ORGAN DONATION
A Gift of Life

MANN KI BAAT
Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s Address to the Nation
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Prime Minister's Address

My dear countrymen, Namaskar

My dear countrymen, once again a very warm welcome to all of you in 'Mann ki Baat'. As we commence this discussion today, many thoughts are arising in the mind and the heart. This mutual connection through 'Mann ki Baat' has reached its 99th distinction. Generally, we get to hear that the turn around the 99th is very difficult. In Cricket, “Nervous Nineties” is considered a very difficult stage. But, where there is 'Mann ki Baat' of the people of India, the inspiration therein is something else altogether! I’m also happy that there is a lot of enthusiasm among the people of the country regarding the 100th episode of 'Mann ki Baat'. I am receiving a lot of messages; even phone calls. Today, when we are celebrating the Azadi ka Amrit Kaal; moving forward with new resolutions, I’m also very eager to know your suggestions and thoughts regarding the 100th episode of ‘Mann ki Baat’. I am eagerly waiting for such suggestions of yours. Although, one always has to wait...this time the wait is just longer. Your suggestions and ideas will make the 100th ‘Mann ki Baat’ on the 30th of April extremely memorable.

My dear countrymen, in 'Mann ki Baat', we have mentioned thousands of people who dedicate their lives in the service of others. There are many people who spend their entire pension towards the education of daughters...some dedicate their whole life’s earnings for the environment and the living beings. In our country, selfless charity, Parmarth has been placed so high that people do not hesitate to donate their all for the happiness of others. That’s why, since childhood, we are narrated the sagas of Shibi and Dadhichi, who sacrificed...
Friends, in this era of modern medical science, organ donation has become a very important means of imparting life to someone. It is said that when a person donates their body after death, it creates the possibility for eight to nine people to get a new life. It is matter of satisfaction that today awareness about organ donation is also rising in the country. In the year 2013, there were less than five thousand cases of organ donation in our country; but in 2022, this number has increased to more than fifteen thousand. People who have done organ donation, their families have actually accomplished a lot of Punya!

Friends, I cherished a desire for a long time to know the ‘Mann ki Baat’ of people who do such noble deeds and share it with the countrymen as well. So today in ‘Mann ki Baat’ a lovely daughter, a father of a beautiful angel and her mother are going to join us. The father's name is Sukhbir Singh Sandhu ji and the mother's name is Supreet Kaur ji...this family resides in Amritsar, Punjab. After many a prayer, they were blessed with a very beautiful girl child...a doll like daughter. The people of the household lovingly named her Ababat Kaur. The connotation of Ababat is related to the service of others...it is related to ameliorating the sufferings of others. When she was only thirty-nine days old, she left this world. But Sukhbir Singh Sandhu ji and his wife Supreet Kaur ji, their family took a very inspiring decision. And the decision was...Organ Donation of a daughter who was thirty-nine days only. Sukhbir Singh and his wife are present with us on the phone line at this moment. Come, let’s talk to them.

Prime Minister – Sukhbir ji

Sukhbir ji - Namaste Honorable Prime Minister. Sat Shri Akal.

Prime Minister – Sat Shri Akal ji, Sukhbir ji, as I was thinking about “Mann ki Baat” today, I felt that since the matter pertaining to Ababat is so inspiring, I should listen to it straight from you, because when a daughter is born in the household, it brings along many dreams and a lot of joy... but I can also imagine how severe the pain would be if the daughter departs so soon. The way you have taken the decision, I want to know about it in its entirety.

Sukhbir ji - Sir God had given us a very beautiful child, a very lovely doll had arrived in our house. As soon as she was born, we came to know that she has a bunch of nerves in her brain due to which the size of her heart was getting bigger. So we were taken aback that the child was healthy...so beautiful, and yet born with such a big problem! So, for the first 24 days, the child was completely normal. Suddenly her heart stopped working completely. So, we quickly took her to the hospital, where the doctors revived her. But it took time to understand what was wrong with her... such a big problem; a small child and a sudden heart attack. So, we took her to PGI Chandigarh for treatment. There the child fought bravely during the treatment. But the disease was such that its treatment was not possible at such a tender age. The doctors tried a lot to revive her. If the child were to approach the six month mark, then one could have thought of operating on her. But God had something else in mind, when she was only 39 days old, the doctor said that she had suffered a heart attack again, now there was very little hope left. So we both husband and wife weepingly came to the decision that we had seen her fighting bravely again and again as if she would go away now but then she was reviving, so we felt that this child had some purpose in coming here. So when they expressed utter helplessness, both of us decided... why not donate the organs of this child. Maybe there would be light in someone else's life! Then we contacted the administrative block of PGI and they guided us that only kidneys of such a small child can be taken. The almighty gave us the courage, it is the philosophy of Guru Nanak Saheb that guided us in this decision.

Prime Minister – In life, You have truly abided by the
teachings given by the Gurus. Are you there Supreet ji? Can we talk to her?

Sukhbir ji – Yes sir.

Prime Minister – Sukhbir ji, when you were in the hospital and when the doctor gave you this shocking news, even after that you and your wife took such a big decision with a calm and composed mind, it is the teachings of the Gurus that led to such an altruistic thought in the mind and in fact the meaning of Ababat in common parlance is helpful. I want to hear of the moment when this work was done.

Sukhbir ji- Sir, actually Priya jiji, a family friend of ours had donated her organs and we got inspiration from her too... so at that time we felt that the body which is there would merge into the five elements. When someone gets separated forever and goes away, his body is burnt or buried, but if his organs are useful to someone, then it is a good deed and we felt more proud at that time when the doctors told us that your daughter had become the youngest donor in India whose organs had been successfully transplanted. So our heads were held high with pride that, whereas we could not bring glory to our parents till this age, a small child had come and raised our name in so many days...and the bigger thing that today I am talking to you about this topic. We are feeling proud.

Prime Minister – Sukhbir ji, it is not as if only one part of your daughter is alive today. Your daughter has become an immortal traveler of the immortal saga of humanity. She is present even today through a part of her body. For this noble deed, I appreciate you, your wife, and your family.

Sukhbir ji – Thank you sir!

Friends, the greatest feeling behind organ donation is that someone’s life should be saved even while leaving. People who wait for organ donation know how difficult it is to pass each moment of waiting. And in such a situation, when an organ donor or a cadaver donor is found, then virtually, a form of the Almighty is seen in him. Snehlata Chaudhary, a resident of Jharkhand, was also like that, giving life to others as the Almighty would! Snehlata Chowdhary, 63, donated her heart, kidney and liver. Today in ‘Mann ki Baat’, her son Abhijit Chowdhary is with us. Let’s hear from him.

Prime Minister – Abhijeet ji, Namaskar.

Abhijeet ji- Pranam sir.

Prime Minister- Abhijeet ji, you are the son of such a mother who gave you life in a way by giving birth to you, but even after her death, your mother gave life to many people. You Abhijeet must certainly be feeling proud as a son.

Abhijeet ji – Yes sir.

Prime Minister- Tell us a little bit about your mother, under what circumstances the decision of organ donation was taken?

Abhijeet ji – There is a small village in Jharkhand called Seraikela, where both my parents live. They used to go on a morning walk continuously for the last twenty-five years. According to her routine, she left for her morning walk at 4 in the morning. At that time a motorcyclist hit her from behind and she fell instantly due to which she suffered severe head injury. Immediately we took her to Sadar Hospital, Seraikela, where the doctor bandaged her, but she was bleeding profusely. And she had no consciousness.
Immediately, we took her to Tata main hospital. She underwent surgery there. After 48 hours of observation, the doctor said that there are very few chances from there on. Then we airlifted her and brought her to AIIMS Delhi. She was under treatment here for about 7-8 days. After that the observation was fine, but suddenly her blood pressure dropped a lot, after that, we came to know that she had suffered brain death. Then the doctor briefed us with the protocol about organ donation. We could not tell our father that there is something like organ donation because we felt that he would not be able to absorb that. So, we wanted to remove from his mind that something like that was going on. As soon as we told him that the matter of organ donation was going on. Then he said that no – no, this was the mother’s wish and we had to do this. We were very disappointed till the time we came to know that mummy will not be able to survive, but as soon as this organ donation discussion started, that disappointment turned to a very positive side and we entered a very positive environment. While doing that, we had counselling at 8 o’clock in the night. On the second day we did organ donation. Mummy had lofty thoughts in this matter… earlier she used to be very active in social activities such as eye-donation. Perhaps we were able to do such a big thing with that very thought in mind, and because of my father’s decision making regarding this matter, this thing became possible.

