

**ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA,
SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND
ON THE OCCASION OF CALL ON BY INDIAN FOREIGN SERVICE
OFFICER TRAINEES**

Rashtrapati Bhavan, June 6, 2018

1. I warmly welcome you to Rashtrapati Bhavan. I am happy to meet you. You have chosen an exciting career. It is, indeed, an honour to represent one's country and I am sure you would be proud to do so.
2. At the Foreign Service Institute, I understand you have spent six months to hone your skills as a diplomat. During the training, you would have realized that the skills a Foreign Service Officer requires are very different from what other members of our Civil Service do. Your world revolves around effective communications, strategic thinking and deep political and cultural understanding of your host societies. For you, it is important to master the art of nuances, understand subtleties and read between the lines. You must bear these in mind and sharpen them as you cruise along in your career.
3. Soon you would be leaving for your postings abroad. You will be working with diverse sets of people. To be effective in your work, you must appreciate and understand their cultural sensibilities. It is important for you to have a perspective understanding of them in all respects. Each one of you have been assigned a foreign language, but my advice to you would be learn as many languages as you can. They have the power to open a whole new world for you, and more so in diplomacy.
4. I happy that your stint at FSI has given you an all round exposure to the various facets of India, its economic prowess, cultural diversity, scientific capabilities and security needs. These would help you navigate the complex world of diplomacy abroad.

5. Officer Trainees, I must say that you are joining the Indian Foreign Service at an exciting time. India is fast expanding its global footprint. We are securing our interests in every part of the world. We are also taking lead on critical issues affecting global peace, security and progress, be it fighting terrorism or enhancing efforts to combat climate change. Our aspirations place new responsibilities on you, and I am sure you will make the best of the opportunity.
6. In today's hyper-connected world, diplomacy has become an essential component of domestic action. There is an international connect to every aspect of our country's growth and development, be it clean energy pathway, Digital India, Skill India, Make in India, or building High-Speed Trains. Economic diplomacy is a priority for us. You have to scout for new technologies, look at ways to expand our exports and create opportunities to boost economic growth and productivity. In such a scenario, I need not emphasise the important role you have in nation building.
7. The job for you is clearly laid out. We have to maintain robust relations with all our friends and partners to fashion a secure and prosperous world and meet our developmental aspirations. You have to engage, contest and reconstruct global governance structures that adequately reflect and accommodate our interests.
8. As a representative of India, you will have a privileged responsibility and a privileged life. I am sure you are going to put them to the benefit of the country in the best possible manner. And while you do so, you must remember those back home who still need to climb the ladders of development. You must commit yourselves to giving back to the society in whatever form you can. You must also uphold the principles of integrity and probity in your functions at all times.
9. I wish you all success in your careers ahead.

Jai Hind!