

**ADDRESS BY THE HON'BLE PRESIDENT OF INDIA
SMT. DROUPADI MURMU
ON THE OCCASION OF CALL ON BY THE
PROBATIONERS OF INDIAN FOREIGN SERVICE 2022 BATCH**

Rashtrapati Bhavan, August 1, 2023

I extend a warm welcome to you at Rashtrapati Bhavan. It is always a pleasure for me to interact with our youth, filled with positive energy and new ideas.

I congratulate you all on joining the Indian Foreign Service. It is a great privilege to represent one's country abroad. However, this privilege requires an equally deep commitment from you to serve the people and the nation with pride, dedication and humility.

I am happy to see that this group of young Indian diplomats represents India's diversity, and also reflects the improving gender balance in the Foreign Service. This bodes well for the Service and our nation.

Dear officers,

It was good to hear about your rich training experience. You have not only learnt how our national interests are linked to the outside world, but have also gained the tools and skills required to shape the global agenda to India's benefit.

There could not be a better time to be an Indian diplomat. India's role and influence in the international arena is expanding rapidly - both as a driver of global growth and as a strong voice in global governance.

Today, the international community is looking towards India for solutions to complex global challenges: be it sustainable growth, climate change, cyber security, dealing with disasters or combating extremism and terrorism.

For young diplomats like you, this presents unprecedented opportunities along with new challenges.

Dear young officers,

India's growing profile means that you will not only have to fulfill your traditional duties, but will also have to shoulder new responsibilities for serving our political, economic and cultural interests. It could be seeking out new technology partnerships, securing markets for Indian goods and services, delivering humanitarian aid, or providing support to our Diaspora. You must be versatile and adaptable, stay well-informed, and learn to play multiple roles.

As you prepare to discharge these great responsibilities, I urge you all to keep a few things foremost in your mind:

First, the ultimate aim of all your efforts and activities abroad should be fostering growth and development in our own country. You should never lose sight of this aim as you seek out new technology, new markets, new resource suppliers and new strategic partners around the world. Your role and contribution to India's progress and prosperity are as important as that of your colleagues in other branches of the Civil Service, and you have to work with them hand-in-hand to attain this larger goal.

Second, you must carefully cultivate and promote the important role played by the 33 million strong Indian Diaspora around the world. I have seen for myself the energy and commitment of our brothers and sisters of Indian origin abroad - this must be harnessed for the good of our nation, and to improve our ties with their countries of residence.

Third, always remember that for the Indian nationals abroad, the Indian Missions are their home away from home. Consular services and community outreach must be delivered with sensitivity and a humane touch. I would urge you to regularly meet our community members, and

look after their welfare. They have no one but you to reach out to, in times of distress.

Vande Bharat Mission, Operation Ganga and Operation Kaveri, where our diplomats worked hard to repatriate thousands of our nationals abroad to their homes in India, were exemplary efforts.

Dear officers,

You must also keep up the role being played by India now as a first responder in humanitarian assistance and in disaster and pandemic relief - all these efforts contribute to the immense goodwill and respect enjoyed today by India in the global arena.

Finally, many of you are already involved in the busy calendar of events leading up to India's Presidency of the G20. You are getting hands-on experience of organizing such an important mega-event. Our G20 Presidency is unique, since India is using this platform to bring the concerns and priorities of the Global South to the forefront. I wish you all the best for a memorable and successful G20 Leaders Summit.

Dear young officers,

You are members of a very distinguished service, which has brought us many laurels. You will be playing major role in strengthening our bilateral relations and global partnerships. I am sure that you will contribute with dedication and integrity in country's developmental journey. In this journey, always remain empathetic and sensitive to the needs and aspirations of those you serve - especially the less-privileged.

In the end, I extend my best wishes to all of you for your future endeavours. May you keep our tricolour flying high, and our proud traditions alive wherever you serve.

Thank you!

Jai Hind!
Jai Bharat!