Prime Minister – How many people benefitted through the organs?

Abhijeet ji – Her heart, two kidneys, liver and both eyes were donated, so four people got their lives back and two people their eyes.

Prime Minister – Abhijeet ji, both your father and mother are entitled to a respectful bow.

Abhijeet ji – Definitely, thank you!

Friends, whether it is 39-day-old Ababat Kaur or 63-year-old Snehlata Chowdhary, great donors like them make us understand the importance of life. In our country today, there are a large number of needy people who are waiting for an organ donor in the hope of a healthy life. It is a matter of utmost satisfaction for me that in order to make organ donation easy and to encourage it, work is being done on a uniform policy in the whole country. In this direction, it has also been decided to remove the condition of domicile of the states, that is, now the patient will be able to go to any state of the country and register for receiving the organs. The Government has also decided to abolish the age limit below 65 for organ donation. In the midst of these efforts, I urge the countrymen that organ donors should come forward in maximum numbers. One decision of yours can save the lives of many people, can give life.

My dear countrymen, this is the time of Navratri; the time to worship Shakti. Today, the potential of India, which is emerging from a new
perspective, our woman power has a very big role in it. Recently, many such examples have emerged before us. You must have seen Asia’s first female loco pilot Surekha Yadav, on social media. Surekha ji, setting another record, has also become the first woman loco pilot of Vande Bharat Express as well. This month, producer Guneet Monga and director Kartiki Gonsalves brought laurels to the country by winning an Oscar for their documentary, ‘The Elephant Whisperers’. Sister Jyotirmayee Mohanty, Scientist at the Bhabha Atomic Research Center has also notched another achievement for the country. Jyotirmayee has received a special award from IUPAC in the field of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering. Earlier this year, India’s Under-19 women’s cricket team created history by winning the T-20 World Cup. If you look at politics, a new beginning has taken place in Nagaland. In Nagaland, for the first time in 75 years, two women legislators have reached the Vidhan Sabha through their victories. One of them has also been made a minister in the Government of Nagaland, that for the first time the people of the state have also got a woman minister.

Friends, A few days ago, I also met those brave daughters who went to help the people of Turkey after the devastating earthquake. All these were part of the NDRF contingent.

Their courage and skills are being praised all over the world. India has also deployed a Women-only Platoon in the Peacekeeping Force under the UN Mission.

Today, the daughters of the country are raising the flag of their bravery in all the three armed forces. Group Captain Shalija Dhami has become the first woman Air Force officer to get a Command Appointment in a Combat Unit. She has a flying experience of about 3000 hours. Similarly, brave-heart Captain Shiva Chauhan of the Indian Army has become the first woman officer to be posted at Siachen. Shiva will be stationed for three months in Siachen, where the temperature drops to minus sixty (−60) degrees.

Friends, this list is so long that it is difficult to discuss all of them here. All such women, our daughters, are today giving energy to India and India’s dreams. This energy of women’s power is the oxygen of a developed India.

My dear countrymen, these days there is a lot of talk about clean energy, renewable energy all over the world. When I meet people across the world, they certainly talk about India’s phenomenal success in this field. Especially, the speed with which India is moving forward in the field of solar energy is a big achievement in itself. The people of India have had a special relationship with the Sun for centuries. The scientific understanding we have about the power of the Sun, the traditions of worshipping the Sun, are rarely seen in other places. I am happy that today every country person understands the importance of solar energy and also wants to contribute towards clean energy. This spirit of ‘Sabka Prayas’ is taking India’s Solar Mission forward today. In Pune, Maharashtra, one such excellent effort has caught my attention. Here, the people of MSR-Olive Housing Society have decided that they will now run things of common utility, like drinking water, lift and lights, in the society with solar energy only. After this, everyone in this society got solar panels installed. Today, about 90 thousand kilowatt-hour electricity are being generated from these solar panels every year. This is resulting in saving of about 40,000 rupees every month. All the people of the society are getting the benefit of these savings.

Friends, like Pune, the people of Diu in Daman-Diu, which is a separate district, have also done a wonderful job. You must know that Diu is near Somnath. Diu has become the first district in India, which is using 100% clean energy for all day time needs. The mantra of this success of Diu is also Sabka Prayas. Once upon a time, resources for power generation were a challenge. People chose solar energy as a solution to this challenge. Here solar panels were installed on barren land and many buildings. Through these panels, more electricity is being generated in Diu than what is required during the day time. Through this solar project, about 52 crore rupees have also been saved on the purchase of electricity. Due to
Friends, what they have done in Pune and Diu, such efforts are being made in many other places across the country. This shows how sensitive we Indians are about the environment and nature, and how our country is very alert for the future generations. I heartily appreciate all such efforts.

My dear countrymen, in our country, with the passage of time, according to the situation and circumstances, many traditions develop. These traditions increase the strength of our culture and also give it new vitality daily. A few months ago, one such tradition started in Kashi. During the Kashi-Tamil Sangamam, the centuries-old historical and cultural ties between Kashi and the Tamil region were celebrated. The spirit of 'Ek Bharat-Shreshtha Bharat' gives strength to our country. When we know and learn about each other, this feeling of oneness strengthens. With this spirit of unity, ‘Saurashtra-Tamil Sangamam’ will be held in different parts of Gujarat next month. The ‘Saurashtra-Tamil Sangamam’ will run from April 17 to 30. Some listeners of ‘Mann ki Baat’ must be wondering, what is the relation of Saurashtra in Gujarat with Tamil Nadu? Let me tell you, centuries ago many people from Saurashtra had settled in different parts of Tamil Nadu. These people are still known as ‘Saurashtra Tamil’. Even today, some glimpses of Saurashtra can be found in their food habits, lifestyle and social rituals. Many people from Tamil Nadu have written appreciative letters to me regarding this event. Jayachandran ji, who lives in Madurai, has written something very poignant. He said that – “After a thousand years, for the first time someone has thought about the Saurashtra-Tamil relations and brought to the fore the people who settled in Tamil Nadu from Saurashtra.” Jayachandran’s words are the expression of thousands of Tamil brothers and sisters.

Friends, I would like to inform the listeners of ‘Mann ki Baat’ about a piece of news related to Assam. This too strengthens the spirit of ‘Ek Bharat-Shreshtha Bharat’. You all know that we are celebrating the 400th birth anniversary of Veer Lachit Borphukan ji. The brave Lachit Borphukan had liberated Guwahati from the clutches of the tyrannical Mughal Sultanate. Today, the country is getting acquainted with the indomitable courage of this great warrior. A few days ago, a campaign for essay writing based on the life of Lachit Borphukan was launched. You will be surprised to know that about 45 lakh people sent essays for this. You will also be happy to know that it has now become a Guinness World Record. And the biggest thing and a matter of great happiness is that these essays that have been written and sent by the people on Veer Lachit Borphukan have been written in about 23 different languages. Among them, apart from the Assamese language, people have sent essays in languages like Hindi, English, Bangla, Bodo, Nepali, Sanskrit, and Santhali. I express my heartfelt appreciation to everyone who has been a part of this effort.

