

Present on the dais, my colleague in the Council of Ministers, Shri B. L. Verma ji, Dr. Guarco ji, President of International Cooperative Alliance Global and all the dignitaries present on the stage who made such a special contribution in the Cooperative Sector, their names also shall be mentioned, but I am not mentioning their names as lot of time has already elapsed. But the Presidents of all these institutions, who are sitting here, have done tremendous work of taking the Cooperative Movement of the country to a point where it is today.

Today, I convey my greetings to all the leaders of more than 2100 cooperative organizations who have come from every corner of the country, all the cooperative brothers, sisters and all the workers of cooperative sector present here and connected with this program online at many places across the country.

Today, I would like to start with the birth anniversary of Pandit Deendayal ji because the original source of inspiration for many workers like me to join the cooperative is the policy of Sh. Deendayal ji. Welfare of the poor cannot be imagined other than cooperatives and when there was thought of development for the first time in the country, then the first person who talked about it was Pandit Deendayal ji. Today is his birth anniversary. This is the day to get inspiration for lakhs and crores of workers like me, I am very happy that this Cooperative Conference is being held on this auspicious day.

My dear friends, first of all, after 75 years of independence and at a time when the cooperative movement was needed the most, then the Hon'ble Prime Minister of the country formed an independent Cooperation Ministry, thus on behalf of all the cooperative workers and all of you, I congratulate and thank him very much. I request all of you to stand up in your places and give a round of applause and convey our gratitude to our honourable Prime Minister. Once again on behalf of crores of cooperative workers across the country, on behalf of the leaders of the cooperatives, I want to thank the honourable Prime Minister and I want to offer a special thanks to him for giving me the

opportunity to become the first Cooperation Minister of the country as this has been the subject of my interest. It is a matter of great pride for me. Today, when we are standing here and a new beginning to give strength, momentum and direction to the cooperative movement, at this time I want to say that the Prime Minister has established this Ministry, I being the Minister of Cooperation, want to convey to the leaders and workers of the cooperatives across the country that the time of neglect has ended and the time of priority has begun, Let's all take forward the cooperative by staying together. Cooperation can make a very important contribution in the development of the country. The contribution of cooperatives in the development of the country is still there, but within many dimensions, we are yet to reach those dimensions, we will have to think it afresh, we will have to outline of a new way. The scope of our work will have to be increased, stability will have to be brought in the work, transparency will also have to be brought in the work and the cooperative movement will have to be promoted by mingling the spirit of co-operation within the work like nature and culture. Millions of farmers, underprivileged, backward, downtrodden (dalit), poor, neglected women of the country, the path of their development can be only and only be achieved through Cooperative and there is no other way. Many people raise question about the relevance of Cooperatives, they feel that the cooperative movement has become irrelevant. I would like to say from the very core of my heart and with a lot of humbleness that if the cooperative movement was the most relevant ever then it is now and many heights is yet to be scaled. By connecting every village with cooperative, making every village prosperous with the mantra of SAHKAAR SE SAMRIDDHI and thus making the country prosperous by contact with prosperous village, this will be the ultimate role of cooperative movement. The word cooperative is made up of two words 'Co' and 'Work'. By working together in one direction in a fraternal spirit with a common goal is called Cooperation. I always say that the strength of crores of people of the country, all of us working in the cooperative sector

may be very less, maybe our economic power will also be less, but our number is so huge that if we come together once through cooperative, then a tremendous force will be generated which no one can beat and the time has arrived for the cooperative movement to make a new beginning with confidence. Modi ji has given a new mantra of prosperity through cooperation (SAHKAAR SE SAMRIDDHI) and he has set a target of 5 trillion dollar economy. I want to assure Modi ji today that the cooperative sector also will leave no stone unturned in achieving your goal of 5 trillion dollar economy.

Friends, I believe that the strength that we get from cooperatives will be useful towards making the country prosperous. The cooperative movement will not only help in the progress of the rural society of India but will also conceptualize new social capital. There are many interpretations of capital around the world but we are the people who have lived for ten thousand years. There are people who carry the culture for ten thousand years. The concept of social capital, the idea of social capital and the culture of social capital will take our cooperative movement far ahead. In many countries, cooperatives come into existence by law, and in many countries, cooperatives come into existence through the constitution of small PACS and other cooperative societies. This system is necessary in India, as Cooperatives has blended in the nature and culture of the people of India. It is not a borrowed concept, it is a concept manifested by our own work and therefore the cooperative movement can never be irrelevant in India.

