delhi for providing education to the street children and slum dwellers. Initially, shocked to see the condition of children begging around or doing some menial jobs that this group of youngsters got dedicatedly, selflessly involved into this creative mission. Starting with just 15 children from the slums near Geeta Colony in New Delhi it is now being run at 12 places and two thousand children have been brought under its fold. Young teachers associated with this campaign find out a free time of two hours from their busy schedule and contribute in this stupendous mission of bringing out a social transformation.

Dear brothers and sisters, in this very way, some farmers from hilly areas of Uttarakhand have become a source of inspiration for the farmers across the country. With their collective efforts, they have not only changed their own fortunes but have changed fortunes of the whole region. In Bageshwar in Uttarakhand, main crops sown are Mandwa, Chaulai, Corn or Barley. This being a hilly area, the farmers did not get a fair price for their produce. But, the farmers in Kapkot tehsil decided to come out of this situation and adopted a value- addition process and changed the loss incurring equation into a profit-earning one. What they did was that they started production of biscuits from their agricultural produce and sold those biscuits directly in the market. Consequently, Chaulai which the farmers were forced to sell at Rs. 25 per Kg was now selling at Rs. 50 per Kg as biscuits. Besides, there is a strong belief that the land in this area is iron-rich and these iron rich biscuits are very good for pregnant women as they overcome the deficiency of iron. These farmers have formed a cooperative society in Munar village and set-up a biscuit factory there. Impressed by the bold initiative of these farmers, the administration has also linked this to the National Livelihood Mission. These biscuits are now being supplied upto Almora and Kousani besides being sold to about fifty Aanganwadi kendras in Bageshwar district. With the hard work of these farmers, the annual turnover of the society has gone up from 10 to 15 lakh rupees and with more than 900 families getting employment here, people have stopped migrating to other places.

My dear countrymen, we often hear that in, times to come, the world will face a war because of water. Everyone talks about this but do we not have any responsibility towards conservation of water? Do we not feel that water conservation must be a social responsibility? This must be a collective responsibility. How can we conserve each single drop of rain water? And, we all know this. And, water conservation is not a new topic for us; it is neither a part of the academic curriculum nor a part of our languages. Our forefathers have lived this as a way of life for centuries together. They gave due priority and importance to each single drop of water. They found out newer methods in order to conserve every single drop of water. Those of you who might be getting a chance to visit Tamilnadu might have noticed that in some temples in the state, there are carvings on stone depicting irrigation system, water conservation methods and drought

management. There are vast stone inscriptions in these temples and devotees get a chance to read these educative messages. May it be Manarkovil, Chiranj Mahadevi, Kovilpatti or Pudukottai - you will get to see massive stone inscriptions to this effect. Several baadis (stepwells) are famous as tourist spots but please do not forget that these are the living symbols of the water conservation campaigns which our forefathers had accomplished.

Adalaj and Patan Ki Raniki Vaav (Baodi) in Gujarat is a UNESCO World Heritage site and its grandeur is to be seen to be believed. Baadis are water temples in a way. If you happen to go to Rajasthan, you must visit Chand Baodi. This is one of the biggest and the most beautiful baadis of India and the point to be noted is that this is situated in a water-scarce area. April, May, June and July is the most suitable time when rain water harvesting can be done and if we make preparations in advance, we can reap a rich harvest. Budget under MNREGA is also utilized for this water conservation activity. During the last three years, everyone in his or her own way has contributed towards water conservation and water management. An average of 32,000 crore rupees have been spent besides the MNREGA budget each year on water conservation and water management. If we talk of 2017-18, 55 percent of the total outlay of Rupees 64 thousand crores, which comes to around rupees 35 thousand crores, has been spent on works like water conservation. In last three years, nearly 150 lakh hectares of land got more benefit through water conservation and water management measures. Some people have really benefited very well from MNREGA budget provisions made by the Government of India for water conservation and water management works. A project of reviving the rivers which had dried out was undertaken in Kerala. Seven thousand workers under MNREGA worked very hard for seventy days and finally succeeded in reviving Kuttumperoor river there. The Ganges and the Yamuna have plentiful of water but there are many other places in Uttar Pradesh like Fatehpur district where two small rivers namely Sasur-Khadri got dried out. After receiving the reports of Remote Sensing Imagery and Inter Department Coordination, the district administration took up the responsibility of soil and water conservation on a massive scale. They succeeded in reviving the dried out Sasur Khadri river with the help and cooperation of people from 40-45 villages of the area. This grand achievement is a big boon for animals, birds, farmers, crops and villages. I emphasize that once again April, May, June and July are before us and we must also take up some responsibility for water harvesting and water conservation, we should also chalk out some schemes, we should also do and show something.

