



SPEECH
OF
HIS EXCELLENCY GEN JJ SINGH,
PVSM, AVSM, VSM (RETD),
GOVERNOR OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH
ON THE NRI INSTITUTE'S FUNCTION ON
PRESENTATION OF AWARD TO
H.E. RT HON SIR ANEROOD JUGNAUTH
G.C.S.K.,K.C.M.G.,Q.C.
THE PRESIDENT OF MAURITIUS
ON
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AT
SPEAKER'S HALL CONSTITUTIONAL CLUB,
RAFI MARG, NEW DELHI

I begin with our Hon'ble Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh's words spoken at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, Chennai, on January 8, 2009. Quote "We are proud of the achievements of the people of Indian origin around the world. More than any other people, the people of India and of Indian origin know the meaning of tolerance and the art of living together regardless of caste, creed, religion or language." Unquote.

His Excellency, The Right Honorable Sir Anerood Jugnauth, President of the Republic of Mauritius, Dr S K Pachauri Chairman NRI Institute, Shri Jagmohan Singh, Hon'ble Member of Parliament Shri Tarlochan Singh, Former Governor of Tamil Nadu Dr Bhishma Narain Singh, Mauritius High Commissioner to India H.E. Mookhesswar Choonee, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

An overseas community serves as an important 'bridge' to access knowledge, expertise, resources and markets for the development of our country. India has the second largest overseas diaspora with an estimated 25 million Overseas Indians spread across over 110 countries in the world. Though they live in different countries, speak different languages, practice different faiths and are engaged in different vocations, they are bound together by the common thread of a shared culture. In every part of the world the overseas Indian community is recognised and respected for its hard work, discipline, law abiding nature and for successfully integrating with the local community.

Overseas Indians have transformed the economies and have come to occupy a pride of place in the countries of destination and have contributed

very significantly to knowledge, innovation and prosperity.

Yet, it is difficult to speak of just one great Indian Diaspora. The overseas Indian community is the result of different waves of migration over hundreds of years driven by a variety of reasons- trade, commerce, colonialism and globalisation. Its early experiences make up a saga of trials, tribulations and the eventual triumph due to determination and hard work. In the last three decades of the 20th century, the character of migration began to change and a 'new Diaspora' led by high skill professionals moving to the western world and semi-skilled contract workers moving to the Gulf, West and South East Asia emerged.

The overseas Indian community thus constitutes a diverse, heterogeneous and eclectic

global community representing different regions, languages, cultures and faiths. The common thread that binds them together is the idea of India and its intrinsic values. Overseas Indians

comprise People of Indian Origin and Non Resident Indians, and today, they are amongst the best educated, industrious and successful communities in the world. This year another feather in the Indian scientific community's cap was added, Venkatraman Ramakrishnan, an Indian-born scientist, along with American Thomas A. Steitz and Israeli Ada E. Yonath, was awarded the Nobel Prize for Chemistry 2009. The award was bestowed upon them for showing the world exactly how information contained in the DNA is translated into life—a process that has benefited the fight against infectious diseases.

Overseas Indians share a strong bond with their country of origin. This is reflected in their language, cultures and traditions that have been kept alive, often over centuries, and continue to be vibrant and unique even today. It is now being witnessed in the growing popularity of Indian culture, films, dance, music, arts, and food on foreign shores, the strong surge in remittances back home. The return of many of them to live and work in India and in their increasing engagement with India's development is indeed commendable. The relationship between India and its overseas community is growing, new partnerships evolving and newer multi-faceted dimensions being explored. India remains the highest recipient of remittances from its overseas community. India received US \$ 43.5 billion in remittances in 2008.

It is my unique privilege to honour His Excellency, The Right Honorable Sir Anerood Jugnauth, President of the Republic of Mauritius , who stands before us as an iconic political personality in the history of Mauritius. He has been a torch-bearer of democratic aspirations in Mauritius.

