Prime Minister's remarks at the Aditya Birla Group
Golden Jubilee Celebrations

November 03, 2019
Shri Kumar Mangalam Birla Ji, Chairman of Aditya Birla Group,
Respected dignitaries of the Kingdom of Thailand,
Members of Birla family and management,
Business Leaders from Thailand and India,
Friends,
Namaskar,
Savadi ख्रप ।

We have gathered here to celebrate the Suvarna Jayanti or Golden Jubilee of the Aditya Birla Group in Suvarna Bhumi, Thailand. This is truly a special occasion. I congratulate the team of the Aditya Birla Group. We just heard Mr. Kumar Mangalam Birla talk about the commendable work the Group is doing in Thailand. It is creating opportunities and prosperity for many in this nation.

Friends,

We are here in Thailand, with whom India has strong cultural linkages. And, we are marking fifty years of a leading Indian industrial house in this nation. This reaffirms my belief that commerce and culture have inherent powers to unite. For centuries, monks and merchants ventured out to places far and wide. They have travelled far from home and mixed with many cultures. May the bonds of culture and the zeal of commerce keep bringing the world closer in the times to come.

Friends,

I am eager to give you a picture of some positive changes happening in India today. I say this with full confidence- this is the best time to be in India! In today’s India, many things are rising and many are falling. ‘Ease of Doing Business’ is rising and so is ‘Ease of Living.’ FDI is rising. Our Forest Cover is rising. The number of patents and trademarks are rising. Productivity and efficiency are rising. Pace of infrastructure creation is rising. Number of people getting top quality healthcare is rising. At the same time, Number of taxes are falling. Tax rates are falling. Red-tapism is falling. Cronyism is falling. Corruption is falling. The corrupt are running for cover. Middlemen in the corridors of power are history.
Friends,

India has seen many success stories in the last five years in various sectors. The reason for this is not only the Governments. India has stopped working in a routine, bureaucratic manner. Transformative changes are arising due to ambitious missions undertaken. When these ambitious missions are energised by the partnership of people, they become vibrant mass movements. And, these mass movements achieve miracles. Things that were supposed to be previously impossible have now become possible. Coverage for basic necessities of life have reached almost hundred percent. Good examples for this are - Jan Dhan Yojana that has ensured near total financial inclusion. And, Swachh Bharat Mission, where sanitation coverage has reached nearly all households.

Friends,

In India we faced a big problem when it came to service delivery- leakage. The poor suffered most due to this. You would be shocked to know that for years, money was spent on the poor which did not really reach the poor. Our Government ended this culture thanks to DBT. DBT stands for direct benefit transfer. DBT has ended the culture of middlemen and inefficiency. It has left little scope for error. DBT has saved over Twenty Billion Dollars so far. You would have seen LED lights in homes. You know that they are more efficient and energy conserving. But do you know its impact in India? We have distributed more than 360 million LED bulbs in last few years. We have changed 10 million streetlights to LED lights. Through this, we have saved about three point five billion dollars. Carbon emissions have reduced as well. I firmly believe- money saved is money earned. Energy saved is energy generated. This money is now being used to empower millions through other equally effective programmes.

Friends,

In today’s India, the contribution of the hard working tax payer is cherished. One area where we have done significant work is taxation. I am happy that India is one of the most people friendly tax regimes. We are committed to further improving it even more. In the last 5 years, we have lowered the tax burden on the middle class considerably. We are now starting faceless tax assessment so that there is no scope for discretion or harassment. You would already have heard of India’s decision to cut the corporate tax rates. Our GST has fulfilled the dream of economic integration of India. We want to work towards making it even more people friendly. All of what I have said just now makes India one of the world's most attractive economies for investment.

Friends,
India received 286 billion US Dollar FDI in the last five years. This is almost half of the total FDI in India in the last twenty years. 90% of this came through automatic approvals. And 40% of this is Green Field Investment. This shows that investors are taking a long term call on India. India’s growth trajectory is reflected in several ratings. We are among the top 10 FDI destinations as per UNCTAD Moved up twenty four places on the Global Innovation Index of WIPO in five years. But, there are two of them I want to talk about specially. India has jumped 79 places in the World Bank’s ‘Ease of Doing Business’ rankings in five years. From 142 in 2014 we are 63 in 2019. This is a massive achievement. For the third year in row, we are among the top ten reformers. The variables for doing business in India are many. We are a large and diverse nation. There are the Central, State and local governments. In such a context, a directional shift shows our commitment to reforms. The people and government came together to make the business environment better.

**Friends,**

The other is India’s improved ranking in the World Economic Forum's Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index. From 65 in 2013 we are ranked 34 in 2019. This jump is among the biggest. The number of foreign tourist arrivals have also gone up by 50%. All of you know very well that a tourist will not go to a place until he or she finds comfort, convenience and safety. Thus, if we are getting substantially more tourists, it means that our efforts on the ground are bearing fruit. The fact that India has better roads, better air connectivity, better cleanliness and better law and order is bringing the world to India.

**Friends,**

These rankings come after looking at the impact of the transformation. These rankings are not a forecast. They are a manifestation of what has already happened on the ground.

**Friends,**

India is now pursuing another dream - to become a five trillion dollar economy. When my Government took over in 2014, India’s GDP was about 2 trillion dollars. In 65 years, 2 trillion. But in just 5 years, we increased it to nearly 3 trillion dollars. This convinces me that the dream of a 5 trillion dollar economy will soon become a reality. We are going to invest One Point Five Trillion Dollars for next generation infrastructure.

**Friends,**
If there is one thing I am specially proud of, it is India’s talented and skilled human capital. No wonder India is among the world’s largest start-up eco-systems. India is one of the largest and fastest-growing markets for digital consumers. There are a billion smart phone users and more than half a billion internet subscribers. We are keeping pace with Industry Four Point Zero and working actively to adapt technology for fulfilling development and governance needs. With all these advantages, we aspire to emerge as a Global manufacturing Hub.

Friends,

‘Thailand Four Point Zero’ focuses on transforming Thailand into a value-based economy, built on science, technology, innovation and creativity. It is also compatible with and complimentary to India’s priorities. India’s initiatives such as Digital India, Skill India, Ganga Rejuvenation Project, Swachh Bharat Mission, Smart Cities and Jal Jeevan Mission offer good opportunities for partnership.

Friends,

When India prospers, the world prospers. Our vision for India’s development is such that it also leads to a better planet. When we are looking at giving top quality and affordable healthcare to 500 million Indians through Ayushman Bharat, it will naturally lead to a healthier planet. When we decide to eliminate TB in 2025, five long years before the global target of 2030, it will surely strengthen the global fight against TB. At the same time, we are sharing our accomplishments and best practices with the world too. Our South Asia Satellite is helping so many people in our region. Especially students and fishermen.

Friends,

In the spirit of our Act East Policy, we are paying special attention to enhance connectivity with this region. Direct connectivity between ports on Thailand’s west coast and ports on India’s east coast—such as Chennai, Visakhapatnam and Kolkata will enhance our economic partnership. We must take advantage of all these favourable factors. We must take advantage of our geographical Proximity, like our Forefathers did.

Friends,

Given that our economies are capable and complement each other, Given the commonality in our
cultures, Given the natural goodwill for each other, I have no doubt that we can enhance our business partnership for a win-win situation. I would like to end by saying: For investment and easy business, come to India. To innovate and starting up, come to India. To experience some of the best tourist sites and warm hospitality of people, come to India. India awaits you with open arms.

धन्यवाद।
खोब खुन खप।
Thank you very much.