

**SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA, SHRI PRANAB
MUKHERJEE ON THE OCCASION OF CALL BY
PROBATIONERS OF INDIAN POSTAL SERVICE, OFFICER
TRAINEES OF INDIAN TELECOM SERVICE AND P&T
BUILDING WORKS SERVICES**

Rashtrapati Bhavan: 09th March 2016

01. I welcome all of you to the historic Rashtrapati Bhavan. You have just entered into a new career which will give you an opportunity to shoulder immense responsibilities at a young age. You can serve the nation and the people of the country by serving through the public services.

02. Your diverse social, economic and cultural background represent unity in diversity of India. You have committed yourself to serve the people of this great country, by joining these services. The role of civil servants is constantly changing in this global scenario. To meet the increased aspirations of the people you are expected to act as facilitators rather than administrators.

03. The postal department of India has been serving the country for more than 150 years. At the time of independence, there were 23,344 Post Offices, which were primarily in urban areas. Now India has more than 1.5 lakh post offices. On an average, a Post Office serves an area of 21.22 sq. km and a population of 8221 people.

04. Since last few decades, the role of postal and telecom department has undergone a big change. Telegrams have ceased to exist. Emails have almost replaced letters. Though speed posts are in vogue, yet private courier companies are flourishing. Antique telephone exchanges have been replaced by high-speed optic-fibre mobile networks.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

05. The part privatization of Postal and Telecom sector in the era of liberalization has witnessed drastic changes in technology and exponential growth of the consumers. If you have to survive in the competitive world, you have to keep pace with the fast changing Information and Communication Technology.

06. The banking services of Postal department are in the form of saving, recurring, term deposit and national saving certificates schemes. The small savings have been contributing sizeably to the Indian economy. The postal life insurance schemes have been providing financial security to the millions in rural and urban sector. It is also a fact that the banking and financial services are not available to over 600,000 villages of India.

07. Underlining this need the government has granted license to India Postal Department, as a bank in August 2015. I hope that this effort will lead to financial inclusion of the rural India. The decision of Department of Posts to install ATM machines

and issuance of debit cards shall ensure speedier financial transactions both in rural and urban areas.

08. The decision of the government to implement welfare schemes such as MGNREGA through banking system of post offices is likely to bring in more transparency and curb pilferage of funds. Your commitment to provide a stable, robust and reliable network of postal banking system would ensure definite success to welfare scheme. The outreach to deep and remote areas can only be increased using latest technology and innovative methods.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

09. India has undergone a telecom revolution during the last two decades. The launch of mobile telephony and faster internet network in India has enabled India tap its vast digital potential. India is emerging as a fast digital hub. It is the need of the hour to have best quality telecom and internet services. India now has about 46 crore internet users and 37 crore mobile users. The numbers are likely to increase exponentially with enhanced levels of education and cheaper rate of internet and mobile telephony.

10. It is a matter of concern that an institution, which has been in existence for 150 years, is facing threat of being driven out of market due to stiff competition from private sector. It is an opportunity for you to do introspection as to why the oldest government telecom companies with biggest network are not able to provide requisite quality services.

11. You need to understand and realise that maintaining pace with technological advancements and delivering high quality services alone can ensure your long term presence in the Indian Telecom Sector. The dream of a vibrant digital India can come true only if we have a robust high speed communication network. A reliable and stable postal banking network can make a prosperous and empowered India.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

12. I hope that the Postal Academy and National Telecommunications Institute are providing requisite technical and non-technical inputs to enable you to take up the ensuing challenges in the postal, telecom and building works sector. You have to work with professionalism,

transparency and integrity to meet the aspirations of large number of people of India.

13. With the new instruments of Right to Information Act and social awakening, existence of large network of civil society, all your actions shall be under scrutiny. You should always be fair, equitable and humane in your approach towards the clients. Try to make a best public servant within you, who has a vision of an empowered, well-governed, transparent and efficient system in India.

14. With these words, I wish you all success in your future endeavors.

Jai Hind