My dear countrymen! When 'Mann Ki Baat' approaches I receive messages, letters and phone calls from all sides. Aayan Kumar Banerjee from Devi Tola village of North 24 Parganas in West Bengal in his comment on My Gov has written - "We celebrate Rabindra Jayanti every year but many people are not aware of the Nobel Laureate Rabindra Nath's philosophy of living peacefully, aesthetically and with integrity. Kindly discuss this point in 'Mann Ki Baat' programme so that more and more people may get to know about this."

I thank Aayanji for drawing the attention of all listeners of 'Mann Ki Baat' towards this point. Gurudev Tagore was a personality full of knowledge and intellect whose writings left an indelible mark on everyone. Rabindra Nath was a personality full of talent, a multi - directional person but a teacher in his inner self can always be felt. He has written in Gitanjali - "He, who has the knowledge has the responsibility to impart it to the students."

I do not know Bangla but had the habit of rising early since my childhood and in Eastern India, radio broadcasts start early while in Western India these start a bit late. I have a faint memory that probably around 5:30 in the morning, Rabindra Sangeet used to be broadcast on radio and I had developed a habit to listen to Rabindra Sangeet on radio. And, whenever I got a chance to listen to poems like Anandloke and Aaguner, Poroshomi, I used to feel as if my mind was being refreshed. You must also have been impressed by Rabindra Sangeet and his poems. I pay my respectful homage to Rabindra Nath Tagore.

My dear countrymen! Within a few days from now the holy month of Ramadan will dawn upon us. The month of Ramadan is celebrated with full reverence and respect throughout the world. The sociological and collective aspect of fasting is that when a person experiences hunger himself, he comes to realize the hunger of others. When he is thirsty, he realizes the thirst of others. This is an opportunity to remember the teachings of Prophet Muhammad-peace be upon him- and his message. It is our responsibility to follow the path of equality and brotherhood as morals from his life. Once a person asked the Prophet (peace be upon him): "Which is the best thing in Islam?" The Prophet Saab said, "feeding a poor and needy and meeting everyone cordially, whether you know him or not!"

Prophet Mohammad Sahib (peace be upon him) believed in twin principles of knowledge and compassion. He did not possess an iota of ego regarding himself. He preached that knowledge alone defeats ego. Prophet Mohammad Sahib(peace be upon him) believed that if you possessed anything more than your requirement, then donate it to the needy, this donation or giving alms is important during Ramzan. People donate generously to the needy during this holy month. Prophet Muhammad Sahib believed that a person is rich because of his inherent spirituality, and not materialistic wealth. I wish all the citizens an auspicious month of Ramzan and I hope this opportunity will inspire people to follow the Prophet's message of peace and goodwill.

Baba Saheb strengthened the oppressed, exploited, deprived and crores of people standing on the brink of marginalization via the Constitution of India. There cannot be a bigger example of compassion than this. This form of compassion was one of the greatest qualities of Lord Buddha for the alleviation of suffering of the people. The Buddhist monks used to travel to different countries carrying with them the rich ideals of Lord Buddha and this has been occurring throughout the ages. We have inherited the wisdom of Lord Buddha throughout Asia as part of our legacy.

It forges a link between us and many Asian countries like China, Japan, Korea, Thailand, Cambodia, and Myanmar where Buddhist traditions and his preaching are a part of their origins. And this is the very reason that we are developing Infrastructure for Buddhist Tourism, which is going to connect Southeast Asia with the important Buddhist sites of India. I am also very pleased that the Government of India is a partner in the restoration of many Buddhist temples which also includes the centuries old magnificent Anand Temple in Bagan in Myanmar. Today, when there is confrontation and human suffering prevalent everywhere in the world, Lord Buddha's teachings show the way to rid hatred from the world with compassion. I wish people spread all over the world who revere Lord Buddha and believe in the principles of compassion- I wish all of them an auspicious Buddha Purnima.

