

**VALEDICTORY REMARKS OF THE HON'BLE PRESIDENT OF
INDIA
SMT. DROUPADI MURMU
AT THE 18TH PRAVASI BHARATIYA DIVAS**

Bhubaneswar, January 10, 2025

Namaskar, and a warm welcome to your own Bharat-bhumi!

It is with immense pleasure and a heart full of pride that I stand before you today in the vibrant city of Bhubaneswar, a city rich in culture and heritage. After the success of the last Pravasi Bharatiya Divas in Indore in 2023, I am delighted to be here with you all, to celebrate the indomitable spirit of our Pravasi Bharatiyas. As we gather in the first month of this New Year 2025, I also extend my greetings and best wishes for a prosperous and fulfilling year ahead.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I take this opportunity to extend congratulate Her Excellency Christine Kangaloo, President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, on being conferred with the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman 2025. Excellency, your outstanding contributions in leading your nation, with a special focus on women and the Indian diaspora, has set a high benchmark on the world stage. This is a reflection of the deep ties of friendship and cooperation between our two countries, as much as it is a testament of the shared values that bind us across borders.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Indian Diaspora represents the best of our country. You, the sons and daughters of Bharat, have carried with you not just the knowledge and skills acquired in this sacred land, but also the values and ethos that have been the foundation of our civilization for millennia. Whether in the fields of technology, medicine, arts, or entrepreneurship, the Indian Diaspora has made a mark that the world acknowledges and respects.

Today, we honour those amongst you who have distinguished themselves through exemplary achievements. It is my privilege to confer on them the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman, as India's token of recognition of their extraordinary contributions. My heartfelt congratulations to all the awardees. Your success stories are not just a matter of pride for India, but they also inspire millions across the world to strive for excellence.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Pravasi Bharatiya Divas has, over the years, become more than just an event; it is a platform where ideas converge, collaborations are forged, and the bonds between India and its Diaspora are strengthened. I am sure that over the last three days, you have used this occasion to engage in meaningful dialogue, and share your experiences. This event underscores the fact that while you may be physically distant from your homeland, your connections with Bharat remain as strong as ever.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our nation today is marching towards *Viksit Bharat* – a developed India – by the year 2047, when we will celebrate 100 years of our independence. This vision is not just a government initiative; it is a National Mission that requires proactive and enthusiastic participation of every Indian, including those living abroad.

The Indian Diaspora is an integral part of this vision. Your global presence gives you a unique perspective, and your achievements place you in a position to significantly contribute to the realization of a developed India. I have seen this first-hand during my interactions with our Diaspora as part of my travels abroad. I urge you all to actively engage in this journey, for in your success, lies the success of India.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Recognising the crucial role of the Diaspora in nation-building, Government of India has undertaken several initiatives to support you. Consular services for Non Resident Indians (NRIs) have been

simplified. For Overseas Citizens of India (OCIs), processes have been digitized and streamlined. Initiatives like “Know India Programme” provide avenues for the younger members of our Diaspora to re-discover their Indian roots.

I am happy to know that Odisha Government is appointing a Nodal Minister for engaging with Pravasi Bharatiya for projects, investments, etc. I appreciate the step taken by the Odisha Government.

We have also been proactive in safeguarding interests of Indians living abroad. In recent years, we have launched several missions, including Operation *Kaveri*, Operation *Ganga* and Operation *Vande Bharat*, to assist distressed Indians. Today, Indians around the world can count on their homeland for support and protection in times of need.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Over the last three days, experts from diverse fields have come together here to discuss issues of importance, for both India as well its Diaspora. You all must have seen the special exhibits at the Convention, which highlight various important facets of our Diaspora’s connection and contributions to India. I am sure these insightful discussions will help to shape policies that benefit both India and the global community.

A special mention must also be made of the contributions of women, students, and the youth amongst our Diaspora. The achievements of Indian women globally are a matter of immense pride for us, as they break barriers and scale new heights in various fields. Our students and youth, with their dynamism and creativity, are the torchbearers of our future. They are the ones who will carry forward the legacy of a vibrant and progressive India.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our vision for *Viksit Bharat* aligns with our growing stature on the world stage, particularly as a leading voice for the Global South. It is guided by our timeless philosophy of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*, or ‘The World is One Family’.

This vision is about creating an ecosystem that not only meets our needs, but also contributes to global well-being. We seek to be a nation that balances economic progress with social justice and environmental stewardship, ensuring a bright future for generations to come. Each one of you, whether through entrepreneurship, philanthropy, or knowledge-sharing, will play an essential role in achieving this vision.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The connection between the Indian Diaspora and the Motherland is eternal. No matter where you are in the world, Bharat is and will always be your home. This bond is rooted in shared heritage, culture, and values. It is this connection that we celebrate today, and it is this connection that will continue to inspire us as we move forward together.

As we celebrate the achievements of our *Pravasi Bharatiya* family, let us also look forward to the future with hope and determination. Together, we can build a *Viksit Bharat*, a nation that stands tall on the global stage and continues to be a beacon of light for the world.

Thank you,

Jai Hind!

Jai Bharat!