

**ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA,  
SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND  
ON THE OCCASION OF LAUNCH OF ENDOWMENT FUND OF  
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY DELHI (IIT-D)**

**New Delhi, October 31, 2019**

1. I wish you a warm welcome to Rashtrapati Bhavan. You have all travelled from far to be here today. You come from different backgrounds, work in different industries, belonged to different departments and batches. But you have one thing in common. All of you belong to one family- IIT Delhi.
2. I am happy that today you will be further strengthening your bonds with your parent institution. Carrying forward our ancient tradition of 'guru–shishya' you will today be expressing your gratitude to your teachers and the institution that has nurtured and prepared you for who you are today.
3. Almost two years ago, on 4th November 2017, I was at IIT Delhi to deliver the convocation address. While commending the achievements of the alumni I had encouraged you to find ways to give back to your institution and society in whatever way you can. It gives me immense pleasure to see that you have acted on my advice and we are here today for the launch of your endowment fund.
4. Globally, endowments allow institutions to deliver greater value and attain higher levels of quality in their teaching and research than otherwise possible. Reliable long-term support from endowments enables institutions to take greater risks in undertaking innovative projects, increasing student aid, developing stronger teaching programs and enhancing physical infrastructure. Endowment support allows institutions to confidently engage in long term planning without sustainability risk to critical projects.

5. Endowments globally have become integral to the financial health of educational institutions over time. While we are still far from the size and importance of endowment funds of Institutions such as Harvard, Yale or Columbia, I must congratulate all of you for taking the right first step in this direction. By giving through endowments, you are not just giving to your institution but you are also supporting and nurturing future generations of learners.

Ladies and gentlemen,

6. Success is seldom achieved without hard work and sacrifice. I must recognize the contribution of the spouses, who are present here today with you on this special occasion. They are equal partners in your success stories and have had to undergo numerous sacrifices, at times including their own careers, to ensure you have come this far in your lives. And they are now giving you the strength and the courage to commit a part of your success, which is also theirs, to your institution. I am happy that they rightfully are here with us today.
7. The best way to honour a gift is to make the best use of it. I am sure that IIT Delhi will put the funds presented to them through the endowment fund to good use. In the latest QS World University ranking 2020, IIT Delhi was ranked at 182. There is a lot of scope for improvement if you aim to be one of the top institutes in the world. You need to increase the number of faculty particularly faculty with international experience. Additionally, you need to upgrade your infrastructure to ensure your campus, course content and research facilities are completely world class. I hope the institute will make use of the valuable contribution from the alumni to bring changes in these areas.
8. As the Visitor to over 150 institutes of higher education, I am invited to attend convocations across the country. In most of these convocations, I find that our girl students outshine boys, winning most of the academic awards. However, I find that

there are less number of women engaged in research and teaching in technical institutes of our country. We have to take the necessary steps to ensure greater participation of girl students and of women in science and technology.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

9. Throughout history our educational institutes have been the beacons of our culture. We have a tradition of universities showing the way for the people in society and enriching lives. While it is commendable that the alumni have been able to already commit more than 200 crores to the endowment fund, I would like you to keep in mind that giving back need not necessarily mean just financial contributions. Giving back can also be in the form of time and commitment. And giving back to not just your institute but to the larger society. I would urge all of you to devote some amount of your time for the benefit of the not-so-fortunate sections of society by picking up any cause of your choice. It can be the empowerment of the divyang, or rehabilitation of destitute women, or helping children in distress. The cause does not matter, only your will to make a difference does.
  
10. Once again I compliment you on a journey well begun. The alumni are important stakeholders in the wellbeing of our educational institutes and I am sure that with support from the ministry for human resource development, this effort will be emulated in other institutes in the country. The ministry now has a model which it can use to convince other IITs, NITs and other institutes of higher learning to adopt. The launch here today should act as a catalyst for numerous such initiatives across the country. I am told that the video you have shown me on the endowment fund has become popular on social media and is being shared widely. This only goes to show that good deeds need no publicity. They spread by virtue of their inherent goodness. I am confident your selflessness will inspire many such efforts across the country.

11. I convey my best wishes to IIT Delhi and its alumni family. Together, I am sure you will do yourself and our nation proud.

Thank You,  
Jai Hind!