

**ADDRESS BY THE HON'BLE PRESIDENT OF INDIA  
SMT DROUPADI MURMU AT THE  
LAUNCH CEREMONY OF VINDHYAGIRI**

**Kolkata, August 17, 2023**

I am very happy to be here at the launch of Vindhyagiri. This event marks a move forward in enhancing India's maritime capabilities. Vindhyagiri is also a step towards achieving the goal of Atmanirbhar Bharat through indigenous shipbuilding.

I congratulate the Indian Navy and everyone involved in the design and construction of this ship. I am told that 'Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers' have constructed and delivered more than one hundred warships including frigates like Vindhyagiri. Your skill and tireless efforts have brought us to this milestone for which I appreciate the entire team at GRSE for its achievements.

Project 17A of which Vindhyagiri is a part, reflects our commitment to self-reliance and technological advancement. This project demonstrates indigenous innovation for developing state-of-the-art technology. I have been informed that the multi-mission frigates of this series would be capable of dealing with all kinds of threats to our maritime interests.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This is my second visit to West Bengal as the President of India. The vibrant city of Kolkata, with its rich history and culture holds a special place in the heart of our nation. Its intellectual vibrancy, artistic fervour and the cosmopolitan spirit showcase the best of India.

Kolkata's strategic location makes it vital for our naval preparedness, safeguarding our maritime interests and maintaining regional stability.

The ship is aptly named after the 'Vindhya' ranges, which have been a symbol of fortitude. I am confident that when this warship gets commissioned, it will symbolise the robustness of the Vindhyas!

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Last year, I was pleased to attend the Navy Day Celebrations in Visakhapatnam. I had witnessed the Operational Demonstration by our brave Navy personnel there. This year in March, I visited INS Vikrant in Kochi. There, I interacted with the officers and sailors on board. The induction of indigenously built modern aircraft carrier, INS Vikrant, into the Indian Navy remains a proud moment for the nation.

Today, India is the fifth largest economy in the world and we are striving to become the third largest economy in the near future. A growing economy means higher volumes of trade. A huge part of our trade-goods transit through the seas. This fact highlights the importance of oceans to our growth and well-being.

The security in the Indian Ocean Region, and the larger Indo-Pacific has many aspects. It includes piracy, armed robbery, drug smuggling, illegal human migration, natural disasters and several such issues. Against this backdrop, the Indian Navy has the mandate to protect, preserve, and promote India's maritime interests. The Navy has to always remain proactive in tackling security threats.

As we witness the launch of this warship today, I once again, congratulate the Indian Navy, the designers, and everyone involved in its construction and launch. I convey my best wishes to the Indian Navy in all its endeavours.

Thank you,

Jai Hind!

Jai Bharat!