

**ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA,  
SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND  
ON THE OCCASION OF CALL ON BY THE PROBATIONERS OF  
DIFFERENT RAILWAY SERVICES**

February 19, 2019, Rashtrapati Bhavan

1. I welcome you all to Rashtrapati Bhavan and congratulate you for your selection to the prestigious Railway Services. Your selection to the prestigious services marks a big personal milestone for each one of you and your families must be proud of you. While you celebrate your success, do not lose sight of the bigger goals and responsibilities that lie ahead for each one of you. All of you in your own ways will get an opportunity to contribute to Indian Railways and serve millions of Indians each day.
  
2. You are from different Group 'A' services. Some of you are from the Civil Services and some from the Engineering Services. These different services in the Indian Railways are like different colours of a rainbow. Think of yourself as a key player of 'Team Railways'. This team will be as good as each one of you and your respective services. Like an ideal team player, each of you has to place the interest of the Railways and that of the people of India above anything else. You should all be inspired by a common vision to best serve the people and strengthen the magnificent national institution called Indian Railways.
  
3. As you all know, the Indian Railways holds a unique place in our lives and indeed in the history of modern history. It has facilitated national integration by enabling cross-cultural exchange and the development of a pan-Indian Identity. We all know that after returning from South Africa, Mahatma Gandhi traveled extensively by Railways to gain an in-depth understanding of India and its diversity. All of you should be

proud that you are joining the Railways at the same time, when the world is celebrating the 150<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

4. The Railway network also helps to maintain and spread our cultural heritage and traditions. Be it the special trains run to accommodate the rush for the Kumbh Melas or the majestic 'Palace on Wheels' that captures the imagination of people around the globe, the Indian Railways keeps chugging along. Trains evoke pleasant memories in all of us. For children, the arrival of a train and its whistle is an occasion for playful celebration. For others, train is means to connect with friends and families, and to aspire for professional opportunities far away from their homes.
5. In recent years, Government has taken several steps to modernise the Railways. Only a few days ago, the Prime Minister flagged off the ultra-modern Vande Bharat Express between New Delhi and Varanasi. True of the vision of "Make in India", the major systems of this train have been designed and built in India. This was not an ordinary flagging off of a new train. It was an occasion that showcased the recent thrust on modernisation and India's rising technological capacity. The Vande Bharat Express sets new benchmarks of speed, safety and service.
6. A couple of months ago, the Prime Minister inaugurated the Bobigeel rail-cum-road bridge in Assam and flagged off the first passenger train passing through the bridge. This bridge is of immense economic and strategic significance for the nation's security and development of the northeast. Like Vande Bharat Express, this bridge too is a marvel of engineering and technology and has substantially reduced travel time for passengers travelling to and within northeast. The thrust of the Railways to attaining better connectivity for our northeast is laudable.
7. Another landmark achieved by Indian Railways recently is the successful elimination of all unmanned level crossings on the broad

gauge network. This is a phenomenal achievement that symbolises the zeal of Indian Railways to minimise accidents and make rail travel safe. I am sure that all of you would further infuse Indian Railways with an innovation culture, modern technologies and management practices to better serve the nation in times to come.

8. All of you have joined an institution that provides a unique opportunity to serve the nation. As you start your long career, I urge you all to lead a life of optimism and develop a sense of positivity and of course serve with the highest professional and ethical standards. This will allow you to make meaningful changes both at your work places as well as in the society at large. It will also allow you to nurture a spirit of innovation and emerge as solution providers in the midst of challenges.
9. I wish you all a long and fulfilling career.

Thank you  
Jai Hind!