

PRESIDENT OF INDIA GRACES INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATIONS IN NEW DELHI

TO ACHIEVE DEVELOPMENT IN THE TRUE SENSE, WE MUST ENSURE EQUAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN, WHO CONSTITUTE NEARLY HALF OF THE COUNTRY'S POPULATION: PRESIDENT DROUPADI MURMU

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On the occasion of International Women's Day, the President of India Smt Droupadi Murmu graced and addressed the event organised by the Union Ministry of Women and Child Development in New Delhi today (March 8, 2026). This national-level event was organised to celebrate the achievements and contributions of women across diverse fields and reaffirm the collective commitment towards gender equality, safety, dignity and empowerment of women.



Addressing the gathering, the President said that women are playing leading role in every field—education, administration, judiciary, military, medicine, science, technology, arts and entrepreneurship. Women in rural areas are becoming financially self-reliant through Self-Help Groups. They are providing leadership to rural development in panchayats. Many women are leveraging their abilities and capabilities to provide leadership in industry, startups and the corporate world. They are excelling in sports too. Such examples instil confidence that, given the opportunities and support, women can achieve excellence in every field.



The President said that India is rapidly moving towards women-led development. Over the past decade, strong foundation has been laid for removing barriers in the path of women. India has achieved gender parity in school education. Even in higher education, the number of female students is higher in terms of Gross Enrolment Ratio. Women's participation in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education is rapidly increasing. The Union Budget 2026-27 provides for the establishment of a women's hostel in each district to help STEM students continue their studies. Our daughters are getting ready for leadership roles in the knowledge economy.



The President said that women are emerging as job creators. More than half of the start-ups receiving support under Start-up India scheme have at least one female director. More than two lakh women-owned MSMEs are currently active on the Government e-Marketplace (GeM). The SHE-Mart initiative, launched

in the Union Budget 2026-27, will provide better markets for products made by self-help groups and rural women. The labour codes implemented last year aim to provide a more inclusive, safe and empowering work environment for women workers.

The President said that despite numerous efforts toward women's empowerment, many obstacles still remain in their journey of development. For example, even today, many women face problems such as discrimination, unequal pay for equal work and domestic violence. These cannot be addressed solely through legislation. A shift in societal mindset is essential. Only when we move beyond the mindset of gender-based discrimination can we truly establish equality in society.



The President said that to achieve development in the true sense, we must ensure equal participation of women, who constitute nearly half of the country's population. We have set the goal of making India a developed nation by 2047. For our country to progress rapidly and for realising the full potential of citizens for the national benefit, it is essential that we not only inspire women to dream big but also support them at every step in achieving those dreams. In an environment free from fear and discrimination, women can contribute their best towards nation-building. She said that, on this International Women's Day, all citizens should pledge to provide education and equal opportunities to every girl, to prioritise the respect and safety of women, and to strive to eliminate all forms of discrimination prevalent in society. By doing so, we can present the ideal of women's empowerment to the world.

Please click [here](#) to see the President's speech-

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