

**ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA,  
SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND  
ON THE OCCASION OF INAUGURATION OF ADAMYA CHETANA  
SEVA UTSAV 2018 & CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS OF NATIONAL  
EDUCATION SOCIETY**

**Bangalore: December 30, 2017**

1. This is my second visit to Karnataka after becoming President of India. I am particularly happy that I am here for a function associated with the cause of learning and education, and of giving back to society. These are attributes that are so dear and so typical of the people of this state. After all Karnataka has a rich legacy of culture and knowledge, and of public spirited citizens.
2. Today, we are commemorating notable work done by two institutions of this state. The first is the **Adamyia Chetana Foundation** and the second is the **National Education Society of Karnataka**. The **Adamyia Chetana Foundation**, I have been told, provides quality mid-day meals to over one lakh children each day. It also organises the annual Seva Utsav, which begins today. In parallel, we are celebrating the 100th anniversary of the **National Education Society of Karnataka** as well as of the **National High School**, which is hosting this event.
3. The **Adamyia Chetana Foundation** performs a very noble task in providing fresh and nutritious food to school children through its **Annapurna** project. The Foundation's initiative is in keeping with its philosophy of Seva – and its focus on **Anna-Akshara-Arogya** or **food, education and health**.
4. The mid-day meal programme in our schools serves all these purposes. It promotes education because the less well-off among our fellow citizens make an effort to send their children to school. They are encouraged by the idea of a meal. The meal itself is often the most nutritious and wholesome meal a child from a poorer

family gets in a day. And nutrition is linked to not just physical but also cognitive development. It helps the child learn.

5. I am glad to know that the **Adamyia Chetana Seva Utsav** this year has a theme centred on **Prakriti-Sanskriti** (nature and culture). This theme is appropriate in a country and a society that has historically regarded nature as divine. In India, we worship rivers. We value trees and forests. And we recycle and re-use. This is our tradition. Sometimes we forget it, but we must make an effort to remember. And that effort can only begin by inculcating these habits and these virtues in our school children. They are the biggest influencers in our families.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen**

6. This year marks the centenary of the **National Education Society of Karnataka**. The Society runs several leading educational institutions, including the **National High School**. This is no ordinary school. Like the Society itself, it was established 100 years ago by Dr **Annie Besant**, a stalwart from our freedom movement.
7. **Annie Besant** was a remarkable lady. Though born in London, she came to India and embraced India, its culture and its people with a passion. She fought for India's political freedom and she contributed to the rediscovery of our ancient traditions. In this way, she became a genuine nation builder. This school is a symbol of her nation building efforts.
8. The National High School has given Karnataka and given our country some very gifted and distinguished citizens. Among its alumni are former Chief Justice of India, **Justice M.N. Venkatachalaiah**, former Chief Minister of Karnataka, **Shri H.D. Kumaraswamy**, chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation, **Dr A.S. Kiran Kumar**, well known film actor, the late **Vishnu Vardhan**, and our former cricket captain **Anil Kumble**.
9. When I received the invitation for this function, I was told an interesting story. In 1936, Mahatma Gandhi visited this school. He needed someone to translate for him from Hindi to Kannada. He

found a 16 year old student of this school who could do the job to his satisfaction. That bright student was **Hosur Narasimhaiah**. He grew up to become a noted intellectual, educationist and Gandhian scholar himself. He acquired fame as a promoter of science and later served as vice-chancellor of Bangalore University. Today, we are also honouring his memory.

10. Such a roll call of achievers and such talented alumni must serve as an inspiration for the students of the school! They have a great reputation to live up to and to take forward. I wish them well. And I wish the **National Education Society** – which runs a network of institutions that have so far educated as many as one and a half million students – the very best. May its second century be even better than the first.
  
11. And of course, I also convey my good wishes to the **Adanya Chetana Seva Utsav** 2018. Last but not the least, I wish everybody here a very happy and prosperous New Year.

Thank you  
Jai Hind!