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PM addresses G20 Ministerial Conference on Women Empowerment

02 Aug, 2023

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“Under India’s G20 Presidency, it has been decided to establish a new Working Group on ‘Women Empowerment’

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PM’s remarks on Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam in Rajya Sabha

21 Sep, 2023

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi addressed the G20 Ministerial Conference on Women Empowerment held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat via video message today.

Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister welcomed the dignitaries to Gandhinagar, a city named after Mahatma Gandhi on its formation day and expressed delight that they are getting the opportunity to visit Gandhi Ashram in Ahmedabad. Underlining the need to find urgent and sustainable solutions for issues like climate change and global warming, the Prime Minister said that one can witness first-hand the simplicity of Gandhiji’s lifestyle and his visionary ideas of sustainability, self-reliance and equality at Gandhi Ashram. Shri Modi expressed confidence that the dignitaries will find it inspirational. He also mentioned visiting the Dandi Kuteer Museum and informed that Gandhiji’s famous spinning wheel or Charkha was found by a woman named Gangaben at a village nearby. Since then, the Prime Minister said that Gandhiji started wearing Khadi which became a symbol of self-reliance and sustainability.

“When women prosper, the world prospers”, the Prime Minister remarked as he noted that their economic



voices inspire positive change. The Prime Minister underlined that the most effective way to empower women is through a women-led development approach and India is making huge strides in this direction.

The Prime Minister emphasized that India's President Smt Droupadi Murmu is setting an inspiring example herself. He underlined that she leads the world's largest democracy and serves as the Commander-in-Chief of the world's second-largest defence force even though she comes from a humble tribal background. In this Mother of Democracy, the Prime Minister said, the 'Right to Vote' was granted equally to all citizens including women by the Indian Constitution right from the beginning and the right to contest elections was also granted based on equality. The Prime Minister noted that elected women representatives have been key agents of economic, environmental and social change and informed that 46% of elected representatives in rural local bodies in India are women numbering 1.4 million. Underlining that the mobilization of women into self-help groups has also been a powerful force for change, the Prime Minister highlighted the self-help groups and elected women representatives emerging as pillars of support for our communities during the pandemic. The Prime Minister gave examples of their achievements and mentioned the manufacturing of masks and sanitisers, and creating awareness about prevention of infection. "More than 80% of nurses and midwives in India are women. They were our first line of defence during the pandemic. And, we are proud of their achievements", he added.

Underlining that women-led development has been a key priority for the government, the Prime Minister mentioned that around 70% of the loans up to one million rupees to support micro-level units under the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana have been sanctioned



impacts the environment and improves the health of women, the Prime Minister highlighted the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana and informed that nearly 100 million cooking gas connections have been provided to rural women. He also informed that the number of women in technical education in Industrial Training Institutes has doubled since 2014, nearly 43 percent of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) graduates in India are women, and about one-fourth of space scientists in India are women. “Behind the success of our flagship programmes like Chandrayaan, Gaganyaan and Mission Mars lies the talent and hard work of these women scientists”, he said. Today, the Prime Minister said, more women are enrolling in higher education than men in India. He also pointed out that India has one of the highest percentages of female pilots in civil aviation while female pilots in the Indian Air Force are also flying fighter aircrafts. Shri Modi noted that women officers are being deployed in operational roles and fighting platforms in all our armed forces.

The Prime Minister highlighted the pivotal roles played by women as the backbone of rural agricultural families and as small traders and shopkeepers. Underlining their close association with nature, the Prime Minister said that women hold the key to innovative solutions to climate change. He recalled how women led the first prominent climate action in India in the 18th century when the Bishnoi community of Rajasthan led by Amrita Devi started the ‘Chipko Movement’ to prevent unregulated logging. The Prime Minister informed that she along with several other villagers laid down her life for the cause of nature. “Women in India have also been brand Ambassadors for ‘Mission LiFE – Lifestyle for Environment’”, the Prime Minister said as he highlighted their traditional wisdom to reduce, reuse, recycle, and re-purpose. Under various initiatives, the Prime Minister added, women are actively getting trained in making solar



“Women entrepreneurs are significant contributors to the global economy”, the Prime Minister said as he emphasized the role of women entrepreneurs in India. Decades ago, he said, in 1959 seven Gujarati women in Mumbai came together to create a historic cooperative movement – Shri Mahila Grih Udyog which has transformed the lives of millions of women and their families. Shri Modi highlighted their most famous product, Lijjat Papad, and said that it will probably be on the food menus in Gujarat! He also gave the example of the dairy sector and informed that there are 3.6 million women involved in this sector in Gujarat alone. Shri Modi pointed out that in India, about 15% of unicorn startups have at least one woman founder and the combined value of these women-led unicorns is over 40 billion dollars. The Prime Minister stresses the need to create a level platform where women achievers become the norm. He emphasized working towards removing the barriers that restrict their access to markets, global value chains, and affordable finance while ensuring that the burden of care and domestic work is appropriately addressed at the same time.

Concluding the address, the Prime Minister lauded the focus of the Ministerial Conference on women’s entrepreneurship, leadership and education and expressed delight at the launch of the ‘Tech-Equity Platform’ to enhance digital and financial literacy for women. He also mentioned that under India’s G20 Presidency, a new Working Group on ‘Women Empowerment’ is being established. He expressed confidence that untiring efforts in Gandhinagar will give immense hope and confidence to women around the world.