

**ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA,
SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND
ON THE OCCASION OF CALL ON BY THE OFFICER-TRAINEES
OF THE MILITARY ENGINEER SERVICE**

Rashtrapati Bhavan, October 15, 2019

1. I extend to all of you a warm welcome to the Rashtrapati Bhavan. I am happy to meet all of you, the Officer-trainees of the Military Engineer Service (MES). I congratulate you on choosing the MES, the premier construction organisation of the Ministry of Defence (MoD).
2. As I learnt, the motto of MES is “AHARNISHAM SEVAMAHE” that means “In Service Day and Night”. There cannot be any better objective than what this motto says in service of our nation.
3. MES has an illustrious history. It was created in 1923 and put under direct control of the Ministry of Defence (MoD) in 1948. Being one of the oldest and largest Government infrastructure development agencies, MES provides dedicated engineering support to the Armed Forces enhancing their operational preparedness.
4. MES also provides engineering support to other defence organisations such as DRDO, Ordnance Factories, and Coast Guard. It carries out a variety of construction activities such as residential and office buildings, hospitals, roads and runways, and marine structures across the country including in border areas.
5. As young officers in the Government of India in the field of construction, you will have to also care for the environment. The only way for sustainable development is to adopt green technology.
6. I am told that MES is greatly contributing towards reducing the national carbon footprint by completing 150 MW solar photo-voltaic

projects by 2020. Green building norms, called Green Rating for Integrated Habitat Assessment or GRIHA, are followed in all new important projects to create environmental friendly infrastructure.

7. I appreciate that the MES took proactive initiatives for the creation of the National War Memorial, which was dedicated to the nation recently. I visited this newly-built iconic landmark on April 8 this year to pay homage to our fallen heroes.
8. MES has also been at the forefront in providing assistance to civil administration over and above its charter. For example, it played a pivotal role in creating and maintaining infrastructure at the Allahabad Fort. This made it possible to open the Fort to civilian population during the Kumbh Mela 2019 for the first time. During my Kumbh Mela visit, I was briefed about people's enthusiasm in visiting the fort to have a glimpse of Akshayvatt, the holy tree, inside.
9. No doubt, you will perform a stellar role as civil servants and work for the people of India. But what makes your role particularly important and you should also be proud of is that you serve the soldiers who guard our frontiers day and night. You need to be innovative in your approach to think how the life of the soldiers can be made more comfortable as most of them lead a tough life, living in inhospitable terrain and braving hostile climate.
10. You can contribute immensely in developing advanced building infrastructure using information and communication technologies by constructing smart buildings and smart cantonments and military stations. The construction sector is very dynamic, where the technologies are changing very fast. Therefore, you will have to continuously update your knowledge.
11. In the last, I would emphasise that as civil servants, you will shoulder enormous responsibility and carry the burden of people's expectations. While discharging your duties with honesty and truthfulness, you should consciously avoid the temptation of taking

wrong path. When in doubt, remember your motto, “AHARNISHAM SEVAMAHE”.

12. I urge each of you to dedicate yourself to this great organisation and contribute towards nation building by providing best services to the Armed Forces.

13. My best wishes are with you.

Thank you
Jai Hind!