My dear countrymen, when it comes to Kashmir or Srinagar, the first picture that comes to our minds is of her valleys and Dal Lake. All of us would like to enjoy the views of Dal Lake…However, there is one more thing special about Dal Lake. Dal Lake is also known for its delicious Lotus Stems, also known as ‘Kamal Kakdi’. Lotus Stems are known by different names in different places across the country. In Kashmir, they are called Nadru. The demand for Nadru of Kashmir is continuously increasing. In light of this demand, farmers cultivating Nadru in Dal Lake have formed an FPO. About 250 farmers have joined this FPO. Today, these farmers have started exporting their Nadru to foreign countries.
Just some time ago, these farmers sent two consignments to UAE. This success is not only bringing a name to Kashmir but also increasing the income of hundreds of farmers.

Friends, another such effort of the people of Kashmir related to agriculture is diffusing the fragrance of its success these days. You must be wondering why I am talking about the fragrance of success - Well... it is a matter of fragrance and aroma! There is a town ‘Bhadarwah’ in the Doda district of Jammu and Kashmir. Here, the farmers had been engaged in traditional maize cultivation for decades, but some farmers thought of doing something different. They turned to floriculture, that is, the cultivation of flowers. Today, around two and a half thousand farmers are cultivating lavender here. They have also been handheld through the Aroma Mission of the Central Government. This new cultivation has greatly increased the income of the farmers, and today, along with the lavender, the fragrance of their success is spreading far and wide.

My dear countrymen, that’s all for this edition of ‘Mann ki Baat’. I will meet you next time in the hundredth episode of ‘Mann ki Baat’. I urge you all to send your suggestions. In this month of March, from Holi to Navratri, we have been busy with many festivals. The holy month of Ramzan has also started. The auspicious festival of Shri Ram Navami is also going to be celebrated in the next few days. After this... Mahavir Jayanti, Good Friday, and Easter will also be observed. In the month of April, we also celebrate the birth anniversaries of two great personalities of India. These are two great men – Mahatma Jyotiba Phule, and Babasaheb Ambedkar. Both of these great men made unprecedented contributions to eradicate discrimination from society. Today, in ‘Azadi ka Amrit Kaal’, we need to learn from such great personalities and take constant inspiration from them. We have to keep our duties at the forefront. Friends, at this time, cases of Corona are also rising in some places. That’s why, all of you must take precautions and be mindful of cleanliness. We will meet again next month in the 100th episode of ‘Mann ki Baat’. Till then, I take leave of you.

Thank you, Namaskar!
Organ Donation
A Life-Saving Act of Kindness

Organ donation is a life-saving act of kindness that has the potential to transform the lives of many people. Organ transplantation is a medical miracle that has the ability to give someone a second chance at life. It is an act of selflessness that can save the lives of those in need, and can bring hope to families who have been devastated by illness or injury.

The shortage of organs is virtually a universal problem Asia lags much behind the rest of the world. In India, the number of organ transplant cases has increased tremendously over the past decade. In 2013, there were less than five thousand cases of organ donation in the nation. But in 2022, the number has increased to more than fifteen thousand.

The Government of India, under the visionary leadership of Hon’ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has taken various initiatives to promote organ donation and transplantation across the country. The National Organ Transplant Programme aims to improve access to life transforming transplantation for needy citizens of the nation by promoting deceased organ donation. Under this, the National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (NOTTO), Regional Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisations (ROTT), and State Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisations (SOTTO), aid in coordination and networking for the procurement and distribution of the organs in the safest and shortest possible time. With the aim of making organ donation easy, NOTTO also allows citizens to pledge their organs on their website, without much hassle.

Along with the above institutional mechanisms to fasten the process of organ transplant, the Union Government has also embraced an innovative idea to ensure fast transport of donated organs within the country. In 2014, the Government introduced the concept of ‘Green Corridors’, which is a demarcated, cleared out special road route created for an ambulance that enables retrieved organs meant for transplant to reach

“I want to thank Prime Minister Narendra Modi that he talked about organ donation in his latest ‘Mann ki Baat’ and urged citizens across the country to come forward and donate their organs.”

—R. Madhavan
Actor
Another remarkable initiative taken by the Government is the adoption of ‘One Nation, One Policy’ for organ donation and transplantation. Earlier, a prospective recipient was eligible to register himself only in his state of domicile, however, the new changes allow all Indians to register themselves on a single waiting list, irrespective of their domicile. The new guidelines have also removed the upper age limit of 65 years for any person to be eligible to register for receiving deceased donor organs. These steps are aimed at providing better and more equitable access to organs and also to promote cadaver donation, which currently form a minuscule fraction of all organ transplants carried out in India.

In order to increase awareness and break myths around organ donation, the Government conducts various awareness generation programmes on-ground as well as on multimedia platforms with the help of NOTTO, All India Radio, Doordarshan, and other channels. Recently, the Prime Minister himself talked about the subject during his ‘Mann ki Baat’ address. He brought to light the stories of two families who donated the organs of their deceased loved ones and chose to impart life to others.

By working together and supporting the cause of organ donation, each Indian can save countless lives and create a better tomorrow. By pledging and donating their organs, people can leave behind a legacy of kindness and generosity that will continue to make a difference in the lives of others long after they are gone.

“I feel grateful that the Prime Minister appreciated our daughter and was very empathetic towards us. He said that our daughter is the pride of India. It is a proud moment not just for the family, but also for Punjab that the Government of India has recognised our daughter as the youngest donor of India.”

–Sukhbir Singh
Father of Ababat Kaur
Saving Lives Through Organ Donation: The Ultimate Gift of Life

Around 25 years ago, I performed the first heart transplant in Karnataka. Since then, a lot has changed. We have also made progress. More people are coming forward willingly to pledge or donate their organs. However, we still have a long way to go. The need for organs far exceeds the number of donations we receive each year. In fact, we need at least 5 lakh organ donations annually, but we are currently receiving only a few thousand. This gap can only be bridged if more people come forward to donate organs.

As per the data, 2 lakh people require cornea transplants, but only 50,000 people get them. We need at least 2 lakh kidneys each year, but only 1,600 people receive it. Similarly, we need 50,000 heart transplants each year, but only 339 people receive the organ. Similar is the scenario for other organs like the lungs, liver, etc. The data is alarming.

It is crucial to know that one cadaver donation can save the lives of eight to nine people. For example, one person has two kidneys, which can be transplanted to two different people. Similarly, the liver can be split between two patients. While many patients are currently receiving organs such as kidneys and livers from their relatives, there is no choice for organs such as the heart and lungs. We can receive them only from cadavers.

However, there are many myths still prevalent around organ donation in our society. For instance, many people believe that if a part of their body is removed before their cremation, they will not get salvation after death. Such myths are baseless. Recently, a meeting was conducted in Bengaluru, which was attended by religious and spiritual gurus of all the religions. It is worth noting that all these gurus, unanimously, endorsed organ donation. They emphasised on the fact that no religion prohibits donating organs.

Recent policy changes have been helpful in increasing organ donation. In the past, it was relatively easy for foreigners to receive organ transplants in India. However, now the organs must be used for Indian citizens first. This is a very positive step taken by the Government.

The Government has also created an organised structure where a person can list themselves as an organ recipient. Organs are allocated by a Government body, in a very transparent process, purely on the basis of the seniority of the list. Everyone knows who is next in line; nobody can take undue advantage of it.

The Prime Minister of India, who has mastered the art of reaching out to the masses, has often used his ‘Mann ki Baat’ program to touch the lives of millions of people by talking about complex issues in layman’s language. Recently, he shared the story of a young daughter from Amritsar, where her parents donated her organs on her death. He made a very emotional appeal for organ donation, which is going to make a huge difference in the landscape.

It is extremely disappointing to see so many young people with damaged hearts. It is not just them who suffer, but also their families. In my 25 years of experience, from the first heart transplant surgery to today, I have seen people get back to enjoying their lives after receiving an organ. However, due to a shortage of organs, not everyone gets this second chance. On one hand, people are waiting for organs, and on the other, we see thousands of bodies being burned or buried, whose organs could have saved many lives. The only way to fill this gap is to spread awareness through constant discussions on the ground, in digital media, and mass media. The involvement of religious leaders is equally important.

