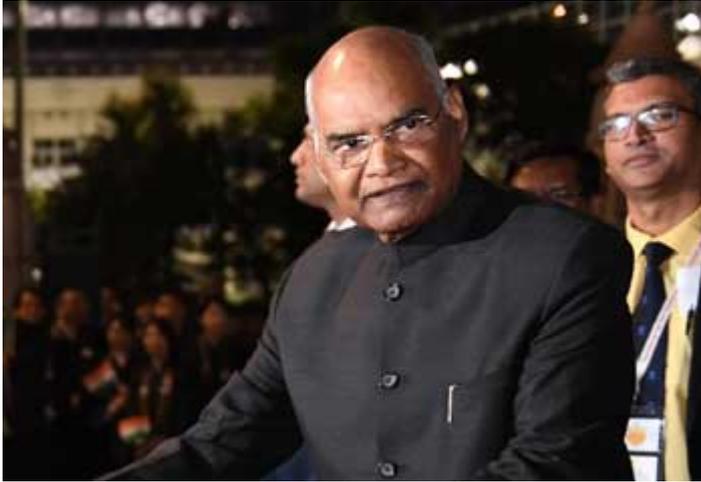


There are some people whose life and deeds lift our spirits

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New Delhi,

When the whole world was using space for military domination, Dr. Sarabhai thought that for India with its immense size and diversity, the space technology is the suitable platform for fast-track development, said the President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind. He was addressing the valedictory function of Dr Vikram Sarabhai Birth Centenary Celebrations, being organized by the Department of Space and Department of Atomic Energy, today (September 25, 2020) through a video message.

Remembering Dr Vikram Sarabhai, the President said that there are some people whose life and deeds lift our spirits. Dr Vikram Sarabhai, 'Father of Indian Space Programme', is one of them. A man of singular charm, he was full of humility that masked his tall achievements. He was a world-class scientist, a policymaker and also an institution-builder - a rarest of rare combination. He achieved it all in a relatively short span of time, as if he knew his end was near. His life unfortunately was cut short too early. We wonder where India's space science would have reached if he could have served the nation for long.

The President said that as a scientist, Dr Sarabhai was never content with merely noting observations. He always looked into the implications of the experimental data for a better understanding of the nature of the interplanetary space. Between 1947 and 1971, he published as many as 85 research papers in national and international science journals.

The President said that Dr Sarabhai was also a great pragmatist. He did not steer India's Space Programme on the lines of other space-faring nations. Instead of the incremental mode, he preferred leapfrogging. He was convinced that a developing country like India should directly plunge into satellite communication. He wanted to demonstrate the usefulness of a satellite system for national development. Today, we realise the significance of his dream, when the Covid-19 pandemic has failed to interrupt school education which has continued in the remote learning mode.

The President said that the government has paid a fitting tribute to the legendary scientist by announcing space sector reforms in the birth centenary year of Dr Sarabhai. Dr Sarabhai famously said, "We must be second to none in the application of advanced technologies to the real problems of man and society." When India strives to become more 'Atma-nirbhar', we realize the significance of his words, the President added.

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