Friends, I have been associated with the cooperative movement for a long time for about 25 years. I have worked from the smallest unit to the state level units. I have seen that in the times of crisis, governments issue circulars. The circular needs to be monitored but our cooperative movement does not wait for any circular of the governments, when there is a flood, then the village PACS stand up and work to feed everyone, it works towards providing shelter to them, the

cooperative bank in the district does not worry about how much profit will be spent, does not worry about how much dividend will be reduced, whether there is a famine, whether there is a cyclone, whether there is a flood or torrential rain, all stand united for relief work. The cooperative movements have contributed towards bringing the country out of many difficult situations in this time of need. Cooperatives are not new to India. Since the year 1904 and till now, India's cooperative movement has seen many milestones, we have seen many ups and downs, sometimes we fell, sometimes we recovered, sometimes we moved forward very fast, but this movement did not stop and my request to all of you is that this movement should not stop. Today, on this occasion, I remember many people like Madhavrao Godbole, Vaikuntabhai Mehta, Tribhuvan Das Patel, Vitthalrao Vikhe Patil, Yashwantrao Chavan, Dhananjay Rao Gadgil and Laxman Rao Inamdar, who gave strength to the cooperative movement and after paying my homage to them, I pray that their blessings will give us a new impetus to take this movement forward.

Friends, even today I meet many people, people from the corporate sector, journalists and also people from different political parties meet me and ask me clearly whether the cooperative movement is relevant. Whether its relevance remains even today, what will it prove? Even today I want to tell you some of the good practice of cooperative movement. As all of you know that I come from Gujarat state. I want to talk about Amul. Amul was born out of the vision of Sardar Patel. In the year 1946, the British made a decision that farmers would have to sell their milk to a private company compulsorily, there was an movement against it. In Kheda district, Sardar Patel told Tribhuvanbhai that until you made arrangements to sell milk, the movement against it would never be successful and then there was a beginning of Amul. Under the guidance of Sardar Patel, Tribhuvanbhai Patel registered two Primary Village Milk Producer Societies and 80 farmers only 80 farmers were associated with it then and where

that Amul stands today. Its group turnover in financial year 2020-21 has crossed over 53 thousand crore rupees. Our cooperative organization manages about 30 million litre milk in a day. Within this, 36 lakh farmer families are associated and especially women have been empowered. I have seen it in the village. In Gujarat, when a woman receives a cheque or cash on Saturday, seeing a smile on her face brings lot of inner peace to the mind. Today Amul has joined 36 lakh farmer families with it. This is a federation of 18 districts. It has built more than 87 dairy manufacturing plants and has a handling capacity of 39 million tonnes today. It has the installed capacity to process 39 million tonnes of milk. You can imagine that our Amul has done what the biggest corporate dairy cannot do and I believe that by following this example we should move forward. Very few people here might be knowing that Lijjat Papad is a cooperative. Lijjat Papad Cooperative was established in the year 1959 by Jaswantiben Popat, a brave Gujarati woman, along with 80 women who started making papads by forming a cooperative. In 2019, their business turnover was more than 1600 crores and they export papads worth Rs.80 crores. 45 thousand women are associated with the cooperative movement of Lijjat and this success story is a source of inspiration for women across the country. If both Amul and Lijjat are successful today, then the women of the country have a big contribution in filling milk and also in making papads. IFFCO who is our host today, the IFFCO Chairman sir is also sitting here and its M.D. Sh. Awasthi is also sitting here. IFFCO has provided a new direction to the Green Revolution of the country. In 1967, a specialized society was formed with 57 cooperatives, and today, by making more than 36 thousand cooperative members, it provides benefits to about 5.5 crore farmers by making them members. You can imagine that if a very big company earns something, then the biggest part of its profit will go to its owner and whatever IFFCO earns, its each rupee will go to the farmer's house, this is called cooperative. Today IFFCO has almost taken up the responsibility of fertilizing the country by keeping 2-3 more cooperatives

