

**SPEECH BY SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE,
UNION MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT**

**ON THE OCCASION OF DISTRIBUTION OF THE
PRIME MINISTER'S SHRAM AWARDS
FOR THE YEARS 2008, 2009 & 2010**

**AT
VIGYAN BHAVAN, NEW DELHI
13TH OCTOBER, 2011 AT 5 p.m.**

Hon'ble Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh Ji,

Hon'ble Members of Parliament,

Shri Ravi Mathur, Additional Secretary, Labour & Employment,

Shram Award winners,

**Distinguished Representatives of Employees'
Organizations and Employers Organizations,**

Distinguished Guests,

Friends from the media,

Ladies & Gentlemen

I feel extremely privileged today in welcoming Hon'ble Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh ji, on the auspicious occasion of the Shram Awards Ceremony. Sir, your august presence gives us a renewed feeling of encouragement and inspiration.

I take this opportunity today to congratulate all the award winners. I would also like to congratulate the management bodies who have created a proper work environment to enable these workers to develop their skills, craftsmanship, efficiency and achieve excellence.

Sir, as you are aware, the Prime Minister's Shram Awards are given every year to workers of Public Sector and Private Sector, engaged in manufacturing and productive processes, for their outstanding performance which has helped increased production and has also resulted in saving of substantial foreign exchange for the country.

Optimum utilization of resources, quantum increase in productivity and efficiency are the pressing demands on the Indian Industry in the present

competitive environment. We have to increase our competence to compete in the world market. These objectives cannot be achieved unless management bodies, workers, trade unions come together and help evolve an ethos and work culture that is required for attaining these goals. Only with such collective and substantive joint effort, will it be possible to achieve the levels of excellence, which alone can lead to industrial growth, development and progress.

Government of India firmly believes that without safe, clean environment as well as healthy working conditions, social justice and economic growth cannot be achieved. The goal of continual improvement towards achieving and sustaining decent, safe and healthy working conditions can be realized only with the full commitment and involvement of all stakeholders. The policies and programmes on occupational safety and health have to be given a shift from focusing on accident prevention activities to creating a culture of workers welfare. A judicious mix of regular monitoring through inspections and safety and health training and awareness can help to promote this culture.

Today, with increasing globalization, greater environmental and social awareness, the concept of organizational responsibility beyond the legal or profit related aspects has gained new momentum. In order to succeed, in today's competitive world order, business has to be seen acting responsibly towards people, planet and profit.

At the same time our Government is according high priority to the matter of ensuring the welfare of workers through The Unorganized Workers Social Security Act, 2008 and Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana.

I am very proud that our Prime Minister's economic and development vision is being appreciated throughout the world. I have had the opportunity to meet several Labour & Social Security Ministers of different countries in the recent past who have been highly appreciative of India's growth story under the stewardship of our dynamic and visionary Prime Minister.

Last month I met the French President His Excellency Mr. Nicolas Sarkozy, who asked me specifically to convey his warmest regards to our Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh ji. He also said that France is particularly very happy about the way India is developing. In the same tenor, Mr. Juan Somavia, the Director-General of the International Labour Organisation also praised the initiatives and programmes launched by our Prime Minister. I would like to mention that some of the Labour & Employment Ministers of the G-20 countries expressed surprise that India has launched such massive and inclusive schemes like

MGNREGA, RSBY, MID-DAY MEAL, Compulsory Education and how the Government of India is financing them. I am happy to bring to Hon'ble Prime Ministers' notice that India has been chosen to lead the Social Security Cooperation in this region and ILO is organising a programme on employment generation issues in January, 2012 where 43 developing countries are expected to participate. The Ministers' of Labour, Employment & Social Security from Turkey, Brazil, South Africa and Nigeria are very keen on personally observing the implementation of MGNREGA in India. This repeated endorsement and admiration of the G-20 countries about MGNREGA programme in our country speaks highly of Hon'ble Prime Ministers' able leadership.

With the cooperation and hard work of our workers we can achieve the desired objective of inclusive growth. Together, we can increase productivity and efficiency in all sectors in the country and build a happier India.

I would like to appeal to all industrial establishments in the country to introduce worker-participative schemes like Suggestion/Feedback, Quality Circles, Small group activities etc. in a big way to harness and leverage the hidden potential of our work force at plant level. I would also fervently request the trade Union fraternity to co-operate with the managements to make these worker participative schemes successful. I am confident that the Award Scheme operated by the Government will continue to make significant contribution in motivating our workers, unions and managements alike for expeditious industrial development of our country in the years to come.

I take this opportunity to once again congratulate the award winners and their management for their excellent work. I hope that they will contribute to discharge their work with the same dedication and commitment in the future also for prosperity and all round development of the country.

I would like to once again thank our respected Prime Minister for gracing this auspicious occasion by his benign presence and for his guidance. I would also like to extend my greetings and heartfelt gratitude to all Awardees and families, who have come here from different corners of the country to attend this function.

JAI HIND