

**ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA,  
SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND ON THE OCCASION OF CALL ON BY THE  
OFFICER TRAINEES OF INDIAN DEFENCE ESTATES SERVICE,  
INDIAN TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICE AND P&T BUILDING  
WORKS SERVICE**

**July 11, 2018, Rashtrapati Bhavan**

1. I welcome you all to Rashtrapati Bhavan and congratulate you for your selection to your respective services, that is, Indian Defence Estates Service, Indian Telecommunication Service and P&T Building Works Service. Your selection through a tough competitive process is an achievement both for you and your families. I congratulate all of you for this.
2. Your services provide you an enormous platform for serving the nation. You shall be responsible for managing important projects in different domains and serve crucial sectors such as Defence and Telecommunications. Few jobs offer a chance to work in an office where everything that you do, can be an act of service to the nation. You should be proud that you are choosing a career with a direct connection to the nation's development.
3. Those among you who have joined the Indian Telecommunication Service and P&T Building Works Service are going to manage key positions in our telecom sector. Our country has the world's second largest telecom network based on the total number of users. This sector has witnessed rapid growth especially in the wireless segment and is today regarded as basic infrastructure just like electricity, roads, and water. The telecom sector is a critical component for achieving rapid economic progress and socio economic development.
4. Indian Telecommunication Service officers have an important role to play as we seek to connect the unconnected especially in our rural and remote areas. This is essential to make our growth inclusive. It is

your responsibility to ensure that we have in place an enabling policy paradigm and a conducive licensing and regulatory framework. Equally important is the job of P&T Building Works Service officers who have to ensure quality and efficiency in construction and maintenance of office and residential complexes, electrical and architectural works both in Department of Telecommunication and Department of Posts.

5. Officers of both these services have to ensure that the benefits of information and communication technology are widely available for the benefit of the disadvantaged groups. Your leadership and managerial skills can ensure that telecom services are both available and affordable for the poorest of the poor.
6. We have embarked upon an ambitious project towards Digital India. It is Information and Communication Technology (ICT) that enable improved access to financial services, modernization of agriculture, and movement towards smart grids, smart buildings and smart logistics. You as officers have to manage and shape projects that shall make these initiatives possible.
7. Some among you present here have joined the Indian Defence Estates Service. As member of this service, you shall hold key responsibilities in municipal administration of 62 notified cantonments and act as advisors to the Ministry of Defence on management of about 17.57 lakh acres of Defence land in the country. This is a very important task indeed.
8. Our cantonments are universally acknowledged as models of cleanliness. They also provide the much needed lung spaces to our cities. I am told that under the Swachh Bharat Mission, Cantonments Boards have carried out various activities and that 60 out of 62 Cantonments have been declared open defecation free areas.

9. I am also told that Cantonment Boards have taken several initiatives for switching over to digital platforms in various aspects of Cantonment administration and many are providing e-services to the residents in taxation, birth and death registration, and hospital management. These are laudable initiatives and set out the agenda for young officers like you.
10. As Defence Estate Officers, you shall be entrusted with key tasks of carrying out Audit of Defence Lands, prevention of encroachment, optimization of land usage, and maintenance of land records. You have to carry out all these functions along with the reality of rapid urbanization in the country. Cantonments which used to be separate enclaves before independence have also become part of the urban landscape in many states and hence are not immune to infrastructure related problems in our cities. You will have to deal with this reality and manage situations that may emerge.
11. All of you present here, have joined services that provide you a unique opportunity to serve the nation and touch the lives of millions of fellow citizens each day. I am sure that you shall give your best to your jobs and thus improve the lives of people whom you are selected to serve. Your good work, done with utmost integrity, can directly impact common citizens and contribute to nation building. It is your integrity that will provide you the motivation to stand firm whenever you are faced with difficult challenges and will ensure your success measured on the barometer of public interest. I also call upon each one of you to nurture a spirit of innovation that will transform you into solution providers in the midst of challenges. Always feed your curiosity and develop a spirit of positivity both in your professional and personal life.
12. I wish all of you a long and fulfilling career.

Thank you  
Jai Hind!