together and I want to compliment Chairman sir and Awasthi ji that they did a great job by putting nano technology on the ground and through this I am sure that the day is not far away in the coming days through cooperative institutions that there will be no need to import fertilizers. We will become self-reliant and our fertilizer will be available in our country. Similarly, KRIBHCO is also a consortium made up of about 9500 cooperatives, its share capital is about 388 crores. KRIBHCO has given a dividend of Rs. 2118 crores to the shareholders in a year. These are all success stories and this is not all as the list is very long. Another is NAFED, I went to Manipur, Renu Handloom and Handicrafts has been contributing to the cooperative for 75 years constantly. Uranungal Labour Contract Cooperative Society, Kerala, Tota Marda Cooperative Union Davanagere, Karnataka, Kozhikode District Cooperative Hospital, running since 1925, a lot of things which have contributed to the country's economy and development of the country by collecting capital from small people through cooperative movements. An example is presented of how they can contribute in a big way and all the profits can go to the house of small investors. Today the leaders of almost all the institutions are here, Managing Directors, Chairmen, are here. I would like to request everyone, we have a lot to do. Can this successful cooperative of ours not contribute in this area? Why will we have to bring good quality seeds from abroad? Why we cannot be self-reliant in the field of seeds? Can't there be cooperatives who can accept this challenge and become a trading house of farmers' produce through which small mandis can export their produce abroad. Certainly you can do. There is a market for food processing all over the world, the small farmer will not be able to do it and no one is interested and even if he does, the farmer will remain there only. If it works as an expansion by capturing each and every area of our cooperative, then I am sure that within 5 years there will be no such area where cooperative will not have penetration. That is why the Ministry of Cooperation has been established. The cooperative has to be strengthened, the graph of the

cooperative has to be increased, transparency has to be brought within the cooperative, the cooperative institutions have to be modernised, computerized and it has to survive the competition, the cooperative has to be made competent to stay in the competition. To do all these things, the Prime Minister has created Ministry of Cooperation.

Friends, today I want to tell you because all of you are associated with cooperative organizations that until Jamwant ji told Hanuman ji that Hanuman ji could cross the sea from Rameshwaram to Lanka, he did not believe it. When Jamwant ji said to Hanuman ji that you are courageous and can cross the sea, Hanuman ji jumped and crossed the sea. What can I tell you, what is cooperative? You are all more experienced co-operators than me, but today I want to tell you about certain things so that we can know about our strength.

Friends, there are about 91% villages where small and big cooperative organizations work. There will be no country in the world which has cooperative presence in 91% of its villages. The number of cooperative societies is more than 8 lakh 55 thousand registered cooperative societies. There are about 8.5 lakh credit co-operative societies. The non-lending cooperative societies are more than 60 lakhs. There are more than 17 national level cooperative federations. There are 33 state level co-operative banks. District level co-operative banks are 363. Besides, out of about ninety five thousand banks, sixty three thousand banks are operational. From one point of view, every 10th village has a PACS. I will tell further that this is not a satisfactory situation but having one PACS in every 10th village is a great achievement in itself when we compare the statistics of cooperatives of the world. These PACS are the only means for the welfare of the farmer, these PACS are the only means that the government provides loans with less interest. These PACS are the only means for the farmer to reach him in a transparent manner, it should be our goal to strengthen these PACS so that it can make all the useful ingredients available

to the farmer for farming activities. I will talk about the PACS at the end and if I want to tell the percentage contribution, then 29% of the agricultural loan distribution goes through the cooperative system. 35% of fertilizer distribution that goes through cooperative. Production of fertilizers, it also produces about 30% of manure. Production of sugar, 31% of the total sugar production of the country is done by cooperative sugar mills. Taklis Pindal Milk purchase 29% and produce 20%, Wheat purchase 13% by cooperative. 20% of Paddy is purchased by cooperative, and contribution of cooperative in the area of fishery also 21%, that is why I am telling you these figures.

Friends, today we are standing on this very strong platform, now the time has come to set new goals and move forward to achieve these new goals. This platform which our ancestors of cooperative movements have given us, the work of building a strong multi-storey building on the platform is to be done by all the workers sitting in the hall and connected online and that is why Modi ji has created the Ministry of Cooperation to give momentum to this cooperative movement. Our success depends on only four things, we have to work with Commitment, Hard Work, Clear Intention and Sense of Cooperation. These are the four basic principles. If we all convey this in letter and spirit within our cooperative, then I think our movement will get a great momentum. The Ministry of Cooperation, which has been created by Narendra Modi, aims to trigger development in the rural area and the responsibility of taking the challenge of reaching to those who are deprived in the rural area lies with Ministry of Cooperation and the responsibility of making it an indigenous mechanism is also with the Ministry of Cooperation.

