



Gujarat

Address by Dr A C Muthiah, President, FICCI

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Gujarat, Shri Narendra Bhai Modiji, Hon'ble Minister of State for Energy and Industry, Shri Saurab Bhai Dalal, My Colleagues and the Most Distinguished Audience,

It is my privilege to make a welcome address on this interactive meet today. At the outset, I welcome our Hon'ble Chief Minister who has taken time from a very crowded schedule to be present with us here today. I also welcome our Hon'ble Minister of State for Energy and Petrochemicals, Shri Saurab Bhai Dalal. As some of you may be knowing, he also did his MBA from the United States and he will be able to interact with you in your idiom.

Of course, ladies and gentlemen, I extend my most hearty and cordial welcome to all of you for taking the time and remaining present here and for giving us this privilege of interacting with you. As you know, the main purpose of the meet today is to see how this State Government of Gujarat and the NRIs can work together for the development of Gujarat.

Of course, we have short time today and we will be having only limited presentations. But we are also looking for a more long-term relationship and we are trying to forge a partnership for growth with the NRIs. We know that NRIs have proved themselves in a tough global competitive environment and we are all very proud of you and of your achievements in the global setting. I am sure that your innovative, dynamic, pioneering qualities will help us greatly by providing necessary inputs for our own thinking.

As you know, friends, our State Government under the leadership of Shri Narendra Bhai Modiji has secured a massive popular mandate and has thus set at rest all manner of doubts and misgivings.

Soon after assuming office, our Hon'ble Chief Minister has set a new developmental agenda, a very ambitious agenda for us and we are really working towards that. We are sure that this kind of interaction will provide us very valuable inputs into this whole process of development.

Ladies and gentlemen, today we have prepared a short presentation on Gujarat for you, which we will be presenting to you. Of course, you will also be hearing our Hon'ble Chief Minister and this will also be followed by interactions with all of us.

While we are meeting primarily to discuss the developmental goals and agendas, let me also hasten to add that we also greatly value the cultural contributions which the NRIs can make towards our development. We sincerely desire that both the NRIs and NRGs should keep alive their cultural and social bonds with India. And in that sense we are not merely looking upon you as only investors, but we are also looking upon you as a larger community as the outposts of Gujarat in the wider world. So, in this context, let me also assure you that the State Government, our Index-B and our Tourism Department will all try to help you whenever you want to come to visit India whether as intending investors or as a cultural tourist or just as sentimental traveller to your former land and abroad. With these few words, ladies and gentlemen, I extend once again a very hearty welcome to all of you.

Thank you.



Address by Mr Narendra Modi, Chief Minister

Kem Cho. My colleagues Shri Ashok Bhatt, Shri Saurab Dalal, Chief Secretary Shri Haren Pathak, Secretaries, NRI Brothers and Sisters, Captains of Industries, Invitees, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is indeed my privilege to extend to you a very hearty welcome to a great land of ours, that is, Bharat, a land of your forefathers. Your spirit of enterprise took you across the seven seas, but I am sure when you sleep in the night and when you wake up in the morning the image of Bharat must be coming before your eyes. You also must be dreaming about the developed motherland. I am aware that it is this common feeling that had inspired you to visit Bharat and attend this conference.

Our great nation has produced eminent persons in different walks of life and among those are many of you who have made India proud. I take this opportunity to salute your achievements. Your progress in economic, technological and educational fields is legendary. Your success in the political sphere is no less legendary. From amongst you highest office-bearers in politics have emerged in the foreign countries across the globe. Thus, a global Indian family is shaping the destiny of the world. Once again, on behalf of the people of Gujarat and on my own behalf, I welcome you, look forward to a meaningful interaction and association with a common agenda of development.

By now we are all aware that Pravasi Bharatiya Divas celebration has commenced on 9th January to remind all of us that Gandhi returned to India from South Africa on this date. With his coming home, he brought a sense of pride among the people of India, which in turn revolutionized the entire nation. He shook not only the foundation of the British Empire, but also the age-old evil traditions within the country. However, we all know that Gandhiji delivered us political independence. But his dream of economic independence remained incomplete. Maybe, the NRI in Mohanlal Karamchand Gandhi led this job for his successor NRIs sitting here. I may add that the Father of the Nation was the Son of the Gujarat soil. Not only this, he chose Gujarat for many of his political and social movements because he found a revolutionary smell in its soil.

Ladies and gentlemen, I believe that our current effort will lead to another revolution for economic developments.

I am sure Gujarat with its strength and political potentials will repeat the history and become the epicentre of economic development of India. The word "Non-Resident Indian" is not new to Gujarat, as the people from the region had successfully established trade links with countries like Java, Sumatra, Babylon, Sri Lanka, Africa and a host of other countries centuries ago. In the process, many of them visited those countries and a few of them settled in pursuit of furthering business prosperity. As you are aware, Gujarat has recently passed through a democratic process of elections. People have chosen to constitute a strong Government by giving a clear and resounding verdict. I am quite conscious of the tremendous responsibilities bestowed on our shoulders. My team and myself shall leave no stone unturned to fulfil the aspirations of the people. The present Government is the first popularly-elected Government in Gujarat in the 21st century. Therefore, the onus lies on us to lay strong foundations for development of the state in the new millennium. I wish to take all the sections of the society along the path of development by soliciting the support of one and everyone, including friends and well-wishers like you.

People recognize CM as Chief Minister. But to me, CM is no more than a common man.

