

**ADDRESS BY THE HON'BLE PRESIDENT OF INDIA
SMT. DROUPADI MURMU
ON THE OCCASION OF 'SAMVIDHAN DIVAS'**

New Delhi, November 26, 2024

I am delighted to be among you all on the auspicious occasion of 'Samvidhan Divas'. The Constitution is the holiest book of our country.

Today, we all are both participants and witnesses of a historic occasion. Seventy-five years ago, on this very day, in this very Central Hall of the 'Samvidhan Sadan', the Constituent Assembly accomplished the huge task of framing the Constitution for a newly independent country. On that day, through the Constituent Assembly, we, the people of India, adopted, enacted and gave to ourselves this Constitution.

Our Constitution is the strong foundation stone of our democratic republic. Our Constitution ensures our collective and individual dignity.

Today, on behalf of a grateful nation, I pay tribute to the members and officials of the Constituent Assembly. It is the good fortune of the country that the Chairman of the Constituent Assembly, Dr. Rajendra Prasad and the Chairman of the Drafting Committee, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, guided the process of constitution-making. The imprint of Babasaheb Ambedkar's progressive and inclusive thinking can be found in our Constitution. Babasaheb's historic addresses in the Constituent Assembly make it clear that India is the mother of democracy. With this feeling of pride in our democracy, we all have gathered today on this special occasion. This is also an occasion to remember the contribution of the fifteen women members of the Constituent Assembly. We should also remember the invaluable contribution of those officers who worked in the background. Their dedication took forward the process of constitution-making smoothly. Among them, Shri B.N. Rau, who was the Constitutional Advisor to

the Constituent Assembly, played a prominent role. I would also like to mention the Secretary of the Constituent Assembly, Shri H.V.R. Iyengar, Joint Secretary Shri S.N. Mukherjee and Deputy Secretary Shri Jugal Kishore Khanna.

Honourable Members of Parliament,

On completing the seventy-five years of Independence, all the citizens celebrated 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav'. On 26th January, next year, we will celebrate the 75th anniversary of our Republic. Such celebrations provide us with opportunities to take stock of the journey so far and plan better for the journey ahead. Such celebrations strengthen our unity and show that we are all together in our efforts to achieve the national goals.

During our freedom struggle, many great personalities outlined our national ideals. The diversity of our country found expression in our Constituent Assembly. The presence of representatives from all the provinces and regions in the Constituent Assembly gave voice to the pan-Indian consciousness. The debates in the Constituent Assembly and the addresses by the members provide us with deep insight into the process of constitution-making as well as our country. The books released and the short film shown, today, will familiarise people with the glorious history of the making of the Constitution.

In one sense, the Constitution of India was the outcome of nearly three years of deliberations by some of the greatest minds. But, in the true sense, it was the outcome of our long freedom struggle. The ideals of that incomparable national movement came to be enshrined in the Constitution. Those ideals have been captured succinctly in the Preamble of the Constitution. They are justice, liberty, equality and fraternity. These ideals have defined India since the ages.

I believe that the ideals highlighted in the Preamble of the Constitution complement each other. Together, they create an environment in which every single citizen finds an opportunity to flourish, contribute to society, and help fellow citizens.

Honourable Members of Parliament,

In accordance with the spirit of the Constitution, it is the responsibility of the Executive, Legislature, and Judiciary to work together to make the lives of common people better.

The aspirations of the people have found expression in the many legislations enacted by the Parliament. For the economic integration of the country, the biggest tax reform since independence was carried out in the form of 'Goods and Services Tax'. In the year 2018, the 'National Commission for Backward Classes' was given Constitutional status. Actualising the idea of women-led development is essential to achieve the Constitutional ideal of social justice. The 'Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam' has ushered in a new era of women empowerment in our democracy. By passing the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, which are based on the spirit of justice instead of punishment and on the idea of security instead of crime, our parliamentarians have given an impressive demonstration of adopting modern thinking. I appreciate all the parliamentarians for enacting many such legislations.

During the last few years, the Government has taken many steps for the development of all sections of the society, especially the weaker sections. Such decisions have improved the lives of the people and are providing them new opportunities for development. Poor people are getting their own houses, and also electricity, water and road facilities. Food security and medical services are being provided. World-class infrastructure is being developed on a large scale in the country. Many such efforts for holistic and inclusive development take our Constitutional ideals forward. I appreciate the government for such efforts.

With the efforts of the Supreme Court, the judiciary of the country is making efforts to make our judicial system more effective. The judiciary is also working on the issues of undertrial prisoners and

prison reforms. The scope of the Fundamental Rights in our country has been expanding over the years. Awareness and action towards the Constitutional Directive of providing legal aid, to the under-privileged, have been increasing.

Honourable Members of Parliament,

Our Constitutional ideals get strength from the active participation of the Executive, Legislature and Judiciary as well as all the citizens. The Fundamental Duties of every citizen have been clearly mentioned in our Constitution. Protecting the unity and integrity of India, promoting harmony in the society, ensuring the dignity of women, protecting the environment, developing a scientific temper, safeguarding public property and taking the nation to higher levels of achievement are included among the Fundamental Duties of the citizens.

Our Constitution is a living and progressive document. Our farsighted Constitution-makers had provided for a system of adopting new ideas, according to the needs of the changing times. We have achieved many ambitious goals related to social justice and inclusive development through the Constitution. With a new approach, we are earning for India a new identity in the comity of nations. Our Constitution-makers had given a Directive for India to play an important role in promotion of international peace and security. Today, besides being a leading economy, our country is playing this role very well as the 'Vishwa-Bandhu'. At the same time, with humility, we readily assimilate the good ideas and changes available anywhere in the world. Our Constitution-makers had demonstrated an example of this spirit of adopting excellent ideas and methods according to the context of our country.

The farsighted members of the Constituent Assembly gave us an inspiring Constitution which has proved to be a model for other countries as well. In his speech on this day in 1949, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the first among my distinguished predecessors and the Chairman of the Constituent Assembly, had expressed the view that it

is upto those who operate the Constitution to keep it alive. He had also said that many things which cannot be written in the Constitution are done by the conventions. He had hoped that our country would acquire those capacities and develop those conventions.

I can say with confidence that in the Constitutional journey of nearly three-quarters of a century, the nation has succeeded to a remarkable extent in showing those capacities and developing those conventions. The lessons we have learnt should be passed on to the next generations. In the year 2015, the Government decided to celebrate November 26th as 'Samvidhan Divas'. The celebrations of 'Samvidhan Divas' every year since then have helped in increasing awareness among our youth about our founding document, the Constitution. Lively interest of the youth in the Constitution, is a source of optimism for all.

I request all the fellow citizens to inculcate our Constitutional ideals in their conduct; follow the Fundamental Duties and move forward with dedication towards the national goal of building a 'Viksit Bharat' by the year 2047.

I congratulate all the fellow citizens on the occasion of 'Samvidhan Divas'. My best wishes to all of you.

Thank you,
Jai Hind!
Jai Bharat!