



# Indian Forest Service Officers are the nation's soldiers in an important area of environmental and ecological conservation, says President

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A group of 89 probationers of Indian Forest Service (2016 batch) from Indira Gandhi National Forest Academy, Dehradun called on the President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind today (August 3, 2017) at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Addressing the Forest Service Officers, the President said that they have chosen a very noble profession. Forests have always been special to Indian ethos and culture. Our civilisation has derived its intellectual and spiritual strength from forests. These forests, therefore, are not merely a resource but they also cover the cultural, spiritual and intellectual heritage of the country. The onus of protecting this heritage is now on the Forest Service Officers. On them lies the responsibility of ensuring environmental security, accommodating the sustainable development needs of the country.

The President said that in the past few decades, the world has woken up to threats to the very survival of humankind due to environmental degradation, depletion in forest cover and above all global warming leading to climate change. India has emerged as a global leader in handling complex climate change issues. Our national forest policy envisages 33 per cent of the land mass should be under forest cover. The Forest Service Officers have to find ways and means to enrich the natural forests, and facilitate bringing non-forest areas under tree cover. They have joined a public service and are the nation's soldiers in an important area of environmental and ecological conservation. The President urged them to discharge their duties fairly, without fear, with honesty, and in such a way that their actions benefit the nation and common citizens as a whole.

The President said that India is one of the fastest growing economies in the world and we have set ourselves stiff targets. The Forest Service Officers have to strike a balance between conservation needs and development requirements. Their job is not to pose problems but to provide solutions.

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