Friends, as a common man I have visited every nook and corner of the state and tried to understand the strengths and challenges. I have also known the immense potential

and entrepreneur's capability lies in the people of the state. Gujarat is a small state comprising only 6 per cent of the geographical area and 5 per cent of the national population. It is a leading state on the economic map of the country. We are now in the centre of economic activities and our fundamentals are very sound. Of late, there has been a systematic propaganda against the state by certain vested interests, both in India and abroad. I would, however, like to dispel all the myths and assure that the state is on the path of progress without any hiccups.

Gujarat is governed with a progressive and professional bent of mind. The systems are very well-routed in legal, financial and administrative discipline. After the swearing in of the new Government last month, we have immediately started vigorous follow-up on the agenda of economic development and have contemplated steps in that direction. Gujarat has witnessed an impressive economic growth over the last 42 years. From an agrarian economy, Gujarat has transformed into a vibrant and leading industrial state. The share of primary sector in the net state domestic product in 1999 and 2000 was 19.8 per cent while that of the secondary and tertiary sectors was 36.5 per cent and 43.6 per cent respectively. I am glad to inform you that Gujarat today accounts for as much as 70 per cent of the total investment approved, 13.2 per cent of industrial production and 13 per cent of value addition in the country. At the same time, Gujarat also contributes over 21 per cent in exports from India. Apart from the development in volume terms, the state was also successful in diversifying industrial base substantially.

At the time of its formation as a separate state in the 1960s, the economy of the state was largely dominated by textiles and auxiliaries. Over a period of time there has been exemplary diversification. Today, Gujarat contributes over 30 per cent of the chemicals produced in India and thus came to be known as a chemical state. Textiles contribute a share of 14.5 per cent, petroleum products 14.1 per cent, paper & paper products 14.3 per cent, fabric material products 13.6 per cent, and agro and fruit products 10 per cent in the national production. All this only indicates that Gujarat is on the move and is moving in a dynamic way.

In India, the process of economic reforms began mainly in 1991. India also became the signatory to the World Trade Organization agreements. This has thrown the Indian industry open to global competition from the earlier protective environment. The industry in Gujarat has made this challenge with a greater degree of success by manufacturing products not only at the competitive cost, but also matching with the international quality requirements.

My Government is committed to further economic reform process in order to modernize and upgrade the technological ways and to promote quality, efficiency and competitiveness. The state believes in consistent and stable policies. We stick to disciplined financial management. We aim at building world-class institutions and infrastructure.

My dream of future Gujarat can be summarized in "Panchamrut Yojana" which we have evolved after deliberating with the people and experts in various fields. This Panchamrut Yojana comprises our intensive development of five sectors-education which I call "Gyan Shakti", water which I call "Jala Shakti", energy which I call "Oorja Shakti". Human resource for me is "Jan Shakti" and safety and security of the people without which no progress is possible is "Raksha Shakti".

For the realization of our dreams in this framework, we have already initiated steps. The first and foremost step in this direction is to remove infrastructure bottlenecks. The Government is keen to develop world-class infrastructure. We want to develop infrastructure projects and have institutionalized the framework to facilitate private sector investments.



In the next five years, development of sectors like ports, power, roads, water supply and sanitation, urban and rural infrastructure, gas grid and telecommunication will receive special focus and provide better quality of life and facilitate enterprises. We are confident to mobilize private investment in these sectors with the cooperation of the investor community of India and abroad, including the NRIs.

Gujarat is a state where E-governance is becoming a way of life in various dealings of the Government. The Asia's largest wide area network is functioning with the Gujarat Government. We are promoting IT-enabled services in a big way. We have already operationalized institutional policy framework for the purpose.

Gujarat has embarked upon creating necessary infrastructure facilities for setting up IT projects. A Software Technology Park has been established in Gandhinagar. Three info parks including JNFC, Info Towers are functional around Ahmedabad. Our prestigious Info City Project has also been commissioned in the private sector near Gandhinagar. An institute for imparting world-class education in Information Technology has also been set up by the Reliance Group in Gandhinagar.

I am aware that biotechnology has tremendous growth prospects and my Government has, therefore, decided to give relief to this sector. I have been saying that BT is Bharat Tomorrow. Gujarat is offering tremendous potential for growth in biotechnology. The state can boost the contribution of share of over 45 per cent in the production of drugs and pharmaceutical formulations in India.

Gujarat is known for pioneering pharmaceutical companies. The State Government is taking initiatives to set up a biotechnology institute at Gandhinagar to develop requisite manpower and to provide research facilities to small - and medium-scale units.

A Biotechnology Park is also taking shape near Vadodara. A state-level council of biotechnology has been constituted along with a new Department of Science and Technology. These two sectors, I believe, will form the mainstay of tomorrow's prosperity both in urban and rural areas.

Agro and food processing is another important sector which has great promise for development. This is one of our traditional sectors which offers potential for generating employment on a large scale with comparatively lower investment. Gujarat has already acquired expertise in commercial crops such as oilseeds, cotton, tobacco, Isbagol and sugarcane.

However, huge potential still exists for value addition on them and also for processing and packaging of fruits and vegetables. For this purpose, post-harvest treatment infrastructure is being developed in the state. Agri-export zones are being set up with great vigour.