India and Mauritius share a special relationship. An overwhelming 70 % majority of the Mauritian population consists of people with their roots in India. Sir Anerood, right through his public life has been a beacon of their hopes and aspirations. He has been elected Prime Minister of Mauritius on five occasions, and has been incessant in the use of his august office to augment the cultural, social and commercial links between India and Mauritius. The economic initiatives taken by his Government have facilitated the enhancement of FDI in India which accounted for 43%

of cumulative foreign fund inflow into India, according to the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion.

In his distinguished political career spanning close to four decades, he has served as Prime Minister from 1982 to 1995 for four consecutive terms and he later became prime minister again after the 2000 elections for his 5th term. He had held the honourable position of the President of Mauritius since 2003. His Excellency is credited with the legacy of Mauritius' "economic miracle" of the 1980s - a set of liberal policies such as the creation of a duty-free trade zone and establishing Mauritius as a leader in textiles production - which allowed the island to develop into an economic powerhouse in the region. It is a fitting tribute to his outstanding leadership, dedication and acumen that Mauritius today is considered one amongst the best-governed countries in Africa,

according to the Ibrahim Index of African Governance, which measures governance using a number of different variables. . He was honoured by H.E A P J Abdul Kalam with Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards for his continued support to India's causes and concerns and for strengthening India's relationship with Mauritius in 2003, in the founding year of these awards.

The Indian diaspora reflects exceptional talents, born, brought up and educated in India, but nurtured and honed abroad, excelling in their chosen pursuits with extraordinary results! India provides a solid base in terms of world-class education. And these pioneers go on to put to test their skills and ideas in crucibles far removed from home and achieve great success. Indeed, these exceptional Indian minds have helped build and nurture some of those pioneering crucibles and

laboratories of frontiers research and knowledge in universities and institutions on both sides of the Atlantic.

Author Mark Twain, for example, noted in *Following the Equator*, his personal travelogue, "You gather the idea that Mauritius was made first and then heaven, and that heaven was copied after Mauritius". On a similar canvas of nature, I represent the easternmost frontier state of India; Arunachal Pradesh rightly called as land of the rising sun. The outside world does not know much about this land of enchanting beauty and peace loving, patriotic and sincere tribal people. Arunachal Pradesh is the largest among all the North-eastern states. We have the longest international borders of approximately 1862 kms. Most of the border areas are still in the vicious circle of poverty, under-developed, and isolated

because of their remoteness and rugged terrain, which has made connectivity a major challenge. The state is home to 26 major tribes and more than 100 sub tribes living in 3857 villages spread across 83743 sq kms. Interestingly, all Arunachalees are fluent hindi speakers and it is their link language. My hindi has improved considerably since I become the Governor of this State. The population density at 13 per sq kms is the least in the country, and in some of the districts like Dibang Valley, it is as low as one person per sq km. The state is on a path of development and will become the power house of the Nation in next decade or so, with an estimated capacity of 55,000 MW of hydel power. It also has immense potential for eco tourism.

I take this opportunity to invite you to our State and also support the socio-economic efforts of NGO's for the cause of Arunachalees.

I compliment the organizers of the Institute for bringing Indians and non resident Indians on a common platform in India and abroad, and for providing them an opportunity to contribute to the socio economic development of India.

The NRI institute a Non-Profit NGO registered body of People of Indian Origin was founded in the Year 1989. It has been doing a yeomen's service by providing a credible platform for the Indians living in India and abroad. It promotes and facilitates NRI investments in India and paves the way in this regard with an effective approach towards the Government and other authorities. I am grateful to Dr S K Pachauri

and his team for bringing us all together for this dignified function and for its efficient conduct.

I would fail in my duties, if I do not place on record the extremely valuable contributions made by each and every distinguished member of the Indian diaspora present here this evening, and I wish you greater happiness and prosperity, and success in your endeavours to bring your country of residence and India closer. Well done my friends, we salute your achievements.

Jai Hind