



Home India President Pranab Mukherjee In Kolkata: 'Country must move forward as a whole, not by caste or community'

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Earlier, Mukherjee had inaugurated the year-long celebration of Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis on his 125th birth anniversary at Indian Statistical Institute (ISI), and said that there had been debates since liberalisation process was ushered in 1991.



President Pranab Mukherjee. (Source: PTI Photo)

Addressing a function in Kolkata on Thursday, President [Pranab Mukherjee](#) said the country must move forward as a whole and not by caste or community. After inaugurating a global summit on ‘Academic and Economic Reforms – Role of Cost and Management Accountants’, organised by the Institute of Cost Accountants of India (ICAI), the President said, “India is a diverse country with 1.3 billion people speaking around 200 languages, practicing seven major religions and belonging to three major ethnic groups yet remaining under one system, one flag and one Constitution. This is the ethos of India. We must have change. We must move forward as a whole and not in isolation. Not in groups, not in individual, not in caste or community but for the entire land mass of India.”

In the backdrop of the recent incidents of violence targeting Muslims in the country, he added, “We are not indulging in the flow of blood, rolling of heads to achieve our

objective.”

Mukherjee said major reforms have been brought in by Prime Minister [Narendra Modi](#), such as presentation of the Budget on February 1 instead of February 28. He also said that the introduction of GST, slated to be rolled out on July 1, will be another major reform. “From tomorrow midnight, when the PM pushes the button, 130 crore people living in such a vast area will come under one taxation system. One nation, one taxation — GST,” he said. The President also said that he had introduced in 2011 a Constitution amendment bill to facilitate the GST, but it could not win the majority.

Earlier in the day, Mukherjee had inaugurated the year-long celebration of Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis on his 125th birth anniversary at the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI). Speaking at the event, he had said that there had been lots of debates and people were divided in two groups — opinion givers and opinion seekers — when the liberalisation process was ushered in 1991.

He also said that his last day in office was July 25 and that he was happy to be at ISI on his final visit to Kolkata as President. “Perhaps this may be my last visit to Kolkata in my capacity as President of the Republic of India. I will lay down my office on July 25 as per the provisions of the Constitution. I am truly happy that on my last occasion on eve of departure, I had the privilege of addressing mighty minds in the form of teachers, students, intellectuals, policy makers and police implementers in this gathering,” he said. Before becoming President, Mukherjee was chairman of the ISI.

While speaking at a function to inaugurate a unified campus of the prestigious Bose Institute, Asia’s first modern research centre devoted to inter-disciplinary research, he asked people to pursue and celebrate “oneness” amidst India’s rich diversity, said a PTI report.

“It (search) is still to be pursued to find oneness amidst varieties. To identify it. Not to ignore it, but to celebrate it amidst the huge diversities which we have,” PTI quoted the president as saying.