Tourism is one of the most important sectors planned to be exploited in the coming years. In fact, Gujarat is quite famous for tourist places like Sasan Gir Forest and Sanctuary, the last abode of Asiatic lions, temples of Dwarka and Somnath, world-famous archaeological and heritage monuments, lakes like Nal Sarovar and Narayan Sarovar, wild ass sanctuary, beaches at Chorwad and Ahmedpur, Mandvi and other ancient monuments. I am sure a long coastline and the flora and fauna of Gujarat with scenic beauty would beckon the NRIs from all over the world. In the times to come, we plan to promote the tourism sector in a big way. We are keenly interested in the development of tourism-related infrastructure.

Education is the priority area for my Government. Many of the NRIs sitting over here had to go abroad in pursuit of higher education about two to three decades ago. India has a massive strength of talented manpower which, if developed in the right direction,

will conquer the world of knowledge. Hence, I want to build the temples of education in the state which can match world-class standards so that our future generations do not have to go overseas for studies.

Instead, the students from other parts of the world may come to Gujarat for pursuing educational courses. We can establish seats of learning like Nalanda and Takshila where people from across the globe used to come to acquire knowledge and wisdom in creating quality educational infrastructure. I seek your valuable inputs and cooperation.

Healthcare is another area of concern to my Government. I believe that health is a prerequisite for any other development. We are, therefore, trying to develop the best of the healthcare facilities in the state.

I am aware that quite a good number of NRIs, most specifically from Gujarat, have achieved excellence in this field. Many of you would be knowing the exemplary commitment shown by Dr H L Trivedi, a renowned Urologist from Canada, who gave up his lucrative career abroad and returned to Gujarat. He established a kidney hospital in Ahmedabad with the help of the Government, two decades ago.

I seek the support of NRI friends in strengthening the healthcare infrastructure in Gujarat, be it in the form of commercial venture or voluntary support. Sardar Sarovar Narmada project is the lifeline of Gujarat. Though the project is now nearing completion, it had to face challenges from the vested interests.

We have already started getting the fruits of this project. Those who have been to Ahmedabad recently, would have seen the Narmada water flowing in the Sabaramati river. Our villages, towns and fields have already started getting the water from the project through its canal across the state.

While we are on the verge of completing the Narmada project, we have taken up another ambitious project Kalpsar to create a freshwater reservoir for constructing a dam across the gulf of Khambhat. These are historical national projects and hence need active support of each and everyone who is concerned about development of the country.

Gujarat was rocked with the worst earthquake in the century on 26th January, 2001. This caused us a loss of human lives and property worth billion of rupees. The district of Kutch was the worst hit. In this hour of agony of Gujarat, the NRIs, the people of institutions from all over the world, have brought succour to Gujarat. With the blessings and support of all you and the salient nature of the people of the state, we could re-surge in no time. I take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to you and the world community for the support and cooperation during our trying times.

The State Government had realized the potential of development through association with the NRIs and the world community at large. For the purpose of associating non-resident Indians in the process of industrialization and organization, Index-B was set up. I am happy to mention that Gujarat could boast of having been successful in attracting the largest number of projects promoted by Non-Resident Indians with 333 NRI units, involving a total investment of Rs. 12,750 million.

In the year 1998, the Government created a separate department for non-resident Gujaratis. There is also an autonomous body functioning under the department with the name of Non-Resident Gujarati Foundation. The objective behind this move was to ensure a greater degree of interaction between the Government of Gujarat and the Gujarati global family to promote social, cultural and linguistic bonds.

The people of Gujarat, whether in the state or outside, have traditionally been a business



community and it is due to their hard work and business acumen that they have been able to achieve commanding heights in their profession. Gujarat is marching ahead and nobody would be able to stop our journey to progress.

My personal appeal to you is to become our ambassadors and objectively project the positive image of the country.

Friends, the 21st-century Gujarat is going to surpass all standards and imagination of progress and development. Many of you might have worked in the companies, firms and offices here and abroad. However, these opportunities even at their best are limited ones. Gujarat today, with its robust and developed infrastructure, abundant and untapped natural resources, its enterprising and forthright people, responsive and stable Government, transparent and consistent policies, offers an unlimited opportunity to partners in this progress.

Here is a vibrant state, which is called Gujarat Unlimited. I invite you to visit and find for yourselves if and how you can make partnership in the Gujarat Unlimited.

Thank you very much.

Address by Dr L M Singhvi, Rajya Shabha MP, Chairman, Organizing Committee, Pravasi Bharatiya Divas

Before you have a cup of tea, may I say a few words to you? Friends, I want you to be seated for a few minutes. Today is the last day of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas. The last day is the most important because what remains with you now, you will take with you back home wherever you go.

I wish to share with you one thought. That thought is that Pravasi Bharatiya Divas and Sammelan are bridges we have built. We have heard the concluding remarks of the Chief Minister. I think those concluding remarks are an invitation to all of us. These concluding remarks are an invitation to all the Pravasi Bharatiya people who have come here. That invitation must be honoured in the true Gujarati spirit.

I believe that Gujarat caused some anxieties, but Gujarat has also given us much joy. That joy must be celebrated. The words that have come from the Chief Minister of Gujarat are words of great importance for the development and the future vision of Gujarat Unlimited.

I want you, friends, as the most important diaspora in the world, to contribute to Gujarat, to contribute to India, and to see that we build bridges. It is no use engaging in discussion and disputations. The point is that we must get on with the job of transforming India. We must get on with the job of strengthening the Indian diaspora.

Thank you.

