

**SPEECH OF THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA, SHRI PRANAB  
MUKHERJEE ON THE OCCASION OF INAUGURATION OF THE  
INDIA INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR 2016 (IITF 2016)**

**New Delhi : November 14, 2016**

I am indeed very happy to have this opportunity to be present at the Inaugural Ceremony of the 36<sup>th</sup> edition of the India International Trade Fair (IITF). This Fair commences every year on 14<sup>th</sup> November, the birth anniversary of the first Prime Minister of India, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru.

2. The IITF is a mega projection of the new India that is fast taking shape. It showcases the vision of a glorious tomorrow, a spirit of excellence and achievement and unparalleled investment opportunity through the prism of the 'Make in India' and 'Digital India' initiatives taken by the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi. The fair symbolises India's commitment towards bringing the benefits of economic reform to its people from all walks of life, especially the under-privileged.

3. I am heartened to see the considerable presence of foreign companies at the fair. I would like to make a special mention of India's continued endeavour of empowering and bringing together all constructive forces for a better world. The recent BRICS and BIMSTEC summits have created a great reservoir of goodwill which is vital for consolidating our economic and cultural linkages and societal bonds with countries across the world.

4. India has always believed in the stability and growth of our neighbouring countries. 'Putting People First' is the guiding philosophy of our development cooperation partnership. Focused on an agenda aimed at regional harmony, peace and prosperity, we look forward to working together in priority areas such as infrastructure, development connectivity, capacity building, education, healthcare and the setting-up of development projects.

5. India is working with like-minded countries in multilateral organisations including the United Nations to play an enhanced role in diverse fora – from the Arctic Council and the Pacific Alliance to the UN Security Council where India has made a legitimate claim for a permanent membership.

6. Apart from economic dimensions, I believe that a fair such as IITF provides an excellent opportunity to introspect on challenges, integrate minds and prepare strategies for the mammoth task of nation building. As India strives to become a manufacturing hub in diverse sectors, it needs to increase its energy resources without compromising on the environmental aspects. Factors such as demography, development and urbanisation exert tremendous pressure on availability of resources. Large-scale utilisation of resources impacts adversely on the environment. Industry, therefore, needs to adopt eco-friendly measures and technologies. I am happy to note that the present Government is focusing greater attention on renewable energy sources.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

7. As there is a considerable presence of foreign countries along with Indian States and UTs in the fair, I would like to share with you that a range of reforms being currently undertaken, including GST, shall enable the States and Union Territories to compete with each other in attracting investment and business opportunities. Over the medium and long term, these reforms shall also hopefully result in job creation thus contributing to the growth impulses of the economy.

8. It is a matter of great satisfaction that the Ministry of Commerce and Industry has taken an excellent initiative towards improving the 'Ease of Doing Business' in India with added emphasis on simplification and rationalisation of existing rules procedures and processes.

Government's recent initiatives on E-Governance have begun to show results in terms of more efficient and effective delivery of public services.

9. I recall having been associated with ITPO and IITF while serving the government in different capacities. I am pleased to see it grow into a larger and more inclusive platform now. I take this opportunity to welcome the global business community who have converged here to further trade and business relations.

10. It is encouraging to note that the IITF this year is seeing the presence of 7000 participants, including representation from 24 foreign countries, almost all States/Union Territories, apex public sector enterprises and the MSME and CAPART pavilions with around 800 rural artisans and crafts persons. I am told that the National Minorities

Development and Finance Corporation is also participating along with 100 artisans in this fair this year. I compliment them.

11. I compliment ITPO for the theme of 'Digital India', this year. Digital technologies, e-commerce, e-enabled and mobile services are major components of e-governance and will, over time, contribute significantly to GDP growth. We, at the same time, also need to make use of our abundant renewable sources to create a society that is self-sustaining and mindful of its responsibilities towards the present and future generations.

12. I believe that IITF will reinforce Indian brands - brands that will, in the first instance, compete and win against the dominant international players in the domestic market before venturing overseas.

13. I especially welcome our foreign friends, exhibitors, delegates and members of the diplomatic corps to this event which is considered a microcosm of India- a land of vibrancy, culture, spirituality and peace.

14. I extend my good wishes to all participants from India and overseas especially, the 'Partner Country' - the 'Republic of South Korea' - and the Focus Country, 'Belarus'. The 'Partner States' for the IITF this year are Madhya Pradesh & Jharkhand while Haryana is the 'Focus State' - I hope all three of them will make full use of the opportunities that this fair presents.

15. I am happy to know that ITPO has taken special measures this year to improve facilities offered to visitors such as **online sale of tickets, online booking of space**, providing Wi-Fi facilities, introducing a separate award category for the best State pavilion dedicated to '**Swachh Bharat**' initiatives within State pavilions and providing details of the fair on mobile applications for convenience of the visitors. 'Team ITPO', as well as all associated service agencies, deserve to be complimented for the excellent arrangements, logistics and facilities that are now going to be provided to users.

16. I am confident that the 36<sup>th</sup> edition of this fair will promote business convergence and cohesiveness amongst the investors, manufacturers and retailers. It will also hopefully create a better understanding and awareness of 'Digital India', 'Make in India' and the 'Swachh Bharat' campaigns. With these few words, I declare the India International Trade Fair 2016 open and wish all of you the very best and success in your endeavours.

Thank you.

Jai Hind!!

\*\*\*\*\*