

VISIT

BY

Honourable Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India to Jaffna

Meeting at Library Auditorium, Jaffna Library, Jaffna

On 14th March 2015 at 1.30 pm.

Chief Minister's Speech

Gurur Brahma ...

Honourable Narendra Modi, the Prime Minister of India, Honourable Pallihakara, Governor of the Northern Province , Your Excellency Mr.Y.K.Singha, the High Commissioner for India in Sri Lanka, Honourable Minister Mr.Karu Jayasuriya, Honourable Minister Mr. Mangala Samaraweera, Honourable Minister Mr.Laxman Kiriella, Shri Ajit Doval, National Security Adviser, Dr.S.Jai Shanker, Foreign Secretary of India, distinguished high officials from India and Sri Lanka, my dear brothers and sisters!

I am no doubt flattered that I have been blessed with the task of welcoming you Sir, the Prime Minister of Bharath , whom I had wanted to meet several years ago even while your Honour was the Chief Minister of Gujarat. You were known then to have been an excellent administrator. You transformed Gujarat into a successful State. You had brought international recognition to Gujarat and conceived the Gujarat model for development, which I referred to in my congratulatory message to you Sir in May 2014. Your excellent leadership and people centered approach was possible due to the nature of center-periphery framework and content and quantum of devolution that is prevalent under the Indian constitution, which is a Union, secular by design.

Your achievements in Gujarat in building a highly responsive public administration system to ensure women empowerment, infra-structure development, economic and industry development initiatives have given us great inspiration. You have shown us a model for us to draw lessons from.

You are empowering each state in India to craft their own success stories by untangling the burdening bureaucracy, fighting corruption and embarking on national scale programs. You are in effect on a mission to unease the potential of every Indian

regardless of their class, creed or gender. No wonder you referred to your firm belief in co-operative federalism yesterday in Parliament.

Needless to say the relationship between our two Countries is quite long and ancient. The Bridge of Rama connects our two Countries close to where you Sir, had unveiled a Plaque today inaugurating the Talaimannar Pier Railway Station. It is the desire of our citizens that close collaboration continue between **our peoples** in the field of trade, commerce, business, Information Technology and other Technologies, education, sport, culture and many other fields.

Your nation has for long welcomed the persecuted, the dispossessed, the war affected and the stateless. From the Jews escaping the Romans 2000 years ago, to Syrian Christians escaping religious persecution in 4 century AD to the modern day Tibetans and nearly 100 thousand of our own have sought and found sanctuary in your nation. I take this opportunity to offer our profound thanks to your people for your long and continuous humanitarian gestures.

You have Sir, risen from humble beginnings with sheer commitment and determination to the highest office in India despite determined and formidable opposition against you over decades. We are aware that it was your yearning to serve the people of India and to create an India to be taken note of in the 21 century that has ensured your ascendancy to power. We have no doubt Sir, that you will usher in political, economic, social and cultural renaissance in your Country. Your forthrightness in wanting the full implementation of the 13th Amendment when Mr.Rajapakse met you on your ascension to power was a step in the right direction though the path to ultimate resolution and settlement is going to be long and arduous. Thirteenth Amendment can never be the final solution.

You have Sir, after assuming office as Prime Minister dismantled centralized planning process to facilitate greater performance and productivity among the States in the Indian Union. We are no doubt happy you are yourself a proponent and an advocate of devolution. That exactly is what we are agitating for in Sri Lanka.

The current 13th Amendment Framework and the existing Sri Lankan constitutional architecture that had evolved since the first Republican Constitution of 1972 without the consent and participation of Tamils of North and East of our Country, poses formidable challenges and hindrances in realizing the quantum of devolution required to fulfill the needs and aspirations of the Tamil Speaking People of North and East of Sri Lanka. Indian Constitution provides for the facilitation of sustainable development, internal security, law and order, policing and protection pertaining to lands and so on within the State. Our inability to function in our Province to the extent you were able to help Gujarat under the Indian Constitution needs to be understood.

Especially the inadequacies of the Thirteenth Amendment. Even when the Indo-Lanka Accord of 1987 was signed there was a historic communication by our leaders to the then Indian Prime Minister, late Shri Rajiv Gandhi on 28 October 1987, pointing out

hollow and inadequate the 13th Amendment had been. They sought the then Indian Government's intervention on behalf of the Tamils of North East Province of Sri Lanka. When Indo Lanka Accord was negotiated ostensibly as a solution to the Tamil Question, India whilst addressing Indian Security and Strategic concerns, stood as a guarantor on behalf of the Tamils of North-East. That situation prevails in North-East Provinces in Sri Lanka even today. We need the services of a guarantor and it is our considered view that the Government of India under your stewardship is best suited for this role!.

The emaciated Thirteenth Amendment has not brought the required and expected devolution to the North and East. Even today parallel administrative structures exist one directed by the Centre and the other by the Province despite the appointment of an amiable Governor!

Our former President in May 2009 released a joint statement with the UN Secretary General during latter's visit to Sri Lanka relating to the core issues and post war context and the causes of the conflict. Later in January 2010 he promised Mr. Manmohan Singh, your predecessor, that he will go beyond the Thirteenth Amendment. Hence, it is time that we take note of the commitment expressed by the then Sri Lankan Head of State, consider our post war context, needs, priorities and concerns and move forward with the active support of your friendly Country under your leadership.

We seek positive action to be taken to resolve our problems. May I suggest Sir, that there be talks among the Indian Government, Sri Lankan Government and the NPC and the EPC without taking refuge under the current constitutional provisions and protocols to find ways of resolving the central problem of the Tamil speaking people in an innovative and creative manner bearing in mind the root causes of our ethnic conflict and post war needs and priorities of the people of the Northern and Eastern Provinces? We seek justice and fair play to be established in the political arena and the constitutional framework in Sri Lanka to live with equity, equality and dignity.

We have many requests to make. But it is not appropriate for me to present our want list when we are happily welcoming you into our midst. Suffice to say a concerted effort on the part of the Central and Provincial Administrations of our Country with yours would no doubt bring alleviation to the vast numbers of War affected families and individuals in our part of this Country. Even though security concerns should be left to the Central Administration in any Country it should not transgress the limits of protection of the Country to a protracted pursuit of purposeful military occupation with political undertones in place. I could give statistics of such purposeful occupations. But we are here to welcome you Sir, not to burden you with a testament of our trials and tribulations. Let us hand over to you today separately our humble requests to rebuild our post war Province.

I fervently believe that it is during your time in office with your leadership that we will finally be able to resolve longstanding political conflict, restore peace, security and stability in the lives of our people. I thank all of you for your patient hearing.

Loga samastha sugino bhavanthu!

Justice C.V.Wigneswaran

Chief Minister,

Northern Province