(open discussion)

Mr Saryurao Desai

My name is Saryurao Desai and I am from Sydney, Australia. I have a request to make to this committee. Sometime in the month of August or September last year, one delegation came along with Mr Sharad Pawar and they have distributed some cards. Obviously, I come from Gujarat and I obviously have an interest in Gujarat. When I started communicating with that person, I never received any response. So, whenever we write from that part of the world, my earnest request is, at least,

when any Chamber of Commerce delegation comes from here and needs any help from us, we can facilitate that because we have a wide networking there. We know a lot of people. We have industry contacts there. So, we can help them in building up the bridges.

Panellist

Let me give response to the point that you have made. We would be always interested in interacting with you. We do apologize for the lack of communication with you.

We have an organization called Index-B. In the brochures that we have given to you, the details are given. You could interact with this particular organization either through e-mail or writing directly a letter to them. Apart from that, we have another organization called NRGF (Non-Resident Gujarat Foundation). That office is also there. You could interact with them. If you happen to be in India, in Delhi, we have the Resident Commissioner's office. We have given the details of that particular office also, and they also are on e-mail connectivity. You could interact with them and we will promptly see that the response is given to you.

Mr Bharat Shah

I am Bharat Bhai Shah from the Gulf. I have stood up to raise my voice because in this film there was no voice from the Gulf.

For two-and-a-half days, I am watching that the whole focus is concentrated on all other countries, except the Gulf.

I am thankful to the Chief Minister. In these three days, he is the first Minister who has sat here to listen to us.

For two-and-a-half days, there were no questions and answers. We only listened to the Ministers, the Ministers go away. As if we have come all the way from there to listen to them. That we have been listening every time, everyday in the TV.

(Speech In Hindi)

I will consider the port. I am importing about 600 containers of sanitaryware from Saurashtra through Kandla. In this country, except the four capital ports, all other ports are nobody's business because all the facilities, all the circulars, all the export incentives do not reach these small ports. If it reaches, they don't read it; if they read it, they don't understand it; if they understand, they don't digest it; if they digest, they don't implement it.

So, many times, I come from there to help my manufacturers. Shri Narendra Modi was in Than at that time and a person who made a hospital. I am handling his seven factories' total exports, which I am getting in the Gulf. But the problem, which we are facing, is, I am always told that the port is under the control of the Centre. So, I will now say that the time has come now that if a state wants a progress in their port, they should take it in their hands.

I will tell you, I brought 1,800 tons on the fifteenth day of the Kutch and the trouble, which I got from the Commissioner of Customs, from the medical doctor at the port. If military would not have come to my help, whole 1,800 tons ship would have gone back. I told Kesubhai, I told Arun Jaitley about landing. My bandage, which is Made in

America and Made in Britain. They wanted to send the bandage to Bombay to the Drugs Controller. There were no clothes to put on the broken bones and therefore the trouble. Military came to my help. I took everything by force and I put through Pramuk Swami. So, I request you to see that the ports are taken in the hands of the state, otherwise there will be no progress.

Thank You.

Participant

Sir, I bring you greetings from Fiji Islands. Fiji is an excellent example where Gujarat can reach out for the Indian diaspora.

To make my point, I will just give you an illustration. The Japanese and the Fijians fought war. The Fijians soldiers were killed by the Japanese. The Indians fought for the British. Two million British soldiers were responsible for the British victory in the Second World War. But today, the Japanese are better friends to the Fijians than the Indians. This is because of lack of diplomacy and concern by our motherland to the smaller countries and the Indian diaspora throughout.

After looking at what you had to offer, I have a vision that perhaps Gujarat could be a pacesetter in changing the page of history, in reaching out to the poor countries, the developing countries like Fiji, Mauritius, and Surinam, and Guyana and Trinidad to offer your village industries, your village development, from which our indigenous Fijians can benefit. Then, they will owe something to the Indians and then the friendship will start.

We invite your interest, Sir. Our Prime Minister, Mr Qarase, will be visiting India to open the Embassy in March. We hope before that, through the India-Fiji Business Council, we will negotiate and get the necessary documents ready, so that we can sign and a positive step can be taken in that direction.

Thank You.

Mr R P Rama

My name is R P Rama with JHM Hotels in the USA. On behalf of 6,500 Asian American hotel owners in the USA, we bring greetings to you. For the news media, I would like you also to make a note. This is the most accessible Chief Minister that we have ever seen.

You need to write about that in the newspapers other than bringing the positive points out.

The point I would like to make on behalf of the Surat-Valsad District is that we need an airport in Surat for all the travelling people who come and stay at our hotels in Surat. We have a joint venture Holiday Inn in Surat and lots of foreign companies are in Hajira. They are facing a lot of problems in terms of transportation.

Thank You.

Mr Ravi Pandit

I am Ravi Pandit from the United Arab Emirates. First of all, I would like to congratulate you on behalf of the Indian community in the UAE because we all feel that you have

started a process by placing India in a position where it should belong. When Aurobindo was asked about the Cabinet led by Nehru, what he thinks about the cabinet? He said. "Sardar Patel is the only man in that cabinet."

I think now we have Narendra Modi as the only man in the country that has brought India to a place where it should be. I would also like to request your team to be active on the media. Yesterday, there was a Pakistani lady who made a comment to which Advani had replied and we had it in some big newspaper. I don't know *The Times of India* or *Hindustan Times*, gave a first page photograph of that lady who didn't talk head or tail of anything, just an anti-Hindu sentiment or whatever. So, Nadira, whom I don't know. But now you should counter this in the media. You should say when Advaniji defends India, when Advaniji defends your action, he should say Gujarat should not be repeated he should say Godhra should not be repeated.

