

HON'BLE CHIEF MINISTER OF TAMIL NADU
KALAINAR M. KARUNANIDHI SPEECH
7TH PRAVASI BHARATIYA DIVAS 2009

Hon'ble Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh,
Hon'ble Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs, Thiru Vayalar Ravi,
His Excellency the Vice President of Surinam, Thiru Ramdien Sardjoe,
His Excellency, the Vice President of
Mauritius, Angidi Veeriah Chettiar,

Hon'ble Minister for External Affairs
Thiru. Pranab Mukherjee,

C.I.I. President, Thiru K.V. Kamath,
Hon'ble Ministers of Central and State Governments,
Officers of the Central and State Governments,
and Friends,

On behalf of the people of Tamil Nadu, I wish all the delegates a very happy and prosperous new year. I extend a very warm welcome to all of you.

It is an excellent honour for the Chennai city to host this event. I thank the Hon'ble Prime Minister and Thiru Vayalar Ravi, the Hon'ble Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs, for choosing our city as the venue for this grand national event.

Today, the world is facing many new challenges. The violence driven by extremism is a major challenge. Similarly, the down-turn in the global economy is another issue. I am convinced that India has to play a special role in this global context.

Pandit Nehru, the architect of Modern India, worked hard to establish 'Unity in Diversity'. People from different races having different languages, religious beliefs and social customs are living together in India as one society.

It is this extraordinary strength of our country, which has made it possible for the Indian Diaspora to go to every nook and corner of the world and assimilate into those societies with ease.

The ancient Tamil Poet கணியன் பூங்குன்றனார் said, in his famous poem, 'யாதும் ஊரே; யாவரும் கேளிர்.' It means "Every place is my native place and everyone is my kith and kin." All of you are the living examples of this great saying.

India is rich in human resources and talents. It really makes me proud to think that India is very well respected in the world. It is because highly trained Indians went abroad to make their living and earned a good name for themselves and their motherland. More importantly, I am proud of the fact that the poor and helpless people, who left India about 150 years ago to work as labourers have now risen to positions of importance in the countries to which they migrated. In my view it has become possible because of their inherent ability to live harmoniously in any surrounding.

I salute Indian Diaspora, who migrated to distant lands with a strong belief in their hard work and devotion to duty. It is remarkable that they are able to create a place for themselves in different countries of the World. They have been spreading the underlying message of accommodation and non-violence.

In fact, more than 2000 years ago, the message of nonviolence emerged from India in the philosophy of Lord Buddha. It was taken to different parts of the world by the Indians then. The same message was again given to the world by Gandhiji, Father of our nation. Some of the basic principles of his philosophy of non-violence were given shape during his stay in South Africa. I think the world needs to take a lesson on the concept of peaceful co-existence from India.

The bond of our value system and heritage creates a feeling of oneness among us. I know how painful, it is to hear of any in-justice to Indians living abroad.

The other major challenge in the world today is relating to the down-turn in the global economy. There is a broad belief that countries like India and China hold the key to the early revival of global economy.

I would like to add that within India, Tamil Nadu would be one of the States, which will provide the lead in global recovery. Tamil Nadu has abundant technical manpower. It has a well developed industrial base. It is emerging as the focal point of innovation and knowledge-economy. Our Government has taken a pro-active approach for attracting investments from major multinational companies. Some of the companies who have come forward to establish or expand their projects in the recent times include world renowned names like Daimler, Renault, Nissan, Hyundai, Ford, Nokia, Dell, Motorola, Samsung, etc.

In fact, the MoUs signed by my Government involve an investment of 32 thousand one hundred crore rupees. These will generate an employment potential for more than one lakh and ninety five thousand persons.

I think many of you hold important positions in your respective organisations. You may like to share with your management the success story of this State, so that they may consider India and more specifically Tamil Nadu, as an investment destination.

Before I conclude, I would like to reiterate that events like this are very important for us. They revive the bond of our legacy and culture.

India is poised today to play a key role in the world. It promotes spirit of co-existence and accommodation. India is also one of the engines of growth for the world economy. Each of you will be our Ambassador in this great task.

Thank you, Vanakkam.

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