Friends, Modi ji has brought a radical change in the agriculture sector in the past seven years, I only want to talk about the budgetary allocation. In the financial year 2009-10, the budget allocation of agriculture was 12 thousand crores, I repeat again 12 thousand crores, it is very big, but in 2020-21, this

budget has been increased to Rs 13,40,499 crores for agriculture. I say this because the agriculture sector is the priority of the Narendra Modi government and this priority of the agriculture sector is not possible without cooperatives to reach its goals. We have talked about supporting a lot of farmers. Swaminathan Commission came since then used to talk that the income of the farmers should increase, 50% more than their production cost, but no one used to give, for the first time the Narendra Modi government has worked for the benefit of the farmers by fixing the MSP more than the cost.

Friends, I can quote many reports which had a spirit but it was never implemented. Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sammaan Yojna: About 1 lakh 58 thousand crore rupees have been delivered to 11 crore farmers of the country through DBT.

Friends, a campaign has taken off to set up a start up. Ten thousand new FPOs have been created. Approximately Rs.6865 crore to be spent separately for the funding. The scheme of e-Nam Mandi has been brought, the soil health card has been provided and there is a role of the cooperative sector and PACS within all these things. We have to study all the things firmly inside our PACS and start making its implementation agency at village level, then only we will be able to reach all these things up to the bottom.

Friends, the Ministry of Cooperatives which has been formed, many people say that it is a state subject. I don't want to get into a state-centre fight. A legal answer can be given to this easily but this is all I want to say that the Ministry of Cooperation, formed under the leadership of Modi ji, will work in cooperation with all the states, it is not made to fight with anyone, so there is no need to think much about it. Whether it is a state subject or a center subject, we can help everyone. We will help the states and will also take the movement forward. The work of taking the cooperatives to the grassroots level will be under the aegis of the Ministry of Cooperation. We are bringing a lot of changes in the Act within

a short span of time to facilitate multi-state co-operatives. There is a great deal to move forward on the development path. We have decided that within a short time the new cooperative policy was first brought in by Atal ji, in the year 2002, now Modi ji will bring it in 2021-22. This is the 75th year of independence. In the Amrit Mahotsav, we will also start to formulate a new cooperative policy, we will also strengthen the PACS. Sixty three thousand PACS is less among six lakh villages. We will keep a target that within the next five years every other village should have PACS. The Ministry of Cooperation will do the work of preparing a proper legal blueprint to increase the number of PACS from 65 thousand to 3 lakhs and that advisory will be sent to the state. The state will change its laws. The biggest problem is that when the PACS becomes bankrupt, until its winding-up work is over, a new PACS cannot be made, a legal arrangement will have to be made in this regard that the work of winding up should start by keeping the PACS on the side. New PACS should be created and the cooperative should go ahead. We will also ensure that the computerization work of all the PACS shall be completed, in this the Government of India is also going to contribute a lot and will come up with a plan to computerize all the PACS in a very short time.

Friends, along with computerization, we have started the process of making a software that will connect all the three PACS, DCB and NABARD. The software will conduct the accounting system of PACS, DCB and NABARD and it will be available in all local languages.

Friends, what can also be done to convert a PACS into FPO. My ministry is working on this also. I insist that cooperative training will have to be sharpened more, it will have to be done professionally. All the areas of skill development which related to the cooperative will have to make arrangements for the skill development of the entire area. There is a huge corpus and my ministry is also preparing an action plan for its proper utilization. The role of credit societies

needs to be further strengthened so that its benefits are percolated to even the smallest person to get credit. Diwali festival is approaching and if one needs thousand rupees to celebrate the festival, he has income but today he does not have money because two months ago illness came in the house, in such situation he should get thousand rupees, his Diwali should be good, this type of credit society should be formed till the bottom. No bank can do this, the bank will ask for paper, my dear brother, if he had paper with him, why he would have come to take thousand rupees. There is no need of paper, our cooperative societies, which give small loans, give them out of one's promise and I believe that we will work to bring it to the last person. The role of PACS in Kisan Credit Card has not yet been made in the states. We will try our best to make it. Priority sector lending is not just a short term room, to increase the role of cooperative in all the priority sector lending, we will work with all the ministries of Government of India to make the priority lending on the ground through all types of cooperatives. Like there are self-help groups, till date, the self-help groups in the country have not formed their own specialized society. This our Amul is a specialized society of self-help groups. Like Amul, Self Help group can make arrangements for marketing of things made by small self-help groups by forming its own specialized societies in each state. For this also a special legal provision needs to be done, for this also we are working. We also have the largest sea shore for fishermen cooperative but we could not harness it properly. Small fishermen do not have the money to take nets, nor to buy mechanical boats, so by forming the fishermen cooperatives we will provide them a platform so that their profits are deposited in the bank account of the fisherman. We also worked to make such arrangements. Similarly, under the leadership of Narendra Modi, we are going to make marketing arrangements by making cooperatives for the forest produce which is produced by tribal cooperative in the tribal area.

