

**ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA,
SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND
ON THE OCCASION OF CALL ON BY THE PROBATIONERS OF
68TH BATCH OF INDIAN REVENUE SERVICE (CUSTOMS &
CENTRAL EXCISE)**

August 30, 2018, Rashtrapati Bhavan

1. I welcome you all to Rashtrapati Bhavan and congratulate you for your selection into the prestigious Indian Revenue Service (Customs and Central Excise). All of you have worked very hard to join the Civil Service and I am sure that you will work equally hard to be the tax administrators that we can all be proud of.
2. Your batch comprises the youth and energy of India from different states and regions. Now, as Officers of Indian Revenue Service, you must build a national perspective while remaining strongly rooted to your own proud backgrounds. All of you are truly blessed to have an opportunity to serve the nation and its people by virtue of the service you have joined. I am sure that you will make this opportunity count.
3. Taxes have been the building block of governance since ages. In ancient times, rulers and kingdoms were judged by the kind of tax systems they had. A nation's tax structure should be just, efficient, honest and equitable. As administrators it is your primary duty to ensure that our country has the tax resources to fund different aspects of national development – be it building infrastructure in rural and urban areas, schools and hospitals, defence and security and so on. You have to discharge your duty in a way that encourages honest tax compliance with minimum discomfort to tax payers.
4. यहां पर मैं प्रसिद्ध अर्थशास्त्री-चाणक्य के कथन का उल्लेख करना चाहूँगा। उनका कहना था कि कर प्रक्रिया का निर्धारण व मानदंड ऐसा होना चाहिए जैसे

मधुमक्खियाँ विभिन्न प्रकार के फूलों से, उन्हें किसी प्रकार का नुकसान पहुंचाए बिना, पराग चुनकर शहद के छत्ते में डालती रहती हैं। यहाँ पर पराग की तुलना Tax से, फूलों की तुलना करदाताओं से और मधुमक्खियों की तुलना कर अधिकारी से की गई है।

5. राष्ट्र निर्माण में, कर-दाता आपका साझेदार होता है। कर-दाता के साथ आपका संपर्क-संबंध इस प्रकार का होना चाहिए कि उसे असुविधा न हो। जहां तक संभव हो, उसके साथ आपका संपर्क डिजिटल माध्यमों से हो और इसके लिए आमने-सामने संपर्क की जरूरत नहीं होनी चाहिए। लेकिन, साथ ही साथ, आपको उन लोगों के साथ कड़ाई से निपटना होगा, जो गलत तरीके अपनाते हैं और कर का भुगतान करने से बचते हैं। इस प्रकार के कर-अपवंचन से सरकार के संसाधनों पर जोर पड़ता है और सार्वजनिक परियोजनाओं का वित्तपोषण करने में कठिनाई होती है। इसके अलावा, कर-संरचना को तर्कसंगत बनाना भी ज्यादा मुश्किल हो जाता है।
6. Last year, Government introduced the Goods and Services Tax (GST), the most comprehensive tax reform the nation has seen. It was your service that had the responsibility of making sure that this mega reform was implemented across the nation and the tax assesses were properly educated about the new tax system. It is a matter of satisfaction that the GST regime has been implemented with success ushering in a progressive tax structure that will benefit the economy and the honest tax payers. You must build on this good start by working with all stakeholders for ensuring an efficient tax regime. For instance, you should help Chartered Accountants understand the rules and procedures under the GST regime so that they can ensure better tax compliance by the tax payers whom they advise.
7. I understand that the training provided to all of you is very comprehensive. It covers subjects ranging from Public Finance and International Trade to Self-Defence and Soft Skills. I am sure that the training will groom you into becoming

efficient managers, sensitive leaders and motivated officers. Above all, it will equip you to make a difference to society.

8. The new age of globalisation and technological advance throws up enormous opportunities for trade and investment. In such a scenario, India is committed to ensuring ease of doing business. But this has to be achieved without compromising our tax resources needed to fund the Government's sovereign duties. As Tax Officers, you must maintain a fine balance between your role as an enforcer of taxation laws and a partner and facilitator of business.
9. The forces of globalisation and technological advances, unfortunately, also create avenues for fraud and money laundering. It is your job to promote economic activity and curb fraud. Both these goals are important.
10. As such the work you do has implications for India and for India's reputation in the world – as a trusted business destination, with a fair and predictable tax regime. Please be mindful of this big responsibility.
11. All of you are at beginning of a long and exciting journey. Your careers will go parallel with our country's rise as an economic power. In such times of change, it is all the more important that you remember the basics - that you are public servants and the repository of public trust. You must serve the nation and its people with full dedication, hard work, honesty and integrity. In any job, and more so in yours, integrity is not negotiable. A credible tax system can only be built by credible tax officers.
12. I wish you all the very best for the future.

Thank you,
Jai Hind!