

## New India needs women as equal partners, says Modi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has stressed the need to have women as equal partners in the development of the country.

"Today, the country is moving forward from the path of women development to women-led development," he said in the 41st edition of his *Mann Ki Baat* radio broadcast on Sunday.

Recalling Swami Vivekananda's words that "the idea of perfect womanhood is perfect independence", Mr. Modi said: "This idea of Swami ji about 125 years ago expresses the contemplation of woman power in Indian culture. Today, it is our duty to ensure the participation of women in every field of life, be it social or economic life; it is also our fundamental duty."

The Prime Minister said a woman's power today underlined inner fortitude and self-confidence, which made her self-reliant.

"Not only has she herself advanced but has carried forward the country and society to newer heights ... Today the country is moving forward from the path of women development to women-led development," he said.

Referring to International Women's Day observed every year on March 8, he said, "We are part of a tradition where men were identified because of women. Yashoda-Nandan, Kaushalya-Nandan, Gandhari-Putra, these were identities of a son ..."

### Focus on safety

Apart from women's rights, Mr. Modi spoke at length about National Safety Day, National Science Day and issues such as clean energy.

"If we are not aware of safety in our daily life, if we are not able to attain a certain level, it will get extremely difficult during the time of disasters," he said.

Mr. Modi regretted that while people read signboards put up on safety issues, they often ignored the messages.

"Leave aside natural disasters, most of the mishaps are a consequence of some mistake or the other on our part. If we stay alert, abide by the prescribed rules and regulations, we shall not only be able to save our own lives but we can also prevent catastrophes harming society," he said.

He urged the people to inculcate safety in their day-to-day lives, stressing that India had to become a "risk-conscious" society.

He said that till three years ago, thousands of people lost their lives every year because of heat waves.

Since then, the National Disaster Management Authority had organised workshops on heatwave management to raise awareness among the people, the Prime Minister said.

"In 2017, the death toll on account of heatwave remarkably came down to around 220 or so. This proves that if we accord priority to safety, we can actually attain safety," he said.

### 'Gobar Dhan' scheme

Mr. Modi also referred to the newly launched “Gobar Dhan” scheme for converting rural waste into clean energy through biogas under the government’s Swachh Bharat campaign. ‘Gobar Dhan’ — Galvanising Organic Bio Agro Resources — would ensure a hygienic environment in villages and monetise cattle dung and solid agricultural waste.

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