

**SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA, SHRI PRANAB
MUKHERJEE AT THE INDIA-GHANA KOFI ANNAN CENTRE FOR
EXCELLENCE**

Accra, Ghana: June 14, 2016

1. It is a great pleasure for me to visit the Kofi Annan Centre of Excellence in ICT. I am accompanied by Minister of State in the Indian Prime Minister's Office, H'ble Dr. Jitendra Singh, H'ble Shri Surendrajeet Singh Ahluwalia, Member of the Lok Sabha, the House of the People and H'ble Shri Mansukh Mandaviya, Member of the Rajya Sabha, the Upper House of the Indian Parliament. We bring with us warm greetings and good wishes of the Government and people of India.
2. I am particularly delighted to interact with the students and trainees here. I see in each one of you great promise and potential. You are the future leaders of this country. Your innovative ideas have the potential to transform your country's economy - and take it to a higher trajectory of productivity and growth.
3. It was deeply satisfying for me to hear of your positive experiences. I am very happy to see that this Centre has grown into an institution par excellence. Since its establishment in 2003, it has, by now, trained over 20,000 students – not only from Ghana but also from other neighbouring countries.

4. I understand that due to the close co-operation between this Centre and the Indian Centre for Development of Advanced Computing, it has been able to steadily expand its curriculum to include several relevant areas of study such as cyber security, mobile computing, enterprise software, high performance computing and so on.

5. I congratulate Director General, Dr. Dorothy Gordon for her dynamic leadership in making this partnership so fruitful. Shri Jeeva Sagar, High Commissioner of India to Ghana tells me that it is her commitment and contribution that are at the core of the Centre's success.

6. It is also a matter of satisfaction that graduates of the centre have been recognised and valued. I understand that most alumni are presently in good positions in business and industrial organisations, some have started their own businesses and others are using their knowledge to create their own ICT solutions and become employers themselves.

7. The greatest reward for the Kofi Annan Centre is that its graduates are effectively deployed throughout the Economic Community of West African States. This was India's primary objective in seeking to build capacity and assist Ghana and its neighbours in their human resource development.

8. The establishment of the Kofi Annan Centre and its partnership with the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) in India is an example of the successful co-operation between Ghana and India in the field of Information Technology and human resource development. India has always been happy to extend technical support and expertise to its friends in Africa.
9. Former UN Secretary General, Mr Kofi Annan, a great son of Ghana, is a long-standing friend of India. He is a respected voice in global affairs and South-South cooperation. Therefore, it was only appropriate that this centre should be named after him.
10. India has always believed that Africa should take ownership of her resources and define her own interests and goals. Our Government is committed to working with partners in Africa in all areas where we can help them to use and adapt relevant, cost effective technologies, share best practices and realise their goals of technological development.
11. I am glad to note that the Kofi-Annan Centre for Excellence is duly focussed on research and the application of science and ICT in finding local solutions for national issues.

12. I would like to take this opportunity to emphasise that India's experience as a developing country has taught us the necessity of giving due attention to equitable and inclusive growth and development.
13. It is very important to ensure that the digital revolution does not create new imbalances between men and women, between rural and urban centres or between the mainstream languages and others.
14. All sectors and segments must be reached in the drive to inculcate skills that will make the targeted population employable; if need be, special programmes must be designed to address their needs. I am happy to learn that the Kofi Annan Centre, through its special programmes is looking at how best to respond to this important requirement.
15. In recognition of the achievements of this centre, my Government is happy to announce an additional million dollar grant to help the Centre initiate a Masters programme, expand its laboratory facilities and introduce additional curriculum that will help students stay abreast with rapidly advancing technology.
16. With these words, I thank Your Excellency, Madame Foreign Minister and Director General, Dr. Dorothy Gordon, for giving me a very satisfying tour of this Centre.

17. To the students and trainees of this Centre, I offer my commendations for your hard work and my best wishes for your success.

18. I am confident that you will leave no stone unturned as you take full advantage of the curriculum offered by this Centre. I have no doubt that you will equip yourselves thoroughly and develop your capabilities comprehensively to one day make your own valuable contributions to the progress of your great country. Your success will be a tribute to the friendship and close partnership between Ghana and India.

I thank you once again!