

**ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA,
SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND
AT THE 7TH CONVOCATION OF IIT HYDERABAD**

IIT Hyderabad, August 5, 2018

1. It is a pleasure for me to be here for the seventh convocation of the Indian Institute of Technology, Hyderabad. This occasion is a double celebration as it coincides with the 10th anniversary of the opening of the Institute. Let me begin by congratulating the IIT Hyderabad community for these landmarks. For the graduating students, today is a special moment. It is the result of years of hard work and dedication on your part, and on the part of your teachers and professors as well as your families.
2. The energy and enthusiasm of youth, combined with a solid foundation, is a very effective combination. It can take an individual very far. As fresh IIT graduates, you are entering a world and an India packed with opportunities. There is so much you can do, and so much you can achieve – for yourselves, for your families, for society at large, particularly for those less fortunate than you. Please dream big and aim high – and please take risks. The time to do it is now.
3. Like individuals, institutions are very dependent on decisions taken in their formative years. IIT Hyderabad is young; it is only 10 years old. It too is defined by energy and enthusiasm and has built a solid foundation. Today, you have 2500 students, one in five of them being a young woman. The Institute has a strong postgraduate programme, with 30 per cent of students pursuing a PhD. These are commendable figures, but the question is: what next? The road you take today will determine your future – not just for the next few years but perhaps for the rest of the century. That may sound like an over-statement but do consider some of the world's major universities, or even the older IITs, your peer institutes.

Their achievements, over several decades, have been shaped by the trajectory they took in their earliest days.

4. As a second-generation IIT it is important that you borrow from as well as learn from the models of the past. Conditions are different from the 1950s and 1960s. India has changed. Technology and the very discipline of engineering have evolved. Our aspirations are no longer limited to the heavy industrial base that we created six decades ago. Rather, IIT Hyderabad has to remain relevant to the fourth industrial revolution that will write the script of the 21st century.
5. I am happy to learn that a start has been made by setting up a network of centres for research and promotion of entrepreneurship at this Institute. These include the Centre for Healthcare Entrepreneurship; the Centre for Cyber-Physical Systems and Internet of Things; and the Fabless Chip Design Incubator and other initiatives that fall under the umbrella of the i-TIC Foundation. Collaborative research is being carried out in areas of widespread utility such as 5G technology, affordable housing, and information networks for natural disaster mitigation and recovery. MoUs with leading international universities and R&D agreements with Japanese industrial corporations are also worthy of appreciation.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Members of the Faculty and Dear Students

6. The best scientific universities and institutions of learning are not just teaching shops or degree factories. Increasingly they are sources of innovation and incubators of technology and technology-driven start-ups. The knowledge ecosystem of public investments in science, academic institutions and universities, research laboratories, commercial applications and private enterprise has an almost magical potential. Its best example is, of course, Silicon Valley in the United States. At the core of Silicon Valley are basic science and technology campuses and their talented faculty and students.

7. This IIT has been set up in a city and in a metropolitan area where several elements for such an ecosystem already exist. IIT Hyderabad, in a sense, is the element that completes the picture. Hyderabad has a long tradition of scientific discovery and application. In the 19th century, Ronald Ross, who won the Noble Prize for Medicine for identifying the mosquito that transmitted malaria, did pioneering work here. After Independence, Hyderabad became a location of industrial manufacture. It saw vigorous and farsighted investments by the public sector and then the private sector.
8. Gradually the city's reputation grew as a research centre. Before coming here, I called for details from the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, the Department of Science and Technology, the Department of Biotechnology, the Department of Atomic Energy, the Defence Research and Development Organisation and the Indian Space Research Organisation. Between these institutions, I am told there are as many as 19 research facilities and laboratories in Hyderabad. I have not even mentioned the private sector. Hyderabad-based companies are engaged in cutting-edge research and manufacture of biopharmaceuticals and vaccines and, separately, in the field of Information Technology.
9. Individually, many of these entities are doing excellent work. The point is: are they pulling their collective weight? Is there adequate cross-pollination?
10. IIT Hyderabad is not envisaged as just an add-on to this ecosystem. Rather, it needs to be the hub of this ecosystem. It must be the connecting tissue and the catalyst for a greater synergy. This is IIT Hyderabad's mandate. I would go to the extent of urging greater engagement with schools like the Indian School of Business and the National Academy of Legal Studies and Research. After all, technology management and technology law and regulation are dynamic and critical areas. It would be extremely valuable if technology practitioners

played a great role in these domains, rather than left it to non-specialists.

11. The true measure of IIT Hyderabad cannot be restricted to grade point averages, campus placements and number of published papers. No doubt, all of those are important but please don't limit your ambitions. Please break out of silos and please encourage others to break out of silos. India will judge your success by the vitality and the output you can ensure for not just yourself but for the entire Hyderabad knowledge ecosystem.
12. Do keep these thoughts in mind as you move ahead in life, as the graduating students go further in their professional careers, and as IIT Hyderabad travels into its second decade. Of course, my best wishes are always with you.

Thank you
Jai Hind!