It is up to us to take responsibility for spreading awareness and motivating people to come forward. Today, many young influencers are using their reach to talk about organ donation. This has increased awareness.

Organ donation is the ultimate gift that one can give before leaving this world. We must continue to work together to spread awareness and encourage more people to donate organs. The ball is in our court now; it is up to us to bridge the gap between the need and the number of donations we receive. Let us work together to save lives and give people a second chance at life.
Organ Donation: A Responsibility Towards Humanity

As we move towards a more advanced and globalized world, it is important to think about our responsibilities towards each other. One such responsibility is organ donation, a cause that has been gaining attention in recent years. I myself pledged to donate my organs over ten years ago, and I have seen first-hand the impact it can have.

When I made the decision to pledge my organs, there was still a lot of superstition and little awareness about it. However, I believed then, as I do now, that it was a selfless and effortless thing to do. There are many cultures and people who are skeptical about organ donation. However, we must understand that culture and traditions are not static and that they evolve with time. As humans, we have advanced technologically, and we must also advance our thinking and actions. We need to think beyond our cultural and religious beliefs and focus on how we can serve our society.

I have seen the impact of organ donation through my work in a web series called ‘Breathe’, where I played the father of a son who was waiting for his lung to be replaced. You can see the anguish the family goes through, but when they hear that someone has pledged their organs and they are next in line, you can see the joy and hope that fills them. There are also amazing stories of successful people having transplants and becoming useful contributors to society.

When I made the decision to pledge my organs, everyone in my family agreed, and we publicised it. I didn’t see what the big deal was; it’s a great way to help other people. I think it is important for people to realise that organ donation can have a significant impact on someone’s life. It can save lives and offer hope to people who are on the verge of death.

Countries around the world are making organ donation compulsory, and India should also follow suit. Singapore considers every citizen an organ donor, even if they are not registered. The family’s objection cannot stop the harvesting of organs if the person had agreed to be an organ donor. Such steps can encourage more people to come forward and donate their organs, ultimately saving many lives.

I am glad that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has talked about organ donation in his latest ‘Mann ki Baat’ and urged citizens across the country to come forward and donate their organs. It is important for the Government to encourage people to take this noble cause seriously. I believe that India, with everything it is doing, has set an exemplary example for the world.

I want to tell all youngsters and citizens that organ donation is the least amount of effort one can put in to save many lives and offer hope. It is a noble cause that we should all consider, and if we can make even a small difference in someone’s life, then it is worth it. Organ donation is a selfless and effortless thing to do that can have a significant impact on someone’s life. We should all consider pledging our organs and helping those in need. It is important for us to realize our responsibilities towards each other and do what we can to make this world a better place.

Scan the QR Code to know views of R. Madhavan on Organ Donation.
The greatest feeling behind donating organs is the realisation that you are saving someone's life even after leaving this earth. People who wait for organs know how difficult it is to pass each moment until an organ or cadaver donor is found. In such a situation, an organ donor is no less than a God for the patients. In his recent 'Mann ki Baat', Prime Minister talked about Snehlata Chowdhary, a resident of Jharkhand, whose heart, kidney, and liver saved many lives.

Our Doordarshan team talked to Abhijit Chowdhary, the son of Snehlata Chowdhary, to know more about this inspirational decision of the family.

"My mother was highly involved in social activities, and that was the reason why we took the decision to donate her organs once she left us. She also wanted the same. There were many myths that came our way while we were deciding to donate her organs. Myths like she will not attain salvation. But we kept all our feelings aside and thought that if we do not donate her organs, they will eventually be burned. Rather, by donating them, we were able to save many lives. We donated her heart, her kidneys, and her liver. The heart has been transplanted to a 14-year-old child who hails from Ghaziabad. Even though we don't know the people who received her organs, we know that she is alive somewhere in some form.

It was my dream to talk to the Prime Minister one day, and it could become possible only because of my mother's blessings.

I believe, organ donation is not a mere act; it is a thought that coincides with the thought of New India. The youth of our nation need to know that there is no other donation as noble and as worthy as this.”

Scan the QR Code to know more about Snehlata Chowdhary.

Organ donation is much more important than many of us realise. In India, there are a large number of people who are waiting for an organ in the hope of living a happy life. In fact, for some people with end-stage organ failure, it is truly a matter of life and death. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his latest ‘Mann ki Baat’ episode, talked in detail about the importance of organ donation in India. In order to highlight the noble cause, he talked to Sukhbir Singh and Supreet Kaur from Amritsar, Punjab. Sukhbir and Supreet donated the kidneys of their deceased daughter, Ababat Kaur. By taking this inspiring decision, the parents of Ababat not only saved someone's life, but also ensured that their daughter is alive in some form even after her departure from this world.

Our Doordarshan team talked to Ababat Kaur’s parents. Sukhbir Singh said, “Human beings are made of five elements, i.e., panchatvata. The body is nothing but soil once the soul leaves it. I believe that if we decide to donate our organs to someone who is in need, we can not only infuse their life with new enthusiasm and give them a new ray of hope, but we can also ensure that some part of us stays alive even after our death. You will be surprised to know that there is a long list of people who are waiting for organs. If we all decide to donate organs, we can ensure that our loved ones are still alive in some way. This will not only make us happy, but it will also make us feel proud of saving someone’s life.”

Supreet, mother of Ababat, expressed her gratitude toward the Prime Minister and said, “This is a matter of pride that we could talk to the Prime Minister. He talked to us very generously.” Sukhbir added, “I felt grateful that the Prime Minister appreciated our daughter and was very empathetic towards us. He said that our daughter is the pride of India. It is a proud moment for not just my family but also for Punjab that the Government of India has recognised our daughter as the youngest donor in India.”

The story of Sukhbir Singh, Supreet Kaur, and Ababat Kaur, is a powerful inspiration to everyone across the world. Their selfless act has shown that we all can be life savours to someone in need, by pledging our organs.
Nari Shakti
From Women Development to Women-led Development

On the occasion of the 75\textsuperscript{th} year of India's independence, the Prime Minister articulated a bold vision that in the Amrit Kaal, ‘Nari Shakti’ would play a vital role in India’s socio-economic developmental journey.

The phrase ‘Nari Shakti’ is derived from two Hindi words, ‘Nari’, meaning woman, and ‘shakti’, meaning power. Together, these words represent the strength and potential of women in India, with which they achieve their dreams and ambitions. Often emphasised by the Prime Minister himself, “Women are not just our mothers, sisters, and daughters; but they are the real architects of our society”. Empowering women and creating a more inclusive society are primary needs for the country today.

Women have been endowed with an elevated status in India, both culturally and mythologically. For instance, it is mentioned in the Kena Upanishad that it was Goddess Uma who enlightened the three powerful Gods - Indra, Vayu, and Agni – to the profound mystery of Brahman. Even in modern society today, women are making strides, generating far-reaching impact, and demonstrating the true essence of ‘Nari Shakti’ across sectors, swelling the hearts of the nation with pride.

The progress of a country can be gauged by the level of empowerment of its women, in all strata and demographics. With ‘Government’ schemes like ‘Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao’ promoting the education of girls and preventing female foeticide; ‘Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana’ providing free LPG connections to women from Below Poverty Line (BPL) households and reducing their dependence on traditional cooking fuels like firewood, which cause various health hazards; ‘Mahila E-Haat’ enabling women entrepreneurs to showcase and sell their products, and many others, the Government is striving to empower all our women. Be it providing financial assistance for starting small businesses to rural women, providing maternity benefits to working women in urban areas, or increasing the representation of women in politics and decision-making positions, the Government is striving to ensure an equal platform for all.

