



It has been an amazing journey

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On the eve of the 74th Republic Day, I extend my heartiest greetings to every Indian, at home and abroad. We will now enter the 75th year as a Republic. From the day the Constitution came into effect to the present day, it has been an amazing journey that has inspired many other nations. Every citizen has reason to be proud of the Indian Story. When we celebrate the Republic Day, we celebrate what we have achieved, together, as a nation.

India is, of course, home to one of the oldest living civilisations. India is called the mother of democracy. As a modern Republic, however, we are young. In the early years of Independence, we faced countless challenges and adversities. Very high levels of poverty and illiteracy were just two of the many ill-effects of the long foreign rule. Yet, the spirit of India was undeterred. With hope and confidence, we began an experiment unique in the history of humankind. Such a vast and diverse multitude of people coming together as one nation remains unprecedented. We did so with a belief that we are, after all, one; that we are all Indians. We have succeeded as a democratic republic because so many creeds and so many languages have not divided us, they have only united us. That is the essence of India.

That essence was at the heart of the Constitution, which has withstood the test of time. The Constitution that started governing the life of the Republic was the outcome of the Freedom Struggle. The national movement, led by Mahatma Gandhi, was as much about winning Independence as about rediscovering our own ideals. Those decades of struggle and sacrifice helped us win freedom not only from colonial rule but also from the imposed values and narrow world-views. Revolutionaries and reformers joined hands with visionaries and idealists to help us learn about our age-old values of peace, brotherhood and equality. Those who shaped the modern Indian mind also welcomed progressive ideas from abroad, following the Vedic advice: आ नो भद्राः कर्तवो यन्तु ववश्वतः. "Let noble thoughts come to us from all directions". A long and profound thought process culminated in our Constitution.

Our founding document is inspired by the humanistic philosophy of the oldest living civilisation in the world as well as new ideas that emerged in more recent history. The nation will always remain grateful to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, who headed the Drafting Committee of the Constitution, and thus had a critical part in giving it the final shape. On this day, we should also remember the role of jurist B.N. Rau, who had prepared the initial draft, and other experts and officers who helped in making of the constitution. We are proud of the fact that the members of that

assembly represented all regions and communities of India and that they included 15 women too.

India's Mars Mission was powered by a team of extraordinary women, and our sisters and daughters are not far behind in other areas too. Women's empowerment and gender equality are no longer mere slogans, as we have made great progress towards these ideals in recent years.

As a result of a series of initiatives in recent years to transform all aspects of governance and unleash creative energies of people, the world has started to look at India with a new sense of respect. Our interventions in various world forums have started making a positive difference. The respect that India has earned on the world stage has resulted in new opportunities as well as responsibilities. This year, as you know, India holds the presidency of the Group of 20 nations. With our motto of universal brotherhood, we stand for peace and prosperity of all. Thus, the G20 presidency is an opportunity to promote democracy and multilateralism and the right forum for shaping a better world and a better future. Under India's leadership, I am sure, G20 will be able to further enhance its efforts to build a more equitable and sustainable world order.

We are faced with the dilemma: To lift more and more people out of poverty, we need economic growth, but that growth also comes from fossil fuel. Unfortunately, the poor bear the brunt of global warming more than others. Developing and popularising alternative sources of energy is one of the solutions. India has taken a commendable lead in this direction by giving a policy push to solar energy and electric vehicles.

We need to modify our lifestyle if we want our children to live happily on this fragile planet. One of the changes suggested pertains to food. I am happy to note that the United Nations accepted a suggestion from India and declared 2023 as the International Year of Millets. Millets were essential ingredients of our diet and they are making a comeback among sections of society. Coarse grains like millets are eco-friendly as they require less water to grow and yet they provide high levels of nutrition. If more and more people turn to millets, it will help conserve ecology and also improve health. One more year has

Droupadi Murmu
The President of India



gone by for the Republic and another year commences. It has been a time of unprecedented change. With the outbreak of the pandemic, the world had changed within a matter of days. During these three years, whenever we have felt that we have finally put the virus behind, it raises its ugly head. However, there is no need to panic because we have learned in this period that our leadership, our scientists and doctors, our administrators and 'Corona Warriors' will make every possible effort to meet any situation. At the same time, each of us has also learned to not let our guard down and

remain alert.

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On the occasion of Republic

Day, I convey my special appreciation to our jawans who guard our borders and are ready to make any sacrifice for the country. I also express my appreciation for all the brave soldiers of paramilitary forces and police-forces who provide internal security to their fellow citizens. I salute all the brave-hearts of our armed forces, paramilitary-forces and police-forces who laid down their lives in the line of duty. I convey my blessings to all the dear children for their bright future. Once again, I extend my best wishes to all of you on this Republic Day.



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HAPPY REPUBLIC DAY



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