

**ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA, SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND
AT THE CONVOCAATION OF IIT BHUBANESWAR, INAUGURATION OF
ICT-IOC BHUBANESWAR CAMPUS AND FOUNDATION STONE
LAYING OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE OF OIL PSUs**

Bhubaneswar, March 18, 2018

1. It is a matter of great pleasure for me to be delivering the sixth Convocation Address of the Indian Institute of Technology, Bhubaneswar. This is a beautiful campus set amid the lush greenery at the foothills of the historic Barunei hill. This is not an ordinary place. It is believed that Lord Rama visited this area and that the Pandavas stayed here during their exile. It is here that 200 years ago in 1817, Bakshi Jagabandhu led the *Paika Bidroh*, which was a war of independence much before 1857. You are indeed fortunate to have your campus in such a historic place.
2. A convocation is an occasion for celebration. For the graduating class of 2017, this occasion represents a major milestone in your careers. I congratulate all of you and specially the medal winners. As you leave this campus, you have a whole new world of opportunities ahead of you. Being bright technocrats, I am sure that many of you would consider setting up your own ventures to give shape to your innovative ideas. In doing so, avail the benefits of Government of India schemes that encourage innovation and entrepreneurship. Through your enterprise you shall become creators of economic value and jobs. Being an IIT-ian, you should aspire to achieve the best not only for yourself and your

families but also for society and the nation and world at large. I am sure that you will not hesitate in taking up worthy challenges in your careers.

3. There is another group in the audience that needs to be congratulated today: your families. It is the blessings and support of your parents and family that make your success possible. While it is you who receive the medals and the degrees, it is your parents who feel the most pride. I congratulate all parents and family members on what is indeed a special moment for them.
4. Your teachers too have made an equally important contribution to your success. It is they who have imparted in you the skills and knowledge of different subjects and have been your mentors. They have encouraged you to think beyond the ordinary. My good wishes to all the faculty members of IIT Bhubaneswar.

Friends

5. Two weeks ago, on the 6th of this month, I had a day-long meeting at Rashtrapati Bhavan with the Directors of all the IITs, IISERs and the Indian Institute of Science. I had called that meeting to get a first hand understanding of the progress, challenges and the future road map of these institutes of national importance. The deliberations reassured me that IITs are taking all necessary steps to augment their capacities in order to further strengthen their position among the world's best institutes of science and technology. I also commend Ministry of HRD, Government of India for extending its full support to the IITs in this regard.

6. For a young IIT like yours, there are several challenges to be overcome. What matters though is the road map that you envisage for your institute. You should aspire to be the best in all areas that matter, be it teaching, research, social impact or having the best of infrastructure. This will not be an easy task but it is not impossible either.
7. Your institute has doubled its B.Tech intake over the past two years and has admitted 350 students into the programme. This, I am told, is the highest intake among the 2nd and 3rd generation IITs. I am happy to know that since its establishment your institute has carried out several sponsored and consultancy projects and has set up five Centres of Excellence including the Bay of Bengal Coastal Observatory. I am also happy to know that more than 80 per cent of the graduating students have secured jobs in core-sector companies. This too is a welcome sign.
8. A central component of an IIT is its alumni body. Although your institute is still young, I am sure it will take all the necessary steps to engage with its alumni over the coming years. IIT Bhubaneswar should develop a deep and thriving relationship with its former students. They will act as its ambassadors and contribute to the institute's growth. I also urge the graduating students to continue their association with their teachers and peers and fully participate in nurturing their alma mater.

Friends

9. As I have said on many occasions, all of us must strive to give back to society in our own little way. You as IIT-ians are fortunate to have

received world-class education. There is a moral obligation to pay back, and to help those who are less privileged – in whichever manner the individual prefers. Of course, it would be best if this process of paying back enriches education and scholarship at the grassroots of our society. Your own institute has taken some initiatives in this regard. I am told that the institute has adopted six villages and has undertaken certain technological and educational initiatives to improve the quality of life of the villagers. I am sure that more such initiatives can be taken up in the days ahead.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

10. Apart from attending the convocation of IIT Bhubaneswar, I am also happy to inaugurate today the ICT-IOC Campus and to lay the foundation stone of the Skill Development Institute of Oil PSUs. The setting up of these two institutes demonstrates the commitment of the Government of India towards the development of Odisha.

11. Set up by the Institute of Chemical Technology, Mumbai and the Indian Oil Corporation, the ICT-IOC campus would offer a five-year integrated M.Tech programme after class 12, Executive M.Tech programme for industrial personnel, and the PhD programme. I am told that the programmes on offer are being introduced in the country for the first time and shall involve active industry participation. In addition, this campus will be a hub for carrying out high-end research and innovation as well as support skill development in fields such as chemical engineering, petrochemicals, textiles, pharmaceuticals, and energy.

12. The Skill Development Institute (SDI) on the other hand, will offer young people short courses on a spectrum of skills ranging from simple to more complex ones related to Artificial Intelligence, 3D printing and Advanced Robotics. SDI Bhubaneswar will be the country's first Skill Development Institute in the hydrocarbons sector and make our youth more employable for industries in this sector. I am happy to know that this institute aims to train about 50,000 youth over the next 10 years.
13. I convey my best wishes to all those who are involved in the setting up of these two institutes. I compliment the Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan and the Chief Minister, Shri Naveen Patnaik for extending their full support and leadership to make these two projects possible.
14. Before I conclude, I extend my best wishes to the administration, research and teaching fraternity at IIT Bhubaneswar. I once again congratulate the students of IIT Bhubaneswar who are graduating today and wish each one of you a happy and rewarding future.

Thank you

Jai Hind!