According to the World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap Report 2021, India has improved its overall gender gap index ranking by 28 spots. The literacy rate among women has increased from 65.46% in 2001 to 77.65% in 2021. Moreover, the gender gap in literacy has decreased from 21.7% in 2001 to 14.4% in 2021. This progress can be attributed to various Government initiatives focused on promoting women’s education, health, and economic participation.

In his recent ‘Mann ki Baat’ address, Prime Minister Narendra Modi also shared a heartening account of women change-makers in India, celebrating the immense contribution of women to the Indian society.

From Asia’s first female locopilot of Vande Bharat Express, Surekha Yadav, to Group Captain Shaliza Dhami, the first woman Air Force officer to get a Command Appointment in a Combat Unit and Captain Shiva Chouhan, the first woman officer of Indian Army to be posted at Siachen; from producer Guneet Monga and director Kartiki...
The state of Nagaland getting their first woman minister as Ms. Salhoutuono Kruse, India has made striking progress with its women taking the centre stage of success. With the paramount importance of women’s upliftment in today’s day and age, it is certain that ‘Nari Shakti’ is critical to India’s growth and development. There has been towering progress to uplift women financially, politically, and socially, but it is now time to move forward with greater force, bringing more and more women to the forefront of development and building a society that is more inclusive and more empowered across all geographical settings, social status, educational status, and ages. After all, the energy of women’s power is indeed the oxygen of a new, developed India.

Gonsalves bringing home the Oscar for their documentary ‘The Elephant Whisperers’ to Dr. Jyotirmayee Mohanty receiving a special award from IUPAC in the field of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering; from India’s Under-19 women’s cricket team creating history by winning the T-20 World Cup to the mention of my name in PM’s ‘Mann ki Baat’, along with some of the most inspiring women in India, has filled my heart with pride and gratitude. I feel honoured and overwhelmed that a person of such stature acknowledged my achievement and my hard work of 34 years.”

—Surekha Yadav
Asia’s First Female Loco Pilot

**BREAKING BARRIERS**
Empowering Women for a Better Life

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEN</th>
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<tr>
<td>Women walked long distances to lakes, ponds or borewells and brought back heavy loads of water.</td>
<td>Jal Jeevan Mission’s 8 crore tap water connections come as a boon!</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women inhaled smoke from wood-fired kitchens. They went out to collect firewood for cooking.</td>
<td>Ujjwala Yojana’s 9 crore LPG connections freed women from respiratory diseases.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kerosene lamps harmed the respiratory health and eyesight of people in poor families, especially women and children</td>
<td>2.6 crore SAUBHAGYA electricity connections have made kerosene lamps a matter of the past.</td>
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<td>Women had to go to isolated places to relieve themselves, endangering their health, safety and dignity.</td>
<td>Swachh Bharat’s 11 crore toilets have removed these worries.</td>
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My experience in the Indian Army has been an exciting, challenging, and fulfilling journey. The Army demands not only physical fitness and mental sharpness but also leadership qualities, especially when serving in a tough operational area like Siachen. However, the Army provides comprehensive training to prepare us for any role and situation.

I received adequate training at the Officers Training Academy and during other training activities, which helped me develop confidence in my abilities to perform effectively in various operational roles and terrains. The training taught me to lead from the front and be a role model for the troops. This motivated me to put in extra effort and bring out the best in myself.

When I was selected for deployment at Siachen, I felt proud and elated but also aware of the immense responsibility that came with it. I familiarised myself with the terrain and operational aspects of the location and received guidance from my superiors. Physical and mental preparation were crucial for this challenging assignment, and the tough and arduous training at the Battle School prepared me for the task ahead.

Siachen Glacier presents multiple challenges, including severe cold weather, sub-zero temperatures, crevasses, ice masts, overhangs, taxing moraines, high-speed winds, and a sense of isolation. However, my indomitable willpower and firm belief in my abilities as an Army officer have enabled me to overcome every obstacle. Mental toughness is the key to operating here, and the support and positive attitude of my department have made me more responsible as a leader.

My operational duty in Siachen Glacier has taught me how to face the toughest challenges with a smile and how to survive in any difficult situation with ease. Life in the Indian Army is different from any other profession, as it provides unmatched opportunities for leadership, physical strength, courage, mental toughness, and a sense of responsibility. It empowers and humbles us at the same time. I strongly encourage more women to choose the Army as their profession.
Salhoutuonuo Kruse has made history by becoming the first woman minister in the state of Nagaland, India. She was sworn in as the Minister of Women Resource Development and Horticulture after being elected to the Nagaland Legislative Assembly in 2023, making her the first female minister in the state’s history. Kruse hails from Kiruphema, Kohima, and represents the 8th Western Angami Assembly constituency.

She expressed her gratitude for the privilege of becoming the first woman minister in Nagaland and emphasized the importance of inclusivity and gender equality in politics. She said, “There is a need for men and women to work together to contribute their unique abilities in any field, for the growth of the country.” In addition, Ms. Kruse commended the Government for promoting schemes and provisions to enhance Nari Shakti in all aspects of life, including improving the child-sex ratio and education for girls.

As the State’s first woman minister, Ms. Kruse has a vision for advancing Nari Shakti in Nagaland. “The focus should be on skill development, education, enhancement of large and small-scale undertakings of women, and on generating employment for self-sustenance. The aim is to empower and uplift women by helping them avail the policies and schemes that the Government has to offer.” With the motto ‘empowering women, empower the nation’, Ms. Kruse is determined to inspire more and more women to come forward as flagbearers of Nari Shakti and attempt to break the glass ceiling across fields.

Ms. Kruse’s message to every woman, “Be passionate, brave, steadfast, and work hard. Anyone with strong convictions can succeed and conquer all their dreams.”

Kruse’s appointment as the first woman minister in Nagaland is a significant milestone for women in politics. Her vision for empowering and uplifting women in the state serves as an inspiration for all women in India, and her journey will pave the way for more women to follow in her footsteps.

In an interview with our Doordarshan team, Ms. Kruse shared her thoughts on women taking the center stage in building a developed India.
Asia’s First Female Loco Pilot
Surekha Yadav

Surekha Yadav made history by becoming Asia’s first female loco pilot. Combating gender stereotypes and braving several challenges, Surekha has paved her way to success in a male-dominated industry. Her hard-earned accomplishments and passion for her job have inspired women to step forward in various sectors. She has become a role model for young girls and women who aspire to break gender stereotypes and carve their paths.

Surekha Yadav’s journey is truly inspiring and has received well-deserved recognition on the national platform when Prime Minister Narendra Modi mentioned her in his ‘Mann ki Baat’ address, acknowledging her as an inspiration for many women in India.

In an interview with our Doordarshan team, she expressed her gratitude for receiving this honour.

“The mention of my name in ‘Mann ki Baat’, along with some of the most inspiring women in India, has filled my heart with pride and gratitude. I feel honoured and overwhelmed that a person of such stature acknowledged my achievement and my hard work of 34 years. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Indian Railways for giving me the opportunity to take my first step in this field. In my 34 years of service, I have in place of I’ve become the first female goods train driver, the first female diesel engine driver, and the first female loco pilot to drive the prestigious Vande Bharat Express, and it is no less than receiving a national accolade for me.

I sincerely hope that my achievements inspire women to take up unconventional jobs and achieve their goals.”

Surekha Yadav’s determination, perseverance, and passion for her job has been groundbreaking, enabling her to climb the ladder of success in an unconventional field. She is truly an inspiration to all women who aspire to break gender barriers, dream big and achieve bigger things in life.

Scan the QR code to watch the interview of Surekha Yadav, the first woman loco pilot of Asia.

India’s Women Power Shines on the Global Stage

The recent victory of producer Guneet Monga and director Kartiki Gonsalves at the Oscars for their documentary, ‘The Elephant Whisperers,’ is a matter of immense pride for India. It is a powerful reminder of the enormous talent and creativity that women in India possess and the positive impact they can have on the world stage. The recognition of their work on such a prestigious platform highlights the growing influence of women in the Indian film industry and serves as a testament of the contribution of women in the Indian economy.

