

REPUBLIC DAY 2019

Greetings to all of you on 70th Republic Day of India! Today, we are celebrating our 70th Republic Day and also our transition from a colonial governed state to an independent Republic.

As we all know that India gained independence on 15th August 1947, but we remained as dominion status under the British, until 26th January 1950, when the Constitution of India was adopted by the Constituent Assembly; marking India's emergence as a fully Independent, Democratic and Republic Nation.

The freedom and rights that we enjoy today as the citizens of India, not to mention this Democratic setup, we owe it all to our Constitution and to the people who created it. Constitution of India is the supreme governing document; it is a rule book of India that includes everything from rights of an ordinary citizen to the rights of its President. It assures the citizens of fundamental rights and justice, liberty and fraternity.

At this day, the Constitution of India came into force in 1950 however, was adopted on 26 November 1949 by the Constituent Assembly. On 26 January, India was declared Purna Swaraj by the Indian National Congress in 1930 that's why 26 January was chosen to bring Indian Constitution into force. After its enforcement the Union of India officially became contemporary Republic of India which had replaced the Government of India Act 1935 to fundamental governing document. Our country was declared a sovereign, secular, socialist, and democratic republic by the Constitution. Our constitution assures the citizens of India about justice, liberty, and equality among them.

Our Indian Constitution was drafted by the Constituent Assembly (389 members). It took around three years (actually two years, eleven

months and eighteen days) to be written. A Drafting Committee was set up by the Constituent Assembly on 29th of August in 1947 to draft the Constitution under the Chairmanship of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. Some important figures of the drafting committee were Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Jawaharlal Nehru, Ganesh Vasudev Mavalankar, C. Rajagopalachari, Sanjay Phakey, Balwantrao Mehta, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Kanaiyalal Munshi, Rajendra Prasad, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Nalini Ranjan Ghosh, Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, and Sandipkumar Patel. More than 30 members of the total drafting committee were from scheduled class. Some important women members of the committee were Sarojini Naidu, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Durgabai Deshmukh, Hansa Mehta, and Vijayalakshmi Pandit. Constitution of India gives rights to its citizens to select their own government.

Much had been sacrificed by our freedom fighters to gain independence. Many even lost their lives for it. They could have easily rested their guards and enjoyed the fruits of independence; instead they took the laborious and painful task of formulating a Constitution for India. Because they had a vision! They had a vision of India where no discrimination is made among its people on the basis of caste, religion, ethnicity etc; where equal opportunity is provided to all irrespective of region or gender; where freedom of religion, expression, education are provided to the citizens. At the apex of the idea was a government of the people, for the people and by the people; resting the ultimate power in the hands of people of India. With this vision at heart, the noble souls framed the Constitution of India.

The great men and women who framed our Constitution had a great foresight and well understood the significance of rule of law for peaceful and prosperous existence.

It is very important for us to understand the meaning and values of being a Republic. Being a Republic means having an elected form of government, elected by the people through a Democratic setup. A

government where chosen representatives could exercise their powers according to the rule of law as enshrined in the Constitution. People have the power to overthrow the government on the charges of non performance or corruption.

In the Republic of India, people are its true stakeholders and the pillars. We all are the pillars of Republic of India in our own capacities. Soldiers who defend the Republic of India are a pillar; mothers nurture the pillars of Republic; fathers who look for the needs of the Republic; doctors, engineers, lawyers who tend to our Republic in their own ways; teachers who instill good values into our Republic; officers who maintain law and order or dispense their public duties for the Republic; ministers and elected representatives who formulate the policies for the Republic; even the sweeper who keeps our republic clean is a pillar of the Republic of India.

I may have missed mentioning many, but the bottom line is that every citizen of India is a pillar on which the legacy of Republic of India stands.

We all must together take the legacy of India forward, cherishing our Republican and Democratic values, moving on the path of progress and prosperity. Moving a huge nation on the path to progress and prosperity is indeed a big project. It will require an effort from each one of us; which is only possible when we stay united and admire the principles of Republican and Democratic setup.

A disciplined and morally upright nation is built by disciplined and morally upright institutions. Institutions that respect their fraternal relationship with other institutions. Institutions that maintain the integrity, discipline and limits of their functioning, without compromising on excellence. Institutions that are always more important than the individuals located there. And institutions where the holders and

members make every attempt to live up to the office they occupy as trustees of the people.

A Nation will be able to prosper and grow only when its people are happy and content. To be happy we need to have rights, powers, equal opportunities, justice, liberty and fraternity. These Rights are guaranteed by the Constitution of India, whose inception we celebrate as Republic Day.

It is therefore Ladies and Gentlemen, not only a gazetted holiday but also a day to admire the principles of Republic and thank the men and women who framed our Constitution. Take a day off from your daily routine to teach your children the significance of Constitution and the principles of Democracy and Republic.

Celebrate the Republic Day with Nationalism at heart and in your conduct too. Acknowledge the fact that we all are equal irrespective of our caste, creed, religion, gender, ethnicity, language spoken or financial status. Instill the same values into our children. Remember, they too are the pillars of the Republic of India and the ones to whom we will be later handing the Nation's legacy.

With this Ladies and Gentlemen I conclude my speech on Republic Day, wishing you all once again a very Happy Republic Day and hoping that we will achieve the goals of development and prosperity together!