I seek benediction from Lord Buddha for the entire world, so that we can fulfill our responsibility in building a peaceful and compassionate world based on his teachings. Today, as we remember Lord Buddha, you must have heard about the idols of *laughing Buddha*, it is said that laughing Buddha brings one good fortune, but very few people know that smiling Buddha is also associated with an important event in India's defense history. Now you will be wondering what is the connection between smiling Buddha and India's military might?

You must remember, 20 years ago today, on 11th May 1998, the Prime Minister of India, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee had said while addressing the nation and his words filled the whole country with pride, courage and elation. The Indian diaspora was infused with new confidence. That day also was the day of Buddha Purnima. On May 11, 1998, at India's western end a nuclear test was conducted in Pokhran, Rajasthan. It has been 20 years since Pokhran and this test was done on Buddha Purnima with the blessings of Lord Buddha. India's test was not only successful but in a way, India had demonstrated its might in the field of science and technology. We can also say 11 May 1988 is engraved in the history of India as a demonstration of her military power.

Now that when we are going to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Pokhran test conducted on May 11, 1998, I ask the younger generations of our nation to imbibe the mantra of 'Jai-Vigyani' given by Atalji for enhancing the might and the power of India, to build a modern India, a powerful India and a self-reliant India. Synergize your energy with the strength of India. Witnessing the journey that Atal ji started, we while continuing onwards on that very path with a renewed joy will derive great satisfaction in getting ahead. My dear countrymen, looking forward to our conversation when we will meet for another episode of Mann Ki Baat.

Thank you very much.

## Poetry Section

# Money! Money!

By - *Dr Nunglekam Premi Devi*  
Independent Scholar

All we know is she's powerful, intoxicating;  
All we know is she's damn beautiful and alluring;  
She knows no boundaries; she's Goddess and wealth;  
She smiles miles and miles unto she's torn into parts;  
All is well, when she's around us lavishing,  
Hither and thither, she comes and she went away;  
She's no one's daughter and she's no one's woman;  
Neither she's no one's mother and no one's sister,  
She knows all what she's unto and she loves counting;  
All we know is she comes in bundles and hangs around,  
She herself a class and a kind, she travels far and wide;  
All we do is crazy after her money! Money!

No doubt she holds one; she unites people, men;  
She blinks and she twinkles and sparkling;  
No doubted, we love us when she's with us,  
She holds the magic wealth and showers peace;  
All we do is we buy, we built and we destroy;  
Behold! She loves her own way, smoother and generous,  
She has 'her' own space; she holds 'her' place,  
Buildings after buildings, construction after construction;  
We laugh beholding 'her' and we dine upon 'her'  
We're all brothers; we're all sisters as she binds us;  
We know no dirty boundaries; we see no good men;  
We're rich upon 'her', we're captivating powerful,  
All we do is crazy after her money! Money!

Alas! She's hard to catch owning as she flies,  
We dreamt and dream of 'her' 'in pocket plenty;  
She's a mirage sick; she's mirage happiness too,  
Peoples' dying starving without 'her', she knows nothing;  
She haunts hard back; men become poor and poorer;  
She's isn't a friend; she isn't a blessing when poor,  
No doubt she holds lie, corruption and envy;  
All we know is she's a median; she's a way living;  
We fight over 'her'; we kill and we kick over 'her'  
She knows whom to hold with, stronger and brave;  
She divides no doubted, weaker and lazy and empty;  
All we do is building bridges hatred, hatred amongst us;  
All we do is crazy after her money! Money!

Something's right as we sow 'her' through,  
Surprisingly! She gives us hope so strong;  
She multiplies 'herself' and she sum up too,  
All we know is counting, bundles after bundle;  
All we remembers is 'her' numbers in total,  
She's unseen, she's blank and she's written number;  
Great we become, honored when own 'her' most,  
She's untidy when in laborers pocket;  
She's clean when in executive's wallet;  
She's thrown fluttering when in politician's hand;  
She's sweated when in hoofers' clinking;  
She's being worship when in merchant's lockers;  
All we do is crazy after her money! Money!

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