

**ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA,  
SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND  
ON THE OCCASION OF CALL ON BY THE OFFICER TRAINEES  
OF INDIAN AUDIT AND ACCOUNTS SERVICE AND CENTRAL  
ENGINEERING SERVICES (ROADS)**

**Rashtrapati Bhavan, March 18, 2019**

1. I welcome officer trainees of the Indian Audit and Accounts Service and of the Central Engineering Services (Roads) to Rashtrapati Bhavan. I must make special mention of the two Audit and Accounts officer trainees from Bhutan. You come from a country which is a very dear friend for us in India. I congratulate each of you for your success in a rigorous and competitive examination and selection process – and for having opted for a career with the government. This is not just a career; it is a calling – a service to the people.
2. The IAAS is a much respected institution in our country. It has a legacy going back over 150 years. Through this period, the economy has changed, technology has changed, accounting practices have changed – but the philosophy and principles of the IAAS have remained the same: to impart public service for the benefit of our nation and our people.
3. IAAS officers play a critical role in ensuring the accountability of the executive to the legislature. The reports of the CAG, submitted to the legislature, play a pivotal part in enforcing this accountability. The audit report is a crucial input for parliamentary committees such as the Public Accounts Committee and Committee on Public Undertakings for holding public functionaries to account, in judging their performance and recommending improvements.
4. As officers of the IAAS you are guardians of public trust and financial prudence. Always bear in mind that the objective of an audit should be to improve governance strategies. The credibility

of your findings will determine the utility of the audit for enhancing the quality of governance. While you are indeed watchdogs, it is also important that your approach is not simply fault finding but is constructive and aimed at solving the problems at hand. Integrity is nonnegotiable – but it can and must coexist with an enlightened approach and genuine problem solving.

5. The Central Engineering Services (Roads) is an important contributor to what is one of the most exciting phases of road and highway development in Indian history. In recent years, there has been a rapid rollout of roads in our cities and rural areas, between our cities in the form of national highways, and – most satisfyingly – in remote and border areas. You are part of India’s connectivity revolution.
6. The challenge now is not just to build more but to build better and to build safer. As engineers working on road and highway projects, please be mindful that you are building not just for the next journey – but for the next generation. Use of new technologies to make roads more durable and cost-effective in the long run should be a key determining factor while designing projects. As India has shown, using plastic waste for road building can not only make the surface stronger, it can also help in recycling. This is only one example. The coming years will offer many such opportunities. Please be alive to them.
7. As automobile traffic in India increases, as more two-wheelers and cars and commercial vehicles drive onto our roads and highways, issues of speed and safety also arise. The number of traffic accidents and deaths in India is far too high for comfort. I appreciate that the solution does not lie with engineers alone, but I would urge you to be mindful of this problem and try to minimise if not entirely eliminate road tragedies in India.
8. As I conclude, I don’t have to remind you that as public servants, you are expected to serve the nation and fellow citizens with courage of conviction and devotion to duty. While discharging your duty, you must maintain the highest standards of integrity and

discipline – and I am confident you will do so. I wish you every success.

Thank you  
Jai Hind!