



English rendering of the PM's remarks in the Rajya Sabha, on the farewell of Vice President Hamid Ansari

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Respected Chairman,

After your long term in public service, I am confident that today you will enter the new field of work, because physically you have kept yourself quite fit. You have a family background which has a long history of political association; whose grandfather had been the President of the national party; was in the Constituent Assembly; in a way you come from a family whose ancestors had a great role in public life in general and in the Congress in particular and was also associated with the Khilafat Movement.

You yourself had been a Career Diplomat. Now who is a Career Diplomat? I understood this only after becoming the Prime Minister, because what does it mean when one laughs or what is the meaning of shaking hands; one cannot understand this easily! It is because this is what they are trained to do. But that skill would have been applied here for the past 10 years and this skill definitely would have benefitted the House.

Your career as a Diplomat has been deeply associated to West Asia. You have spent several years of your public life in the same sphere and in the same environment with the same thought and debate and you were associated with such people. Even after retiring, most of your work was still in that sphere, whether in Minority Commission or Aligarh University. But the responsibility for these 10 years had been completely different; like working within the framework of the Constitution; and you have worked very hard to do it well.

Perhaps you felt a bit uneasy, but today you will not have that issue and you will also enjoy this liberation and you will get this opportunity to work with your independent thought process.

Although we could not interact much, but whenever we met, there was a lot to learn from you. Before going to any foreign tour and after returning, whenever I got the opportunity to talk to you, I definitely felt the insight you had, and this helped me to broaden my understanding and therefore I am very grateful to you. I express my gratitude to you from the core of my heart.

As the Vice President of the Nation, for the sake of your services, I express my gratitude on behalf of both the Houses and the people of this country. Your achievements, experience and the post-retirement status hold a great significance. I hope that by following the Constitution, your time and energy shall help in guiding the country. Best wishes!

Thanks a lot!

AKT/AK/IG/MG/BM

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