This success story is also a manifestation of Nari Shakti, that is an integral part of Indian culture. By showcasing the potential of women, it has the power to inspire millions of Indian girls and women, encouraging them to pursue their dreams and reach for the stars.

Surekha Yadav’s determination, perseverance, and passion for her job has been groundbreaking, enabling her to climb the ladder of success in an unconventional field. She is truly an inspiration to all women who aspire to break gender barriers, dream big and achieve bigger things in life.

Scan the QR code to watch the interview of Surekha Yadav, the first woman loco pilot of Asia.

The triumph of Monga and Gonsalves demonstrates that women in India can break down barriers and achieve their goals with hard work and perseverance. India can look forward to a bright future when women are empowered to take the center stage, and their contributions are celebrated, as it is with Monga and Gonsalves.
Today, the world is appreciating India for its phenomenal success in the field of solar energy.

-Prime Minister Narendra Modi

India, a nation with an area of more than 32 lakh sq. Km, has a vast potential for solar power, with most areas receiving 4-7 kWh per sq. m per day. In the last few years, solar energy has brought visible change in India’s energy landscape. The Government’s policies and initiatives focused towards solar energy and the overwhelming support of the citizens are helping to meet the energy needs of the country today, both in rural and urban areas.

**GOVERNMENT’S INITIATIVES**


**PM-KUSUM Yojana**: To promote the installation of grid-connected solar pumps, solarisation of farms and decentralised small solar power plants.

**Central Public Sector Undertaking Scheme**: To set up solar PV projects using domestic cells and modules in order to facilitate national energy security and environment sustainability for Government purposes.


**Atmanirbhar Bharat**: To increase the domestic production of solar PV, a PLI scheme with financial outlays of INR 24,000 Cr. introduced under Atmanirbhar Bharat.

**Suryamitra Skill Development Programme**: To develop skilled and employable workforce (Suryamitras) catering to the needs of Solar PV industries.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi also often uses his ‘Mann ki Baat’ programme as a platform to share India’s success in the solar energy sector along with highlighting inspiring stories of individual and collective efforts of people at grassroots level. During the recent episode of ‘Mann ki Baat’, he highlighted the efforts taken by the people of the UT Dli and MSR-Olive Housing Society, Pune. With such collective efforts from the Government and civil society, India is ready to attain a sustainable future in the age of Amrit Kaal.
Diu - An Example of Collective Efforts Towards a Cleaner and Greener India

Diu, the first city in India to run completely on solar energy during day time, has set an example of how Government’s dedicated efforts, when combined with people’s dedicated involvement can do wonders.

In his recent ‘Mann ki Baat’ address, the Prime Minister mentioned Diu’s success mantra as ‘Sabka Prayas’ or ‘collective efforts’. Once upon a time, resources for power generation were a challenge in this region. But, ever since people chose solar energy as a solution to this challenge, solar panels started getting installed at various places. Today, barren lands, terraces of buildings, all have solar panels which help the city meet its electricity demand.

Our Doordarshan team talked to the residents of Diu to know more about the initiative.

Dr. Haresh Ramji Solanki, a fish exporter from Diu mentioned, “To bring Prime Minister’s dream of creating a pollution-free and green India to fruition, our administrator Shri Praful Patel launched a campaign where solar panels were installed at various places in the city. Our city needs around 9 Megawatt and the solar panels produce around 5 Megawatt out of it. I want to thank the Prime Minister for appreciating our city for this initiative. When we heard him praising Diu, everyone here was happy.”

Himanshi Rajput, another resident of Diu said, “It is a matter of pride for us that the Prime Minister mentioned our city in his monthly programme ‘Mann ki Baat’. Diu has lots of hotels and restaurants, due to which our energy demand is high. Earlier we used to get electricity from our neighboring state, Gujarat, this resulted in high bills. But today, we produce most of it in our city only. We are not only meeting most of our energy needs, but we are also contributing in creating a cleaner and greener India.”

With initiatives like Diu’s, India is on its way towards becoming a leader in promoting renewable energy and sustainable practices. Let us all join hands and work towards building a brighter and greener future for generations to come.

MSR-Olive Society: A Community-led Initiative for Clean Energy in India

Recognizing India’s contribution to a sustainable environment, the Government of India has taken various initiatives to promote clean energy in the nation. The involvement of civil society in all such initiatives, over the last 9 years, have been instrumental in taking India’s Solar Mission forward.

In his recent ‘Mann ki Baat’ address, Prime Minister Narendra Modi highlighted a praise-worthy initiative by MSR-Olive Society of Pune where the residents have decided to switch to solar energy to generate electricity for their regular consumption. The society that houses more than 200 flats, came together to install solar panels which generates about 90 kilowatt-hour of electricity every year. This initiative has resulted in the residents saving around Rs. 40,000 of electricity bill each month.

Our Doordharshan team talked to Ravindra Akolkar, the chairman of the MSR-Olive Society to know more about the initiative.

“Our society required electricity to lift drinking water and run elevators as well as to power the lights in the premises and for other miscellaneous usage. All this costed lakhs of electricity bills each year. In 2016, we collectively spent money to install solar panels on our terrace. Today, we meet all our electricity requirements without worrying about electricity bills. The way in which the Prime Minister praised our efforts has touched our hearts. It is a matter of pride for us. I believe, every society should take such initiatives. I believe, Prime Minister’s mention of our project will motivate a lot of people to take similar steps.

Deepali Chanchad, a resident of MSR-Olive Society mentioned that, “Today, because of the Prime Minister’s praises, many people approach us to know more about this project. My colleagues, friends and relatives all want to know how much we invested and what was the procedure. People are now more interested in taking similar steps towards clean energy. We, the residents of MSR-Olive Society, are taking inspiration from the Prime Minister and are here to guide people with any query. We are very proud that because of him, today, people know our society.”

Looking forward, the success of the MSR-Olive Society in Pune serves as a great example of how community–led initiatives can have a significant impact on promoting clean energy and sustainable practices.
SAURASHTRA-TAMIL SANGAMAM

A CELEBRATION OF ‘UNITY IN DIVERSITY’ in India

The Saurashtra-Tamil Sangamam is a unique initiative being held from 17th to 30th April 2023 in Gujarat, that aims to promote cultural integration, peace, and harmony. This event is shaped to bring together artists, scholars, poets, writers, and cultural enthusiasts from Saurashtra and Tamil Nadu. The 10-day event is being held in four different places, i.e., Somnath, Dwarka, Rajkot and the Statue of Unity at Kevadia.

THE SAURASHTRA-TAMIL BOND

An essential aspect of the Saurashtra-Tamil Sangamam is the celebration of the Tamil-Saurashtra literary connection. The two regions share a long history of scholarly exchange, with many poets and writers from both regions inspiring each other’s works.

Another highlight of the Saurashtra-Tamil Sangamam is the showcasing of traditional arts and crafts of both regions. The event is set to feature exhibitions with visitors getting to experience the diverse art forms.

The Sangamam also highlights the shared culinary heritage of the two regions. Visitors get to savour the delicious cuisine of both Tamil Nadu and Saurashtra, which has many commonalities, including the use of rice, lentils, and spices.

Saurashtra Tamilians have also actively participated in the freedom movement and also contributed to the art, trade and industry of Tamil Nadu which earned GI tag for the Sarees and fabrics that they have produced with excellent skills.

There is no country like India, quite as diverse, multi-lingual and multi-cultural, yet bound together by the ancient bonds of shared traditions, culture and values. Such bonds need to be strengthened through enhanced & continuous mutual interaction between people of varied regions and ways of life so that it encourages reciprocity & secures an enriched value system of unity amongst people of different States in India.

