

**ADDRESS BY THE HON'BLE PRESIDENT OF INDIA
SMT. DROUPADI MURMU
ON THE OCCASION OF CALL ON BY THE PROBATIONARY
OFFICERS OF INDIAN RAILWAYS**

Rashtrapati Bhavan, December 16, 2022

Congratulations to you all for starting a career in this crucial juncture of your life. You all have put in long hours and hard work to get to this position. I appreciate that you have chosen to serve Indian Railways. You are joining the service at a time when India is entering Amrit Kaal and the time is apt for you to play a decisive role in the multifaceted development of the country.

Dear officers

Indian Railways is often called the 'Lifeline of the nation'. It connects a vast country like ours through a well laid out network. It will not be an exaggeration to say that Indian Railways daily carries the number of passengers which is far more than the population of some of the large countries. They are one of the uniting factors that bind our big and diverse country and her people together. This is a shining example of synergy among its various services working to provide an uninterrupted and efficient service to the people.

I am told that officers from 8 different railway services are present here today. This occasion is appropriate to emphasise the role of effective coordination among you all to ensure a safe and efficient railway transportation system. Also, today, with India moving ahead at national and global levels, we are witnessing greater movement of people and goods. This is going to increase in the future. Therefore, Indian Railways should also adopt latest digital technologies and explore new avenues to

add advanced features for a safer, time-saving, more convenient and high quality transportation services. The rail network spread across the country accelerates development which in turn gives pace to the rail network expansion.

Dear officers

Railways are the veritable lifeline for many people who commute to their workplaces for job or business on day-to-day basis. You shoulder a big responsibility since you help people earn their livelihoods daily. Many people also travel for medical treatment. The role of Railways in the life of common man remains as significant as ever. Railways have promoted travel and exchange of ideas and information across the country.

Today, aligned with the vision of New and Resurgent India, Indian Railways has taken up big developmental projects. I am happy to know that work on over 56 per cent of the length of Dedicated Freight Corridors is complete. These will increase output and carrying capacity and will thus revolutionize freight transport and transform rail network. Freight transport cost and logistics costs will reduce substantially through these corridors which will also promote industrial activities. In addition to this, programmes such as PM Gati Shakti for multi-modal connectivity, high speed rail projects, Hyperloop based transport, Char Dham rail project, Setu Bharatam are going to boost industrial, commercial and tourism activities in the country. This will also give a huge push to equitable distribution of resources. Eventually, it will lead to an ecosystem with social equity, economic growth, cultural connect and sustainable development.

Dear officers

We all carry memories associated with train journey. It is your duty to ensure that people travel in comfort so that they carry fond memories. You need to attend to the needs of differently-abled persons, women and the elderly and provide them a safe and convenient travel experience. Indian Railways has to play a key role in bridging the gaps and realising the dream of an inclusive and Atmanirbhar Bharat.

Here, I would also like to highlight the need to have higher number of women officers in Railway services. Women should opt more for railway services also. I think you are aware of the fact that the Indian Railways is one of the biggest employers in the country. Why should Indian Railways be denied a fair share of the valuable contribution that women employees can make and are making in various fields?

Now you have bigger goals ahead and you must strive harder to achieve them. You must aim to make the services of Indian Railways more and more efficient, seamless and customer-focused. I urge you all to move ahead, realize your potential and be the catalysts for India's transformation.

My best wishes to all of you for a very bright future.

Thank you,

Jai Hind!