Thank you.

Participant

Hello, I am from Kutch and I am based in Oman. I would like to know about education. Is the field now open for NRIs to open schools and colleges in Gujarat, or is it still restricted and how is the functioning of that? Will it be like a company? We can run those schools like a company, or it will be again on the social aspect only.

Participant

We are running a very small school at the moment, which is charity based. But unfortunately what happened we are not allowed to expand this school there. But it is a very small school at the moment. But we were thinking about having a large school as well as colleges also for NRIs as well as Indians. But we don't know that whether it can run on a no-profit and no-loss basis or it can be run on-profit basis or we have to make losses only. What is that, I mean that should be made clear.

Mr Narendra Modi

(Speech in Hindi)

Participant

I will just give one figure. There are 60,000 Indian students going out for further studies and only 7,000 are coming back to India. There is a net outflow of foreign exchange also in this regard. If we had opened up this education field, particularly in Gujarat, which is very well placed, there will be a net income also to the country.

Mr Narendra Modi

It is already opened up. In the next week or two, I am going to have an MoU with Columbia University also. Columbia University may start their centre in Gujarat. In the beginning, they will start the research activity and they may expand the education area also.

Nowadays, there are some schools those which are affiliated with the American schools



like the one Gurukul School in Ahmedabad, they have affiliated with some Los Angeles school. So, in a way, there is a scope.

Navin Patel

My name is Navin Patel. I represent Gujarati Samaj of Atlanta. FOGANA, which is the Federation of Gujarati Samaj of North America and Vishwa Gujarati Samaj. I am a retired engineer. There were many Gujaratis who have come to me and asked that they want to share their retired time to use their expertise and to use their retired years. Some with their grandchildren in America or wherever there are and some in Gujarat helping Gujarat, honorarily without getting compensation.

Now, I know that NRG is here, but there is no interaction between those people who want to do this. So, I would suggest that we can have in the United States or any other country, some other unit so they can approach them and NRG and those units can work together to utilize the expertise of these people who have spent so many years.

In 1960, I went for studies. There are many people who went in the 1960s. They are experts. They are retired and that is my suggestion. Then, we can have some kind of a change in those trends. Thanks.

Mr Narendra Modi

I think this is a very good suggestion.

(Speech in Hindi)

Mr Praful Amin

I am Praful Amin from Birmingham. I have just two small questions to ask. The first question was asked by the lady and that was that she complained that whenever we put up any proposal or write a letter, we do not even get the acknowledgment, let alone our suggestions being thought over or put to consideration. We do not mind if you throw them in the dustbins. But at least, we do want that first of all there is an acknowledgment. Now if the acknowledgment fails and we bring to your notice there should be some channel by which you can take some action. So, this is my first small suggestion if you want to take it.

The second suggestion is, because I am in the financial services, an investment adviser in Birmingham, I find a lot of Non-Resident Indians who are interested to put their money in Gujarat or even outside Gujarat. People from India do come with various projects, but their main concern is that they do not know and they do not trust these various schemes and projects and they are afraid to put their money in Gujarat, or somewhere else.

Is there a way, is there a forum by which they can ever certify projects? Or you can just send to these specialists or to the embassies which can be picked up by people like me and then we can advise those people. Because, otherwise, it is a question of putting the money, they do want to trust first of all. Unless there is trust, we cannot put our money. So, I want to have some sort of a forum and certified projects where we can put our money.

Thank you.

Mr Ravi Patel

I am Ravi Patel from Charlotte, North Carolina, born in Fiji Islands, educated in Gujarat, and I am a citizen of USA. I started long time ago Charotdar Patidar Samaj to make sure our children keep culture and heritage in USA.

We took advice from the Jewish community and found out that to keep their heritage we have to teach our children Gujarati, make sure our children come to our motherland and have roots. Our difficulty is to find village information, details of each village in Gujarat. Can anybody give us that information? We have a web page and we like to put our children. Modi Saheb, "aap ne bathaya" that American should visit or a foreigner should visit. I think the first requirement is that our children should keep coming to Gujarat. They will bring all the foreigners and with that there will be great tourism in Gujarat.

Mr Narendra Modi

(Speech in Hindi)

Ms Devismitha Patnaik

Excuse me. This is a question to the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Gujarat. Yes, I am Devismitha Patnaik, an Odissi dancer from France. Through my dance, I represent the Indian culture, tolerance and universality. And Gujarat is a place of Gandhiji, non-violence. But for many years, there has been violence for the minority. I just want to know what is being done? Because India represents many religions and Hinduism is very vast. Every home has his gods and goddesses. So, how can we ensure not to have violence and from outside, abroad, Indians can keep their heads up saying that India is a very secure country. You can go and come back without any problems and what are the actions being taken for keeping the security for the minority, as well as others.

Mr Narendra Modi

I think there is no difference between your thinking and other's thinking. We are sharing the same thinking and thanks for your feelings.

Mr Ashok Hansraj

Hello, good morning. My name is Ashok Hansraj. I am from Portugal. As an NRI, I am interested in investing in India. I am also from a Hindu community of Portugal.

(Speech in Gujarati)

I will be most pleased to have a delegation over there and to receive you to show how we are concerned about Gujarat and trying to preserve our culture and our heritage.

