

**ADDRESS BY THE HON'BLE PRESIDENT OF INDIA
SMT DROUPADI MURMU
AT PLATINUM JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS OF BIT MESRA**

Ranchi, February 15, 2025

I am very glad to be here among you. It is a historic milestone as the Birla Institute of Technology Mesra, which has contributed immensely to the developmental saga of our nation, completes 70 years. My heartiest congratulations to you and to everyone associated with this pioneering institute on its Platinum Jubilee!

The faculty and administrators, past and present, as well as students and alumni must be commended for the quality and excellence that BIT stands for. Your institute has imparted engineering education in this mineral-rich region which is also a prominent manufacturing hub. I have served Jharkhand as Governor and this university as Chancellor, and I am also proud of its rich legacy. Every time I visit Jharkhand, it has been like a homecoming for me. BIT has been an integral part of the state's history.

The Platinum Jubilee is an apt occasion to celebrate and honour the institute's contributions to education, research and innovation in engineering, technology and allied fields. It is time to appreciate the accomplishments of the students, faculty and alumni, and their achievements in academics, research, infrastructure and societal impact.

BIT has been a pioneer in a number of fields. The first Department of Space Engineering and Rocketry in the country was established here in 1964. One of the first Science and Technology Entrepreneurship Parks (STEP) to promote engineering entrepreneurship was also set up here in 1975. It is also the only Technological University in eastern India imparting education at the certificate, diploma, bachelor, master and

doctoral levels in science, management and engineering in about 20 disciplines.

The institute's culture of nurturing talent is also reflected in the accomplishments of its alumni who include leaders in every sphere of life, such as education, entrepreneurship, industry, administrative services, journalism, literature and sports. I am told that BIT has recently expanded beyond its traditional area, offering courses now in quantitative economics and data science, humanities and animation and multimedia. Technology and humanities are really complementary, and bringing them together under one roof also realises the vision behind the National Education Policy.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Ours is the age of technology. New advances in the field of information technology, for example, have changed the way we live. What was unthinkable till yesterday has become reality today. There are very few inventions that changed the world around us the way mobile telephony has changed it. It is gladdening to note that these advances have become accessible for most people in the society. The gaps in digital access are getting reduced very fast. A downside of this trend has been an explosion in cyber crimes, but these are also being countered with a rise in awareness.

The coming years are going to be even more dramatic with far-reaching advances expected particularly in Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning. As AI rapidly transforms economies, the Government of India has been quick in responding to the emerging scenario. Several initiatives are being taken to integrate AI in higher education institutions. BIT was indeed ahead of the curve as it introduced a B. Tech. course in Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning in 2023.

The change brought about by AI and other technologies is also reflected in our languages. Till a few years ago, the word 'disruption', to take one

example, meant something to be worried about. But now it has a positive connotation. A break or an interruption in the normal course is now something to be welcomed. But as technology creates great disruptions in societies, I believe we should remain concerned about its impact on the marginalised groups. The great opportunities being created should be available to all; the great transformations being brought about should benefit all.

However, I remain an optimist. There are hundreds of reasons for my hopes, and they are all before me here. I am referring to the youth, whose enthusiasm and commitment will be the key ingredient in the making of a 'Viksit Bharat'. I am especially happy to see so many young women here. As I visit institutes of higher education across the country, I see our daughters raising the bar of excellence. They are not lagging behind in science, technology, engineering and mathematics either.

I would also like to offer a word of advice. Often, the problems around us do not need any big technological intervention. Let us not forget the importance of small-scale, traditional solutions. Indeed, innovators and entrepreneurs must not ignore the knowledge base of traditional communities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am confident that BIT Mesra will continue to make rich contributions to the continuing evolution of science and technology in India. I once again congratulate everyone associated with this prestigious institute in the past as well as the present on the occasion of the Platinum Jubilee and wish you all success in your future endeavours.

Thank you!
Jai Hind!
Jai Bharat!