

Address by the Hon'ble President of India
Smt. Droupadi Murmu on the occasion of call on by the IAS officers of
2020 batch

My dear young friends,

I feel very happy to be with your group consisting of IAS Officers of 2020 batch.

I extend a warm welcome to all of you at Rashtrapati Bhavan. I also congratulate each one of you for having reached a milestone in your life from where you are heading towards your future-destinations.

There is a popular saying “Well begun is half done”. I consider the Aarambh Program, the common foundation program for all civil services, a praise-worthy step. It enables our young civil servants to begin their career with an extensive exposure and cross-functional interaction. The learning you have acquired and the bonding you have developed are going to benefit you throughout your career.

I have been informed that starting with the batch of 2015, officers of all the batches of IAS get posted as Assistant Secretaries for three months in the various ministries and departments in Government of India. I understand that the current batch has already completed substantial part of this posting. I am sure that your knowledge about the flagship national programs will help you contribute better when you go to your postings and implement such programs at the ground level. Your exposure to the working of the Central Ministries will also enable you to align your functioning with national objectives. The big picture that you are getting to see will help you in efficiently steering the local systems and schemes.

Dear friends,

You have joined the civil services at a historic juncture. We have completed 75 years as an independent country. We are looking ahead at the next 25 years as the period to re-imagine India and make it a developed country. Today you are at the beginning of your career. By 2047, you will be among the senior-most decision makers. By working with passion and pride, you can ensure that the India of 2047 will be much more prosperous, strong and happy.

In the past 75 years, we, the people of India, have increased our life expectancy from 32 years to nearly 71 years which is more than double the base-line after

independence. Our literacy rate has increased more than four times, from just over 18 per cent to nearly 78 per cent. Our GDP has gone up 10 times, and we are a 3.2 trillion-dollar economy. There is much more which makes us feel proud as citizens of India. Generations of civil servants after independence have also contributed to all such achievements. I appreciate the civil services-fraternity for this.

But the new India aspires for much more. It seeks a much higher standing in the global community on all major parameters of growth and development. As civil servants, you have an important role to play in the emergence of India as a global hub of knowledge, supply-chain, innovation, technology-development and various other fields. At the same time, India has to strengthen the leadership position it has taken in the areas of socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable development.

For shaping that India of 2047, you have to work with a modern and service-oriented mind-set. Mission Karmayogi is a major initiative to make our civil servants more modern, dynamic and sensitive in their approach.

Dear friends,

I grew up in a remote and less developed part of our country. Since my childhood to my days in public service, I have come across all kinds of civil servants. I have seen committed civil servants who used to reach the remotest villages with the zeal to help the people. I have also observed that if more and more people participate in any program, it becomes more successful. In my life of public service, I have found that people's involvement has been the key to success of activities in the areas of sanitation, education, self-employment and several other fields. You should try to involve common people in the major programs of public service.

With tremendous growth in infrastructure, it has become easier to reach remote parts of the country. I expect you to reach the last person or the most deprived person in your area of responsibility and improve her living condition. You can open up opportunities for those who are not aware of the welfare schemes or development programs. My dear young friends please remember that any welfare initiative can be rated truly successful only if its benefits reach the poor, the downtrodden and such other people at the lowest strata of our society. In

fact, you should try to reach such underprivileged people. They should not be put into the difficulty of reaching you for help.

Dear friends,

You have seen team work in the Central Government. Silos are breaking down. There are examples of civil servants who work with the objective of providing service without seeking undue publicity.

Experts who have done in-depth analysis of the civil services have stated that civil servants should be guided by:

- dedication to public service,
- empathy and compassion towards the weaker sections,
- maintaining highest standards of integrity and conduct,
- impartiality and objectivity.

I expect our civil servants to be especially mindful and active with respect to:

- Constitutional provisions related to Panchayati Raj Institutions,
- administration and control of Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes, and
- provisions about administration of tribal areas in the North-East mentioned in the Sixth Schedule.

Dear friends,

The nation remains grateful to Sardar Patel as a builder of many aspects of modern India. One of those aspects was his conviction to appropriately modify the “Steel Frame” of the British Empire and transform it into a service which would be totally Indian in attitude and working. Sardar Patel had stated and I quote, “Your predecessors were brought up in the traditions in which they kept themselves aloof from the common run of the people. It will be your bounden duty to treat the common men in India as your own” [Unquote]. In line with the expectation of Sardar Patel, you can take a Sankalpa to serve the least developed segments and people in your sub-divisions. You should be fired by the passion to make your area ‘number one’ in terms of human development indices. And you should feel pride in transforming lives of the under-privileged. You should be sensitive to the people you are duty-bound to serve. "Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam" - the entire world is one large family - is part of the great Indian

ethos. "Bharatamev Kutumbakam" - all India is my family - should be integral to the ethos of civil servants belonging to All India Services.

I also leave you with an advice. Whatever you do is going to be closely observed twenty-four by seven by the common people, media and other stakeholders. In the next few years, the common people and others will form their opinion about your performance, contribution, lifestyle and other aspects. That image will be your professional and social capital for the rest of your career and life. You are fortunate to be in the first batch of officers in the Amrit Kal. You have to be the torch bearers of the succeeding batches leading up to the batch of 2047. This is a historic opportunity for all of you. I am sure that you will seize this opportunity and contribute your best in shaping the Shreshtha Bharat of tomorrow. I wish all of you a very bright future.

Thank you,

Jai Hind!