(continued in Gujarati)

One of the reasons I am interested in investing in India, namely, Gujarat is not only because my roots, my origins are from Gujarat - from Rajkot. I am the fourth generation of my family born in Mozambique, Portugal.

(continued in Gujarati)

So, the reason I want to invest in Gujarat is also because, as far as I am concerned, Gujarat is one of the safest states in India.

Knowing that you are the youngest Chief Minister, this also gives us the confidence. Youngest means new ideas, freshness, and being dynamic.

So, I have a request to make. For the investors' and for the NRIs' sake, please don't treat us as just normal common investors. Please create a condition and an environment that we feel comfortable so that we can make investments over here. So, we can feel what we can do for the country, how we can invest over here.

Thank you.

Dr K P Shah

Can everybody hear me? I am from Houston, Texas. Narendra Bhai just mentioned Houston. My name is Dr K P Shah and I studied at the B J Medical College. We are 1,180 doctors from B J Medical College in the USA.

We have an alumni association for the last ten years. We raise about 100 thousand dollars every year. So far, we have donated 700 thousand dollars to the B J Medical College to buy books, equipment, computers, audio visual equipment, and my feeling is that we can do a lot more.

We need some help and I have two or three requests for the Chief Minister. One is that whenever we want a certificate of our graduation from B J Medical College, you may not believe but it is very difficult for us to get a certificate from B J Medical College. This is a real problem and I am the president of the association. Every month I get one letter from one of my members that they have difficulty in getting a certificate and it's not the problem with the Dean or office. There is something wrong in the systems which, I hope, can be corrected.

The second problem is that and I have written several e-mails to Modi Sahib's office and other places. I have received an acknowledgment, but I have never received a reply.

The third thing is I am coming to India every year. I close my office for one month every year. I do my charitable work in Ahmedabad and Bhavnagar. I do my free consultation through free endoscopies. I try to bring medical equipment every year with me to donate to charitable institutes.

Every year at the Bombay airport, the customs people give me a lot of grief and harassment.

I have never been able to solve that problem and I request for some real help. I have 20 thousand-dollar equipment lying at my home in Houston, which I am afraid to bring, because I know what will happen at the Bombay airport. Ahmedabad is worse than Bombay, I tell you.

But the most important thing is that we need one or two responsible people in the Government, who are not going to have their *badli* in six months that we can deal with them on a regular basis. We send an e-mail, we get a correct, clear reply whether this can be done or not. We can do a lot more. We are 5,000 Gujarati doctors.

We have upgraded B J Medical Library in a very nice way and I think we can do that, duplicate the same thing in ten medical colleges in Gujarat. We can set an example for 110 or 120 medical colleges all across India and we can accomplish a lot more.

Thank You.

Dr Arthaktran Mohanty

I am Dr Arthaktran Mohanty. I am a General Practitioner in Manchester in the UK and also a part-time specialist in General Medicine and Gastroenterology.

I am interested in Gujarat. I have got special hobbies in mythology, history and ancient culture. I have visited Egypt, Rome, and Athens, but what I am saying I have visited Lothal. Lothal is a place I can tell you, ladies and gentlemen, is one of the best places in the whole world. Please go and see that.

The culture is 1,000 years old and there are still a lot of things to be discovered. Hieroglyphic things are there, everything is there. The culture, which has developed, is better than Mohen-jo-Daro and Harappa. So, please go and visit that. I request Mr Modi, please develop it and India will get maximum foreign currency from there. Because in Egypt, their first foreign currency income is from that.

There is no parallel comparison with Lothal if it is done properly. Please do that - it is my request also to you, ladies and gentlemen. Please go and visit it this time. There is nothing much expensive, you can go and visit it.

Thank You. Lothal is in Gujarat.

Mr Shrikant Nayak

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I am Shrikant Nayak from Jagannath Dhampuri and presently the President of the National Council of Western Indian Association in Washington, DC.

Narendraji, thank you very much. Congratulations on your victory. You carried the mandate of popular opinion from Gujarat. You will lead the State of Gujarat and you will be the shining example for this country leading the state in various sectors.

I have a proposal for you. If India has to maintain and sustain the GDP at 8 per cent per annum. In a five-year plan, we have to double our power production and as you know very well there are three states in India which have coal - Orissa, Bihar, and Bengal. Bihar and Bengal coals are good for metallurgical purposes, but the coal reserve in Orissa is best suited for thermal plants. It is a fuel grade coal.

So, I have a proposal for you. We will find you the investors from America or Europe. Pursue it with your cabinet ministers in the central level to build a national super-highway to carry the power from each site hydro-thermal plants and carry to Gujarat and solve the dilemma once for all for four states - Rajasthan, Gujarat, Karnataka and Delhi also. So, I want you to champion this case because without power there is no prosperity at all. So, I want a comment from you, a very honest comment on this one.



Mr Narendra Modi

(Speech in Hindi)

Mr George Shivraj

Thank you, Chief Minister of Gujarat and my beloved sons and daughters of my motherland India. I have brought only one message from my beloved nation of Fiji by His Excellency, the President of Fiji, the hon'ble Prime Minister, Hon'ble Laisenia Qarase, the Cabinet Ministers, my Government of the day and each and every citizen of my beloved nation of Fiji.

