

**OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL OF
INDIA**

**New Delhi
24th September, 2024**

**PRESIDENT OF INDIA INAUGURATES ASIAN ORGANISATION OF
SUPREME AUDIT INSTITUTION ASSEMBLY**

**AUDITS AND EVALUATIONS BY SAIS NOT ONLY SAFEGUARD
PUBLIC FUNDS BUT ALSO ENHANCE PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN
GOVERNANCE: PRESIDENT MURMU**

**CAG OF INDIA SET TO ASSUME CHAIRMANSHIP OF ASOSAI
CAG PROMISES TO STRENGTHEN AUDIT PRACTICES, IT AUDIT,
LOCAL BODY AUDITS AND PSE AUDITS**

CAG has lived up to the expectations of the Constitution-makers and has played a key role in ensuring transparency and accountability in the country's public finance. This was stated by the President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu at the opening ceremony of the 16th Asian Organisation of Supreme Audit Institution (ASOSAI) Assembly here today. The conference has been organised by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India.

The President stated that it was not without reason that the Indian Constitution vested the office of CAG with a wide mandate and complete autonomy. It follows a strict code of ethical and moral conduct that ensures the highest order of probity in its functioning.

The President said that the mandate of public sector audits has expanded beyond traditional auditing to include assessing the effectiveness of public welfare schemes and projects, ensuring that they serve all citizens equitably. She stated that in an increasingly technology-driven world, more and more public services are being delivered using technology. Audit, therefore, needs to keep up with technological evolution in order to be able to perform its oversight functions effectively.

The President said that, we are at a critical juncture where emerging digital technologies like artificial intelligence, data analytics, machine learning and geo-spatial technology are becoming the backbone of modern governance. Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) serves as the foundation to support and enhance the

functioning of the digital economy and services provided to citizens. From digital identities to e-governance platforms, DPI has the potential to revolutionise the delivery of public services and goods, making them more accessible, efficient, and inclusive.

The President said that in many parts of the world, women and vulnerable sections of the society have less access to digital technologies, fewer opportunities to develop digital skills, and are under-represented in the digital economy. This divide not only limits their ability to access essential services but also perpetuates inequality. This is where the role of Supreme Audit Institutions (SAIs) becomes crucial. As auditors, they have the unique responsibility and opportunity to ensure that digital public infrastructure is designed and implemented in a way that is inclusive and accessible to all.

She said that the financial world is often beset by opaque accounting practices. In this setting, the role of independent Supreme Audit Institutions is to see that public resources are managed efficiently, effectively and with the utmost integrity. Audits and evaluations by SAIs not only safeguard public funds but also enhance public confidence in governance.

The President said that the institution of CAG of India has a rich history of public auditing. She expressed confidence that SAI India, as hosts of the 16th ASOSAI Assembly, will have a lot to offer in the deliberations of the learned minds gathered in the Assembly. She congratulated SAI India for assuming the Chairmanship of ASOSAI for the period 2024 to 2027. She expressed confidence that under the able stewardship of the CAG of India, ASOSAI will reach new heights, fostering greater cooperation and innovation among the members.

While welcoming the delegates, CAG of India, Shri Girish Chandra Murmu, said that ASOSAI has become a vital platform for knowledge-sharing, capacity-building, and collaboration among member SAIs. Mr. Murmu emphasized the expanding role of SAIs in an increasingly digitalized world: “The digital provision of public services, artificial intelligence, and rapidly emerging technologies offer tremendous opportunities for effective public service delivery. However, these advancements also pose risks of bias, exclusion, and privacy concerns for vulnerable sections of society. SAIs must play a crucial role in ensuring that digital public services are inclusive and transparent.”

He further emphasized SAI India’s commitment as it assumes the Chairmanship of ASOSAI for the term 2024-2027, promising to drive forward efforts to strengthen audit practices, emphasizing additional efforts in strengthening IT audit, Local Body Audits, and audits of state-owned enterprises.

On the side-lines of the 16th ASOSAI Assembly, Mr. Girish Chandra Murmu, Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India, held a bilateral meeting with H.E. Datuk Wan Suraya Wan Mohd Radzi, Auditor General of Malaysia, to explore potential collaboration in public sector auditing.

Mr. Murmu also met Mr. Einer Gorrissen, Director General of the INTOSAI Development Initiative (IDI). The discussions focused on cooperation in the field of SDGs and emerging technologies such as data analytics and Artificial Intelligence (AI) to audit government technological transformations.

As part of the assembly, a Symposium will be held tomorrow, addressing the theme: “Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) and Gender Divide—Issues of Inclusion and Accessibility.” This will serve as a platform for delegates to discuss the audit of DPI and explore strategies to address disparities in digital access, with a focus on promoting inclusivity.

The 16th ASOSAI Assembly represents a significant milestone in regional collaboration, with the upcoming days set to include insightful discussions on public audit practices, governance challenges, and innovative approaches to strengthening accountability across Asia. The assembly is expected to culminate in the adoption of the New Delhi Declaration, setting the future roadmap for ASOSAI.