**Shri Modi’s Arrival in Gujarat as Chief Minister**

I was in Udaipur – Rajasthan for a Holiday with my wife Ila and NRI guests.

I was working as Industries Commissioner. My Personal Secretary- Chandra Shekhar called me up on 26th January, 2001 – Sunday. Come back soon. Kutch & many parts of Gujarat are affected with a high magnitude earthquake.

We immediately returned and I started operating on same day from State Circuit House for coordination with outside agencies, bringing relief assistance.

Relief operations started – but the impact was staggering.

GUJARAT had a terrible natural calamity. The Earthquake measured – 7.6 magnitudes had struck - known as Bhuj Earthquake. Repercussion throughout the state.

Houses, flats, multi-story buildings – collapsed.

* Huge mortality
* Displacement of families
* Livelihood disrupted
* Energy – water – communication – affected.
* Staggering losses across the – Kutch – the most affected.

During same time Gujarat had low rainfall – affecting crop – productivity – farmers’ income – drinking water.

The need was to mobilize resources, people, organizations – both private – public, non-government, elected local bodies – manage food, water, energy, communication and raise morale of devastated population.

Gujarat was slowly recovering from this when Shri Modi took over as Chief Minister and ushered in new era of speedy implementation and reaching out affected families at doorstep.

* He moved entire state administration to ground level.
* Each Block / Taluka was allocated to a senior secretary level official with the team to villages. My colleague Shri Nanubhai Dave – Rural Development Secretary had Bhachau Block / Tahsil. CM monitored – used to call not only him – but Block Development Office – Taluk – Panchayat President – Sarpanch to know the progress on day-to-day basis.
* Moved other state governments to come forward and help in re-building villages by creating new modern villages, mobilized national and international organizations and to assist. All came forward and participated in Rebuilding Process.
* The vision was to transform arid Kutch into mega modern economic hub.
* The water – energy – communication system was quickly restored. New houses at new well planned village sites started coming up.

An economic revival plan was quickly introduced.

* + Rural Artisans and handicraft.
  + Farmers, fishermen and animal holders.
  + Micro-enterprise.
  + A special incentive package was introduced of tax-relief incentives for bringing investment and new enterprises.
  + A massive road-railway infrastructure plan was implemented.
  + New Mundra Port was initialized.
  + Narmada canal started operating to provide water also to industries.
  + Developed as Tourist Centre – in White Rann of Kutch.

This has brought about total transformations in worst affected district of Kutch which had always scarcity and migration.

Kutch – today is thriving industrial and handicraft and agricultural based economy with two main ports, three airports and fish harbours and more than lakhs of tourists visiting White Rann of Kutch. It even exports Mangoes.

There was quick transformation of economic status of poorest – in fact huge migration of out-side work-force started.

Says Miya Hussain Gulbeg – Sarpanch Gram Panchayat – Dhordo – which is near to Khavda (in Rann of Kutch). We are proud that Dhordo village is recognized by international United Nation World Tourism organization. He adds that this is possible because of Hon’ble Prime Minister Sir who initiated “Sabka Sath Sab ka Vikas”. In this desert area – it was rare to find a visitor – we have lakhs of visitors every year, but more – our villages are having water – electricity – good houses and accessible very good roads and young have employed in industries in Rann of Kutch and Tourism.