

**ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA, SHRI PRANAB
MUKHERJEE AT THE BANQUET HOSTED IN HIS HONOUR BY
THE CHIEF OF NAVAL STAFF**

Visakhapatnam: 06-02-2016

It is a singular honour and a rare privilege for me to address this gathering, celebrating a momentous International Fleet Review. Today's ensemble of distinguished government officials, naval officers and dignitaries from 50 countries across the globe is indicative of the inherent desire in each one of us to unite and work together for global peace and the common good of humanity.

India has from the ancient times been a seafaring nation ever since Indus Valley had trade and cultural links with other countries of the world. Our seafarers have carried the message of peace to far corners of the world for several centuries. History has shown us that India's trade and commerce, and its very existence as an independent nation depends upon the safe and secure seas around it. Indeed, it is today an indisputable fact that the independence and prosperity of all nations, and the peace and tranquility of the world, hinge upon the security and stability of the seas and the oceans. The concept of indivisible seas is today a political, economic and strategic reality. Economic progress of nations is bridged to safe seas, free for all to use. Maintaining stability of oceans is the shared responsibility of all nations and it is incumbent on each one of us to synergise our efforts for the common benefit of the global community and to secure a better and more prosperous future for generations to come.

The emerging maritime security challenges, across the oceans of the world, have magnified the responsibilities of navies. The

seemingly vast stretches of water are our common economic development highways connecting distant lands with bonds of friendship. In order to preserve and secure our shared global highways, and to maintain good order at sea, India, and in particular the Indian Navy, has always pro-actively engaged like-minded maritime nations. Presence of your warships, personnel and delegations at this International Fleet Review aptly reflects and carries forward our endeavours to highlight that we are “**United through Oceans**”. IFR 2016 beckons nations across the world, to join us in our quest to promote safety, security and stability across the oceans of the world.

I once again thank all those who have joined us with their magnificent ships, distinguished delegations, and made this event a resounding success. I am confident that IFR 2016, and all associated events, will enable each one of us to further cement our bonds of friendship, and build on it to promote goodwill across the oceans.

The memories of this magnificent day spent amongst some of the finest professionals in white uniform from across the globe, seeing flags of several nations flutter over the serene waters of the Bay of Bengal, majestic ships, submarines and aircraft lined up in precise symmetry and manoeuvring in perfect harmony, the symphony at the Band Concert, and this gala evening, will stay with me for several years to come. It appeared as if the entire universe had transformed to proclaim the central message of IFR 2016, that we are all ‘United through Oceans’. I am certain that all our guests will carry fond memories from their stay here at Visakhapatnam and will cherish their participation in IFR 2016.

My congratulations to the Indian Navy for having conceived this International Fleet Review, and then making this majestic event take shape. The grand conduct of today's International Fleet Review is a testimony to the professionalism and skills of our men and women in whites, and the astute vision of Navy's leadership. I compliment all those who have worked tirelessly for several months, planning and executing this event to perfection.

I wish everyone present here fair winds, following seas, and success in their future endeavours.

Thank You.

Jai Hind!