I am George Shivraj, the only Indo-Fijian minister in this CSDL coalition government. I would like to thank each and every one of you, especially from the Gujarat state, your sons and daughters who are in my beloved nation of Fiji. They have contributed a lot as far as economics of our nation is concerned.

I salute you all for the great work that they have done on employment, on our business. Majority of our business in our country is being dominated by the Gujarati community and most of the taxes are being paid by them. My Hon'ble Prime Minister has ensured that this community will always be protected in my nation. With these few words, may God bless my Motherland. Jai Hind. Thank You.

Mr Narendra Modi

The people of Indian origin are discriminated. That is the number one question. In the last three years, how many people of the Indian origin had to migrate from Fiji.

You are the only Indian Minister in the government. Why you joined that Government when Mahendra Chaudhry has been removed from the Government by military force.

Mr George Shivraj

Thank you very much, Chief Minister. I am going to answer that question.

When we take over our seat in Parliament, we are for the people, of the people and by the people. I am elected as a democratic elected member of my House, and today I am going to tell you one story about my entering Parliament in 1999.

In my constituency, there are 14,000 Fijian voters and 6,000 Indian voters. And I being an Indo-Fijian entered Parliament and met most of the indigenous voters just because I know their culture, I know their tradition, I know their way of life; how to be with them.

How do you feel if you are only 400,000 Fijians in the whole world. You will protect your country. You are going to protect your country. We have to love them, and of course they are going to love you. They are the most beautiful people. They have got a big heart for everybody in the whole world, the Fijians. You must only know their culture and tradition.

I know and I came again in the interim administration when there was a coup, the only Indo-Fijian. I had a vision in front of me to educate my disadvantage in the poor communities of my Indo-Fijians in my nation. That was the job of the Ministry at that time. I came again in the CSDL coalition government on the same ticket just because I

don't differentiate my people. There is one and I always follow what Sai Baba has said, "I have come to this world not to disturb any faith or religion but to make a Christian, a more pure Christian; a Hindu; a more pure Hindu, and a Muslim, a more pure Muslim." If my blood goes into a Muslim, a Muslim in to a Chinese, where is the Chinese, where is the Muslim, where is the Fijian. There is only one race in the world and that is human race and that is very, very important to all of us. We are diaspora, we are Chinese, or we are anybody, we are all one.

What we have is the domestic problem. When the Federation Party which was led by the Hon'ble Jairam Reddy, he joined the DSVT, he was thrown out. Just because we Indians in Fiji must realize, in 1970 before getting independence we would blame our leaders. Before getting independence we did not look into the land issue. Today, in Fiji 89 per cent of the land is the Fijian land. How can you get it from them. We can liaise with them, we can sit down with them. We can put an affirmative action on them. We, in Fiji, are above here in our business, we are above here in our education. The Fijians are here, we have to put an affirmative action that what was done in Malaysia was to put them up.

If they have money in their pockets, I have money in my pocket, and there won't be a problem. If I will be a rich man, they will be poor men, there will be a problem. So, bear with us. As the only Indo-Fijian Minister, I assure you that the Indians will be protected in my country.

Thank you very much.

Mr Suhas Desai

Mr Chief Minister, I am Suhas Desai. I am the past President of the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin and also the current Chair of the four main organizations apart from others in the United States of which some representatives of the Hotel Association are over here, who are a big part, and also the physicians.

Anyway, to make a brief comment, first of all this meeting, this Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, it would be a shame if it is just going to be a nostalgic and sentimental journey and we don't have a follow-up on this. There have been a lot of questions and comments about their people not getting answers from various countries when they write to either Gujarat Ministry or to the Centre and what I would like to propose at least on behalf of the United States delegates is that we have some mechanism, the Prime Minister talked about building and bridge building. If we have a regular set of meetings once every six months or so where delegations from the various countries including the United States could meet on an informal or a formal basis with the Gujarat Government, then that would be more productive because then you get the ideas of various NRIs from various sectors and then they could be followed up on a regular basis. So, if there is any sentiment in the Gujarat Government, I would like to know about it first.

Secondly, as one gentleman had requested about the equipment donation scheme, I can clear that right now that the Centre has set up an equipment donation scheme from various countries, including the United States and there is a mechanism. I will be glad to give a follow-up.

And thirdly and finally one brief comment. At least, a lot of NRIs from the United States feel that it is high time that Gujarat and even the Centre stop apologizing for everything that has happened in Gujarat and we feel strongly that your victory was a brilliant victory and it is high time that the people talk about what they can do for India, just as President Kennedy said, and not what India can do for you. And therefore all the

minorities should realize, we talk about what is in your heart, whether it is Rama or whether it is any other God doesn't matter for what is important is India and Gujarat should be in your heart.

Thank you.

Mr Kabir Kumar

Excuse me, my name is Kabir Kumar. I have come from the States. I am with an organization called Indicorps. I came here for twelve months to work for India because I love this country and I am disappointed that there are not many young people here at this conference. In general, I would like to know what the Gujarat Government is doing to encourage the participation of young NRIs and PIOs around the world back to India and back to Gujarat.

Thank you.

Mr Justice Ebrahim

Hon'ble Chief Minister, I am Justice Ebrahim from Zimbabwe. I just wish to make a few pertinent observations. Firstly, I would like to respectfully associate myself with the very wise words and counsel that you received from the Hon'ble Minister of Fiji. I think we should all subscribe to his views. But this is a great opportunity because we have a lot of intellect, a lot of learning from across the world and I want to take this opportunity, ladies and gentlemen, to remind you that we are the greatest democracy in the world which is a secular state, which has a secular Constitution, which has a Supreme Court, which is fearless in its pursuit of maintaining human rights. I want you to look at each other as Indians. Don't worry about what religion you practise. Because if you look at each other, you will see that we are the same people and I know under the leadership of the Chief Minister and those that are seated at the podium that we will look at ourselves as Indians to support and to uphold the values as Indians.