Friends, we have also made an effort to have a kind of synergy within the basic blueprint of cooperative societies and the laws of every state across the country. I do not know how much success will be achieved, but our intention is noble, so I believe that success will definitely come in this and we will definitely be successful. But today so many veteran leaders of cooperative movement have come, at that time cooperative organizations will have to decide about training, skill development, transparency, transparent recruitment process and transparent election process and open member, open program of electing members. We have to bring transparency in training, skill development, transparency in recruitment and transparency in elections then only we will be able to move forward. It is the responsibility of all of us that Modi ji has taken a big decision to give impetus to this movement and to make this decision of Modi ji successful and in order to move cooperative movement forward with full speed, we have to introspect and emphasize on the internal changes that need to be made within the cooperative sector.

Friends, our Ministry is also conceptualizing the Cooperative Common Service Center. Our ministry is also moving forward for the National Data Base and has also received request from four places to create a National Cooperative University. I think it would be good if some big cooperative institute comes forward instead of any professional university. The Cooperative University needs to be established. If some Cooperative Institution puts up request then it can definitely be a good work.

Friends, few people, Sh. Chandrapal ji has spoken something in subdued voices. I would like to tell them that even if you had not spoken, it would have worked, if you had spoken it is also fine and even if you had outspoken, it would still have been good but I want to assure them that I know everything because I am one of you only.

Problems of urban cooperative banks, problems of taxation, discriminatory attitude, discrimination of government, discrimination of government employees, I am aware of all these things, I want to assure you that no one will be able to do injustice to this sector, have that much faith and that is why Modi ji has given priority to cooperatives and that is why within the dream of self-reliant India, the cooperative movement has been given a prominent place and that is why Narendra Modi ji has given the mantra of prosperity through cooperation (SAHKAAR SE SAMRIDDHI), because we want that there should be equal development, development should be for all, development should be all inclusive, the model of development should have the power to reach everyone and the model of development should be a model with outstretched arms to include everyone and that is not possible except cooperative, that is why the cooperative ministry has been formed. Sugar mills also have many problems, there is talk of disturbing our three-tier agricultural finance system in many places. I am not saying anything clearly in all these matters right now because these are under consideration, I have to discuss with everyone but I want to tell this much that you must send your problems in writing to me, I will read the smallest letter carefully and take a proper decision on it, but even if you do not send it in writing to me then also I will take Cognizance and understand your grievances and will be proactive to redress them. And this is the wish of Modi ji, it is the desire of the Prime Minister of the country that he wants to make every small person a part of the process of development, making every family prosperous through cooperatives and with the help of every prosperous family, making the country prosperous is the government's mantra of prosperity and we have to fight it with our strength. I have come here today and you have welcomed me and my fellow minister, Dr. Guarco Saheb has also come here all the way from Argentina and I want to assure him that India's cooperative sector India's cooperative movement can become a platform for exchange and of sharing good practices across the country. You take the

initiative and make any such organization with its headquarters in India which should become the exchange centre of sharing cooperative good practices around the world. We are ready to welcome you here and I reiterate that it is the desire of the Prime Minister to write a new chapter on the development of India's economy on the basis of cooperatives. To realize the dream of self-reliant India of Modi ji, the cooperative sector will have to play a major role and we have to make cooperative a culture and the important role that we will play will be remembered by the generations to come, I believe that. Today, online data from across the country, as the presenter madam told that before I stood up, 4.25 crore people were connected online, many committees are also connected, many district cooperative banks are also connected, I convey my heartfelt thanks to all the members of the cooperative movement and all of you and assure that with new energy, the efforts to infuse a new life into the cooperative movement, which Modi ji has done, together we will make it successful.