

# **SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA, SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE AT THE INAUGURATION OF 17TH NATIONAL JAMBOREE OF THE BHARAT SCOUTS & GUIDES**

MYSORE : 29.12.2016

I am indeed happy to be present amidst you on the occasion of the 17<sup>th</sup> National Jamboree of Bharat Scouts and Guides at Mysuru, a heritage city of India and the cultural capital of Karnataka.

2. I am informed that the Karnataka State Bharat Scouts and Guides has already hosted two National Jamborees at Bengaluru in the years 1960 and 1986 and is now hosting the present 17<sup>th</sup> National Jamboree at Mysuru.

3. Jamborees are occasions when any organisation reaffirms, redeems and reorients, and I am sure that the activities in the Jamboree will help Scouts, Guides, Rovers and Rangers and other Volunteers to develop leadership qualities, co-operative spirit and moral values. I am also sure that it will provide a good opportunity to its participants to exchange ideas and exhibit their skills and talents, and help create awareness amongst the youth about the values of national integration, service, discipline, patriotism and peaceful co-existence.

## **Friends,**

4. India is a land of ancient civilization but young people. By 2020 India will be the youngest country. It's an asset only if they are skilled and oriented towards the service of the nation.

5. While Scouting was making rapid progress overseas, in India too a move was initiated by Dr. Annie Besant, Dr. G.S. Arundale and other leaders, who foresaw the need of Scouting for the benefit of Indian boys as well. The Scouting Movement had the blessings of great luminaries like Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Subsequently, the movement has been patronized by successive Presidents and Prime Ministers of India and Chief Ministers of States. I am informed that the Boy Scouts Associations in India and the Hindustan Scout Association were merged together on 7<sup>th</sup> November, 1950 and later the Girl Guide Association in India also joined the main stream.

6. The support and patronage of the Royal Family of erstwhile Mysuru State and other princely States of our country saw tremendous growth of the movement. Successive State Governments also extended their support and are responsible for the successful existence and growth of the Movement today.

7. I am happy to know that the Scouts and Guide Movement in India has been growing steadily from year to year and has a strength of over 5 Million Scouts and Guides today, and I am sure that this International Youth Movement will enable school going children become better citizens of our great country. The Scouts and Guide Movement has stood the test of time and is relevant to this day even after 109 years of its existence. Today, there are over 50 million Scouts and Guides

throughout the world in 216 countries and territories right from the impressionable age of 3 upto 25 years.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

8. Scouting and Guiding is a tool for enrichment of life skills through proper understanding and awareness of social and national needs. Young Scouts and Guides are valuable members of our society and are active citizens who are contributing to resolving the challenges our communities are facing today. The Scouts and Guide Movement is open to all regardless of race or creed and its purpose is to help young people develop physically, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Scouting is not mere membership of an Organisation, but a commitment to uphold truthfulness and dignity in one's own life at a very young and impressionable age.

9. In fact, as a world youth movement in a globalised world, Scouting has a global responsibility to meet the challenges of development. It has shown the world how developing countries can benefit from a non-formal education system like Scouting.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

10. I am glad to learn that Karnataka is one of the most active and leading states in the field of Scouting and Guiding in the country. Before I conclude, I would like to compliment Sri Siddaramaiah, Chief Minister of Karnataka, Sri P.G.R. Sindhia, State Chief Commissioner and his team of volunteers for organizing the 17<sup>th</sup> National Jamboree. I also convey my hearty congratulations to all the participants of Scouts and Guides, Rovers and Rangers, Unit Leaders, from our country and overseas for their participation in the Jamboree.

11. Dear young friends in the end, I appeal to all of you to dedicate yourselves wholeheartedly in the service of your motherland. May your meritorious service be the lodestar for others to follow suit in the coming years. Spread the ideals of the Movement and emulate them in your daily lives. I extend greetings to all of you and wish the Bharat Scouts and Guide Movement all success in its future endeavours.

Thank you.

**Jai Hind!**