Thank you.

Mr Anandilal Amin

I am Anandilal Amin from Fiji Islands. Our minister has given his comments from the political side and from the government side and I will say from the non-political side because I am the promotional man of culture and music.

Sir, money is not everything. When our parents and forefathers came to Fiji 80 years ago, they had just a few dollars or a few rupees in their hands and it took them 31 days to travel to Fiji to Calcutta. Sir, what we have seen today here on the screen about Gujarat and its tourist attractions and the development I would like to say that what our parents and forefathers could not see we have seen, the young generation today. And therefore we salute the present Chief Minister and his Cabinet for the development.

Secondly, Sir, this may be a bit sour, but the fact is fact. We have all the faces stuffed in our island. We have culture, music and everything and I think everybody is looking forth for the help from our Motherland India. But it is very safe to see that during our sessions of three days, why we came here was the first Pravasi Bharatiya Divas celebrations for three days and we respect this event but after having a good look all around, in all the centres, on the whole, we found out that there is not a single symbol

of Mahatma Gandhi which I would like you to note it down for future celebrations. If this was the celebration to honour Mahatma Gandhi, there should have been a small symbol somewhere, which I cannot see. Thank you very much.

Participant

Sir, this is not a question but this is just to respond to what the Hon'ble Chief Minister is saying. I met him on the 9th on the first day and he said why don't you come and do something for us and here is a written proposal on what he was saying earlier about the wasteland development and using a lot of the desertification in Gujarat. I am giving a special proposal from the consortium of Indian scientists for sustainable development. Many of them are from the US and NASA and the others where we will like to follow up after this letter. Thank you.

Mr Jagdish Lodhia

Hon'ble Modi Saheb, I know everybody has congratulated you on your coming into power. About a year ago, I brought a small group of people from Australia. By the way, I am Jagdish Lodhia from Sydney, Australia. I am a commoner, I am not a qualified graduate or anything like that, but I represent about 97 per cent of the Indians.

Now, what I want to say that is when I took these people over to Gujarat from Delhi, we travelled to Baroda and over there in the first instance we got out of the train and the first people that we met were some customs people and they harassed us for ordinary cameras that we were carrying. These are the things that should be ironed out so that people can travel more freely to Gujarat and they are happy about travelling and I think that is the time that we can say that Hon'ble, Sir, you have really won. And this is what we want you to do first.

Thank you.

Mr Nitish Doshi

I have a small suggestion to make. I am Nitish Doshi from Dubai. I understand that many people have desired to invest in Gujarat and also I understand that you have an ambitious plan for the growth of Gujarat and you also have a tremendous majority. I suggest that if you come out with a bond everybody will contribute substantially so that the growth of Gujarat and your dream can become true.

Dr Sudhir Parekh

I am Dr Sudhir Parekh. On behalf of all of you, as a non-resident Gujarati, I am very proud of our Chief Minister Narendra Modi and this is the leader what we were anxiously waiting for many years and now this is the leader who really stood straight, who really says what he means and really who puts people's interests before his own ambitions and interests. So, Sir, we all NRIs, non-resident Gujaratis, are very happy, very proud of you and let me repeat my request that we all invite you for what you did in the elections, very successful Gaurav Yatra. Let us start this Gaurav Yatra in New York city for the investment purpose and let us support him. And I am sure that investment will pour in once he starts explaining us what is the advantage of being a part of Gujarat and Gujarat's prosperity.

Thank you, Sir.



Mr Mike Patel

Hon'ble Minister, I am Commissioner Mike Patel, appointed by President Clinton to advise the White House on how to improve the life of Asian-Americans to the White House. As you know, President Clinton was instrumental in coming to Gujarat when the earthquake happened. The greatest thing is that out of all the American-Indians in America 60 per cent are Gujaratis and I would like to say that the Service Corps and the children that America-India Foundation has done have been able to work well in Gujarat and lately great cooperation has been forthcoming in developing the earthquake regions by AIF. So, thank you for the cooperation.

Mr A K Sinha, Principal Secretary, NRG Department

Hon'ble Chief Minister, it is my privilege to thank you for your inspiring presence and the brilliant exposition which outlined your vision for the state of Gujarat. Your open and forthright manner facilitated a very worthwhile and purposeful discussion. Next, I would like to thank the visiting Minister from Fiji, Mr Shivraj, the Government of Gujarat's Ministers, and Industry Minister, Shri Anil Patel. The Energy Minister, Shri Saurav Dalal, NRI Minister, Shri Ashok Bhat, FICCI President, Dr Muthiah, and the Chief Secretary of Gujarat, Shri Rao, who have lent dignity to the occasion with their presence.

Next, I would like to thank the visiting NRIs and NRGs who are truly the chief guests of today's function for their interest and intelligent participation in the discussion. Thereafter, I wish to thank the team of officers, notably among them Shri Rajgopalan, Shri Rajesh Kishore, Shri D K Rao and Shri Dua who have helped organize this function and make it a success. I would also like to thank other members of the audience for their attention and interest.

Thank you.