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My dear young friends,
Affectionate greetings.

During the Freedom Struggle, patriotic songs, provocative speeches and mass protests were an essential means of inspiring the country's youth and instilling in them a spirit of sacrifice and renunciation. After Independence, a pragmatic and down-to-earth approach was the need of the hour, with the entire country buckling down to work in order to realize the dream of a prosperous India. Regrettably, we gained freedom without gaining a sense of responsibility.

Under the British Raj, citizens were forced to depend on the government of the day for basic necessities. That mindset persisted after Independence and even today, we look to the government for everything. As a result, our society has become even more conflict-ridden and vulnerable to disruptive forces than it was prior to Independence.

So-called leaders in the various spheres of public life are hungry for fame and use newspapers as a weapon against each other. They find vindication in the public humiliation of others. They will not work together, even to foster the unity and integrity of a divided India and can never lead us to the pinnacle of prosperity.

On the other hand, our rural brothers and sisters still harbour a strong sense of social responsibility. And that is why, when motivated by disinterested parties, they are willing to bury their differences and withdraw their ongoing cases from courts of law. Setting aside caste, community and any other kind of discrimination, they are working collectively towards the progress of their villages. We have seen this happening on the ground in Chitrakoot. This is the correct route to rebuilding our independent nation.

More than 70 per cent of the nation's population lives in our six lakh villages, which are richly endowed with every natural resource needed to fuel their all-around development. Rural folk are sensitive and hard-working, accustomed to