

**ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA,
SMT DROUPADI MURMU
AT THE KESHAV MEMORIAL EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY**

Narayanaguda, Hyderabad, December 27, 2022

It is my great pleasure to be here today, among such bright and enthusiastic young minds. I would like to begin by recognising the rich history and noble mission of the Keshav Memorial Educational Society. Founded in 1940 by Sri Vinayak Rao Vidyalkar in honor of his father, Justice Keshav Rao Koratkar, this institution has lived upto its motto of, 'विद्ययाऽमृतमश्नुते' that means knowledge provides immortal wisdom. It is a commitment to not only imparting conventional knowledge, but also to moulding students into good citizens with strong character.

The Keshav Memorial Educational Society has a rich history of activism and social responsibility. I am told that its grounds were the site of a historic flag-hoisting ceremony on 15th August 1947, when Hyderabad was still ruled by the Nizam. Its management committee has included prominent freedom fighters such as Narayan Rao Pawar, Vandemataram Ramachandra Rao, and Kande Rao Kulkarni.

I am particularly impressed by the Keshav Memorial Educational Society's commitment to provide free clinic, adoption of village for development and efforts to provide free education to all the children who lost a parent due to COVID-19. The society's focus on instruction in Marathi, Hindi and Telugu is a step towards its inclusive approach to education and serving the needs of the community. I congratulate the present management of the society for undertaking this important work.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Education is the foundation upon which a nation is built. It is the key to unlocking the full potential of every individual. I am pleased to see that the activities of Keshav Memorial Educational Society have grown many fold —from a small school in 1940 to a premier educational centre with nine different colleges, enrolling over 11,000 students.

This growth is a tribute to the ideals of Justice Keshav Rao Koratkar in whose memory the society has been established. I am happy to have paid floral tributes at his statue at this campus. I am happy to know, out of the total students, almost 40 per cent are girls. We need more of our girls to study and excel especially in higher education institutions.

Mahatma Gandhi said and I quote, “If you educate a man you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman you educate an entire family.” [Unquote]. When girls are given equal access to education and opportunities, they often outperform the boys. They are an incredible source of talent and potential.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am glad that celebrations of the 75th anniversary of the Liberation of Hyderabad are being held as part of the ‘Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav’. This holds great significance for the people of this region and for the nation as a whole. It was through the intervention of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel that the Nizam was forced to surrender and Hyderabad was integrated into the Indian Union. It will be my privilege to pay floral tributes at the statue of the ‘Iron Man of India’, after this function. I want to take this opportunity to pay tribute to all the brave leaders who fought for the liberation of Hyderabad, including Ramji Gond, Turrebaz Khan, Komaram Bheem, Suravaram Pratap Reddy, and Shoyabulla Khan. Their valor and sacrifice will always be remembered and honored. Before coming here, I inaugurated a photo exhibition depicting the bravery of those patriots who fought for the Liberation of Hyderabad.

As we celebrate this historic milestone, it is important for us to remember that our independence is not just about the liberation from oppressive rulers of the past. It is also about insuring a bright future through well conceived steps taken today. As we look to the future, it is up to you all – the young people of India – to ensure that we build upon the foundations laid by our forefathers and take our nation to new heights.

This means working hard and striving for excellence in all that we do. It means being responsible and committed citizens, who are willing to contribute to the betterment of our society. It means upholding the values and ideals of our Constitution, and working towards a more inclusive and equitable society. It means fighting climate change and preserving the planet for future generations.

My dear students,

As students of diverse disciplines including technology, management, law, commerce, humanities and social sciences, you represent the entire range of academic and intellectual potential of India. I am confident that the implementation of National Education Policy 2020 will create a learner-centric education system to foster critical thinking and creativity. This shift in focus will not only benefit you as individuals, but will also contribute to the overall progress and development of the nation.

My dear students,

In the context of education, I want to emphasise on the importance of reading. The habit of reading is one of the most effective means for self-development. Reading may also help improve other skills like your vocabulary, critical thinking, and communication skills. It is a skill that will serve you well throughout your life, irrespective of the career path you choose.

While inaugurating a library in 1964, my learned predecessor President Dr S. Radhakrishnan had said and I quote," It is easy to go to a cinema or a picture or see a drama or quarrel with friends; but to sit down quietly and read a book from the first to the last page is an exercise in discipline." (unquote)

In an age of internet and social media when attention span is getting shorter and communication is limited in characters, I will urge you to read more in order to improve your understanding and widen your perspective.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to take this opportunity to appreciate the residents of Hyderabad for its successes as a modern hub for technology and innovation. Hyderabad is a city of opportunities, with a thriving IT sector and modern amenities that make it a great place to live and work. It is a city with a rich cultural heritage and a diverse population, making it a melting pot of ideas and perspectives. This diversity is one of the city's greatest strengths, and has contributed to its success as a centre of growth. I encourage all of you to avail opportunities that this city has to offer.

Dear students,

I am confident that you will play a vital role in realizing the dream of India becoming a more prosperous, strong and developed nation. I wish you the very best in your academic pursuits and bright future.

Thank you,
Jai Hind!
Jai Bharat!