The Saurashtra-Tamil Sangamam is, thus, more than just a cultural event; it is a testament to the idea of “Unity in Diversity” that is at the core of the Indian ethos. The cultural exchange that will take place during the event will help in breaking down barriers, fostering friendship, and promoting mutual understanding, strengthening the spirit of ‘Ek Bharat, Shrestha Bharat’.
Saurashtra - Tamil Sangamam
Reviving a 1,000-Year-Old Relationship

The Saurashtra - Tamil Sangamam, scheduled from April 17th to April 30th, aims to bring together people from different states and foster cultural exchange, in line with the Prime Minister’s vision of ‘Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat’. This program highlights the long-standing relationship between the people of Saurashtra in Gujarat and Tamil Nadu, dating back 1,000 years.

The Saurashtra people settled in Tamil Nadu, established a good community life, and contributed to the region’s business and economy. The Sangamam seeks to revive this age-old relationship and facilitate cultural exchange, as well as an understanding of each other’s literature, trade, lifestyle, and cultural heritage.

People residing in Tamil Nadu with roots in Saurashtra along with the natives of the State are a part of the Saurashtra-Tamil Sangamam. Programmes will be organised at Somnath, Dwarka, Porbandar, Statue of Unity, and the attendees will be welcomed by the people of Saurashtra along the way and at the railway station. Traditional cultural programs will be held in universities, showcasing both Tamil and Gujarati cultures. Additionally, Textile Expos will be held to provide a glimpse into the diverse textiles of both regions.

The people of Saurashtra have adopted many lifestyles in Tamil Nadu since they settled there 1,000 years ago. The Maharaja of Madurai granted them land space, and they integrated into Tamil Nadu’s way of life. Rosam is now a part of their food, and they intend to share their traditional dish from Gujarat, fafda. With many such interesting exchanges, Saurashtra-Tamil Sangamam is bringing together the best of both worlds. In Saurashtra, arrangements have been made for visitors from Tamil Nadu to participate in this confluence, where they will be invited to share their cuisine and rekindle the age-old relationship between the two regions through the lens of culture, tradition and heritage.

All this, and more, will strengthen the relationship between the two regions, thereby giving an impetus to harmonizing the nation and nurturing the true essence of ‘Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat’.

Scan the QR Code to watch the interview of Mansukh Mandaviya.
VEER LACHIT BORPHUKAN

Lachit Borphukan was the 17th-century General of the Royal Army of the Ahom Kingdom of Assam who defeated the Mughals time and again. Lachit Borphukan inspired the Assamese soldiers in the Battle of Saraighat, in 1671, and delivered a crushing and humiliating defeat on the Mughals. The heroic fight of Lachit Borphukan and his army remains one of the most inspiring military feats of resistance in the history of our country.

The life of Lachit Borphukan reflects concentration on work, duty and bravery. He is a symbol of indomitable courage and his strong, selfless and visionary leadership reminds us of the Assamese nation which could not have been imagined without Lachit Borphukan. The courage and foresight of Lachit Borphukan are trilled in every Assamese mind.

TYING THE NATION WITH THE SPIRIT OF 'EK BHARAT SHRESHTHA BHARAT'

In line with the Prime Minister’s vision to honour the unsung heroes in a befitting manner, the nation is celebrating the 400th birth anniversary of Lachit Borphukan. To immortalise this valiant son of India, a book ‘Lachit Borphukan - Assam’s Hero who Halted the Mughals’ was launched by the Prime Minister. A few days ago, a campaign for essay writing based on the life of Lachit Borphukan was launched evoking the spirit of ‘Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat’.

DID YOU KNOW?

The National Defence Academy (NDA) awards its best passing out cadet the Lachit Borphukan Gold Medal every year since 1999 to inspire India’s brave soldiers and to commemorate his valour.

Guinness World Record made

45 lakh entries were received

Submissions received in over 23 languages

Entries received even in Bodo, Nepali, Sanskrit, and Santhali
GIVING A NEW LEASE OF LIFE TO FARMERS

The Prime Minister, in the 99th episode of ‘Mann ki Baat’ mentioned a special vegetable grown in Dal Lake, i.e., Lotus Stem, or Kanal Kakdi, or Nadru (as known in Kashmir). The demand for Nadru of Kashmir is continuously increasing. In light of this demand, farmers cultivating Nadru in Dal Lake have formed an FPO. Today these farmers have started exporting their Nadru to foreign countries.

DAL LAKE LOTUS STEM FPO

Around 250 farmers cultivating Nadru in Dal Lake have come together to form the ‘Dal Lake Lotus Stem FPO’. The FPO has provided them a platform to collectively market their produce, access credit and insurance, and share knowledge and information about farming practices. The FPO is also providing the farmers access to better markets, storage facilities, and processing technologies, which in turn helps them to get better prices for their produce.

This newly-formed FPO has proved to be an important tool for promoting the economic empowerment of farmers in Kashmir and is helping to improve the livelihoods of thousands of farmers in the region. It recently exported two consignments of Nadru to the United Arab Emirates.

NADRU

Nadru or lotus stems are harvested from the roots of the lotus plants that grow in Dal Lake. Nadru is used in a variety of Kashmiri recipes, such as curries, stews, pakoras, and salads. In addition to its culinary use, Nadru is also believed to have several health benefits being a good source of fibre, vitamins and minerals. It strengthens immunity, regulates blood pressure, improves digestion, helps in weight management, and prevents water retention.

WHAT IS AN FPO?

Farmer Producer Organisation (FPO) is a farmers collective for the benefit of farmers. From seed to market, the aim is to make farmers prosper. Under the Central Sector Scheme of Formation and Promotion of 10,000 FPOs, a professional agency, Cluster Based Business Organization (CBBBO) prepares a business plan with participation of farmer members. The plan covers the entire value chain, from production to value addition, processing, and exports. With FPOs, farmers today are turning into agripreneurs.
Dal Lake Lotus Stem FPO  
Changing Fortunes of Farmers

Mohammad Abbas Bhat  
Managing Director, Lotus Stem FPO

Our ancestors were into the work of lotus stem cultivation. I started doing this work after failing to get a job. I thought, “Why don’t we do something of our own and become self-employed”. Thereafter, I decided to establish a Lotus Stem FPO. It was clear to me that through this FPO we could be self-employed. Besides, we would be able to provide some benefits to our farmer brothers as well.

After getting the registration done, we dispatched two consignments to Dubai. It directly benefitted us as there’s no middleman in the process. As a result, more and more farmers joined us. Presently, 250 farmers are associated with us. Ever since we started exporting to Dubai, our profits are increasing. This has motivated more farmers to show inclination towards us. By the next year, our target is to bring 1,000-1,500 farmers into our fold.

Many farmers are now aware of this initiative, thanks to the Prime Minister’s mention of our Lotus Stem FPO in the ‘Mann ki Baat’ programme. He has applauded our FPO, and I am overjoyed about that.

We intend to engage in post-harvest activities in the future. Last time, the DC had also visited here and spoke with the farmers. He said that he will connect us with hotels and hospitals as well, so that we can promote this 100 per cent organic product. We want it to be exported more and we appeal to the Government to provide us maximum market accessibility outside India as well as within the country so that our products reach every corner of the world.

Lotus is our national flower. I am very happy that lotus stem has been mentioned in ‘Mann ki Baat’ and our farmers are also elated with what Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said about it. This will create more market opportunities for us, and we will be able to take our products to every corner of India. I would like to appeal to our fellow farmers to come forward and join us and walk shoulder to shoulder to help this FPO grow further and become more profitable and fruitful. The more farmers join in, more will they contribute to our collective economic prosperity and stability.
LAVERDNER FARMERS OF J&K

PURPLE REVOLUTION

Jammu and Kashmir is witnessing a ‘purple revolution’. Moving away from conventional crops, the farmers, under Aroma Mission, are cultivating lavender, a purple-bloomed aromatic shrub. The Prime Minister, in ‘Mann ki Baat’, mentioned Bhaderwah town in Doda district, which alone has over 2,500 farmers cultivating lavender. In 2022, the town saw India’s first-ever lavender festival. Lavender has also been designated as ‘Doda brand product’, the district being the birthplace of India’s purple revolution.

WHAT IS AROMA MISSION?

Council of Scientific & Industrial Research’s (CSIR) Aroma Mission, under the Ministry of Science & Technology, aims to boost cultivation of plants like lavender which have aromatic medicinal properties. The objective is to move from imported aromatic oils to homegrown varieties. Under the mission, first-time farmers are given free saplings. Introduced in 2016 to J&K, lavender has found home even in each of the 20 districts of the Union Territory.

Essential oils are the main economic ingredient of the aromatic plants which are extracted by employing distillation units. CSIR, along with Indian Institute of Integrative Medicines, Jammu, has installed 50 distillation units at different locations across J&K under the mission.

WHY LAVENDER?

Lavender is drought-tolerant and grows best in low to moderately-fertile soils.

A single lavender plant bears flowers for 15 years.

Lavender is a high-demand product. Oil extracted from the flowers costs at least ₹10k/litre in the market.

The oil is known for its aroma and medicinal value. It is used in soaps, incense sticks, cosmetics, perfumes, & air fresheners.

THE AROMA OF SUCCESS

Lavender cultivation has employed about 5,000 farmers & entrepreneurs in the UT.

It has increased the income of small and marginal farmers and spurred the development of agriculture-based startups.

It has significantly contributed to women empowerment. Many young female entrepreneurs have started small-scale businesses through the value addition of lavender oil, hydrosol, and flowers.

It has lowered the import of essential and aromatic oils.
Farmers of Jammu & Kashmir Becoming Self-reliant with Aroma Mission

IIM-Jammu is a laboratory of the Aroma Mission of Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), the apex scientific body under the Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India. Here, we work on intensive crops of different medicinal aromatic plants.

When the Prime Minister gave the target of doubling the income of the farmers in 2014, our scientists did a lot of research and thought deeply on it. We found that there were some aromatic crops that have untapped potential, but till date no special efforts were made to take them to farmers. That is when we decided to make our farmers aware about these options and as part of this endeavour, the Aroma Mission was started in 2017.

Today, as you can see, in areas like Bhaderwah, which was mentioned by the Prime Minister in the 99th episode of ‘Mann Ki Baat’, the farmers there are planting lavender and are reaping huge benefits. Today, this is being called the ‘Purple Revolution’ all over the world.

We provided over 35 lakh lavender plants free of cost to over 2,000 farmers. We imparted special training for skill development of farmers and connected them with the industries. We installed distillation units at 50 different places for them. Six years of our sustained efforts, sheer hard work of farmers, due support from the Ministry of Science & Technology and positive encouragement from Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh finally bore the fruit.

Moving forward, we are training more farmers on how to cultivate lavender so that they can earn more income. A farmer, who used to earn Rs 2,000 to 2,500 on one kanal, is now earning Rs 90,000 on nine kanals. Now, the farmers are also launching their own products in the market, both on online and local markets. Many new young entrepreneurs are also getting associated with it. This is a huge success.

I would like to thank the Prime Minister for mentioning the Aroma Mission in the 99th ‘Mann Ki Baat’. Because of this, there is a lot of happiness among the farmers and the scientists are also very excited to involve more and more farmers in this mission.

Dr. Sumeet Gairola
Nodal Scientist (CSIR-Aroma Mission)
“We started this Aroma Mission in 2017 with the support of the Government of India. Five CSIRs are working under this Mission where farmers, especially the marginal ones, are supported by providing them with quality planting material of these aromatic crops. We began cultivating these aromatic crops in different districts of Doda, for example Bhaderwah, which is today known for its Purple Revolution. The farmers are really happy as their income has increased two to four fold.

Besides quality planting material, we provide all technical know-how to these farmers. We conduct demonstrations for them on the many field stations of CSIR and make them skilled. We conduct awareness programmes regarding the cultivation of these aromatic crops. Before the Aroma Mission, the marginal farmers, who used to cultivate traditional crops, could not get profit from their lands. However, for the past six years, we have observed that these farmers have been able to generate a better earnings.

At the moment, we are producing only essential oil and selling it to different industries in the country and abroad. The quality of the oil that we are producing is at par with the international standard. I would like to appeal to the youth to opt for this sector as it has great potential, both medicinally and cosmetically.

Recently in ‘Mann ki Baat’, the Prime Minister appreciated our efforts. This is a boost for all the members of the Mission who have worked hard for the last six years towards the development of this sector and continue to do so.”

“I started lavender cultivation in 2010. Before that I used to cultivate maize. I started with planting lavender in two kanals. At that time there was a risk whether the cultivation would be beneficial or not. However, after two years the profit I got was 4-6 times that of maize cultivation. I started planting lavender in my other lands as well and gradually started my nursery too. I planted lavender all over the 10 kanals of land that I had. Only then did people believe, and the people of my village joined me in lavender cultivation. The Aroma Mission, started in 2017, provided free planting material to the farmers. When 500-600 people joined it, I was called to Delhi. I was awarded the National Award in 2020, due to which more people became aware. Part 2 of Aroma Mission started from 2020, in which we were able to add 2,500 people to our team from March 2020 to March 2023, including women. Modi ji’s slogan of Atmanirbhar Bharat is being fulfilled. Starting with 2 kg of aromatic oil, today I am able to distribute 15 quintals of oil. I am very happy that the Prime Minister has mentioned Bhaderwah in ‘Mann ki Baat’. The whole country and the world is watching that we have made the Purple Revolution a success.”

“Initially, I found no takers for my ideas and it seemed a herculean task to switch from the cultivation of traditional maize and paddy crops to the new way of farming. But I kept my resolve and travelled extensively to the lengths and breadths of the Chenab Region to find takers for my ideas. I even offered and assured farmers that I will bear all the losses if they don’t find cultivating aromatic crops profitable. Farmers slowly but steadily started switching from traditional crops and in 2016, the Ministry of S&T through CSIR-IIM Jammu started the Aroma Mission, and the initiative started gaining momentum. As a result, today 2,500 families are successfully growing exotic lavender and Bhaderwah has become the leading producer of lavender in India. I always wanted to utilize locally available natural resources to create jobs and provide profitable livelihood avenues for the small and marginal farmers.”
PM: Women achievers are driving dreams of India

New Delhi: Citing “maid shakti” (women power) as the oxygen of a developed India, PM Narendra Modi on Sunday highlighted empowering stories of women leading from the front in diverse spheres. From Asia’s first loco pilot Surekha Yadav to the women director and producer duo of the documentary “The Elephant Queen”, those who brought laurels to the country by winning an Oscar, the PM said all such women are giving energy to India’s dreams.

Highlighting that women are at the forefront even in the most difficult of terrains in the country, the PM spoke of “braveheart Captain Shiva Chauhan of the Indian Army. He highlighted that she has become the first woman officer to be posted in Kashmir.

The PM described the victory of two women legislators as “a new beginning in Nagaland”. He spoke of his meeting with the “brave daughte rs” who went to help the people of Turkey after the earthquake. All of them were part of the NDRF contingent.

चांद की भाषा: क्यूंकि भरोसा बनाने के लिए देश में एक नीति पर ही रहा काम: मोदी
Rising Kashmir

Mann ki baat: Kashmir’s Nadru is on high demand in country: PM

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PM Modi ने ‘मन की बात’ में नारी शक्ति को सराहा, बोले- भारत के विकास में है महिलाओं की अहम भूमिका

अमर उजाला

मन की बात: कश्मीर के नंदेश और लेवेंडर का पीएम ने किया जिक्र, कहा- किसान गढ़ रहे सफलता के नए आयाम

99th Mann Ki Baat: कोई है यह अंदाज़ी भारतीय महिला सैनिक, जो सियासी में संभाल रही मोदी, पीएम मोदी ने मन की बात में किया जिक्र
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