

**ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA,
SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND
AT THE PASSING OUT PARADE OF THE GRADUATE COURSES
OF INDIAN MILITARY ACADEMY**

Dehradun, December 11, 2021

We gather here today when the nation is yet to come out of the shock of the untimely demise of Gen. Bipin Rawat, the Chief of Defence Staff. As you know, 12 others including Gen Rawat's wife Shrimati Madhulika Rawat ji were also killed in the chopper crash. Gen. Rawat was an extraordinary military leader, and his death creates a void that cannot be filled. Uttarakhand was his home and he was trained at the Indian Military Academy. Here, he was awarded the Sword of Honour for his exceptional skills. But for the tragedy, he would have been among us here today, looking at the passing-out parade with delight and pride for the cadets.

Gen. Rawat added to the glory of the IMA, which is an institution with an inspiring tradition. Before him, Field Marshal K.M. Cariappa, Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw and many other extraordinary warriors and strategists began their journey here as young cadets and potential leaders. Some of them laid down their lives for the safety and honour of our nation.

The IMA is acclaimed worldwide for its nearly nine decades of history and heritage. Its buildings and sprawling campus are impressive indeed.

It gives me pleasure to see before me the batch of 387 gentlemen cadets, who would shortly embark on their journey of a life characterised by valour and wisdom. I am sure they will carry forward the rich legacy of this academy. I appreciate the immaculate turnout and an impressive display of drill.

This parade comprises cadets from all parts of India and from diverse communities as also from ten friendly foreign countries. This is indeed a true manifestation of our unity as also of our plural society.

Gentlemen Cadets!

Your training here equips you to face the challenges that await you. As commissioned officers, you will be expected to blend knowledge, skills and professional application. You must internalise the 'Chetwode Motto' inscribed in your academy. All of you know the motto very well. Yet I find it so good that I would like to repeat it for the benefit of all the cadets passing out today. The motto reads, and I quote:

“The safety, honour and welfare of your country come first, always and every time.

The honour, welfare and comfort of the men you command come next.

Your own ease, comfort and safety come last, always and every time.”

Gentlemen Cadets!

You will have the authority to lead men into battle. At the same time, you will also be expected to uphold the admiration and trust that your uniform evokes amongst fellow countrymen. You must always remain mindful that your actions will influence the outcome of military operations. Your decisions will have an impact on the lives of men under your command and your dedication to services will have a multi-faceted impact on our country.

The challenges that our great nation faces today are defined by a complex security environment, at the regional and global level. You must, therefore, keep in mind that physical and mental toughness

alone will not equip you to tackle modern-day threats to the country. As military leaders, you will have to develop a strategic mindset, cultivate an adaptive temperament and acquire the mental resilience essential to hone the skills required for military leadership. You must be prepared to deal with the unexpected challenges that the profession of arms shall present before you at various junctures of your service.

Gentlemen Cadets!

Advancement in technology has often been driven by military dynamics. The battlefield today presents multi-dimensional situations. Armed forces across the world are heavily reliant on use of technology to deter or defeat the enemy's fighting capability. As modern-day military leaders, you must embrace this technological shift and understand the seamless synergy required between men and machines. It is, therefore, imperative that you develop sound scientific temperament and inculcate the desire and passion to adopt technology and innovation.

I feel happy to see the gentlemen cadets from friendly foreign countries of Afghanistan, Bhutan, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Turkmenistan and Vietnam here today. We cherish the special bond between our nations, and it is a matter of great pride for India to have such fine officers and gentlemen from friendly foreign countries graduating today. I am sure that you will preserve the unique bond of friendship forged with your colleagues and instructors during your training here at the IMA.

Gentlemen Cadets!

I once again congratulate you on the successful completion of your training at the IMA and wish you a bright future, marked by success and glory. Your service and dedication as soldiers and leaders of men shall add to the strength of a peaceful, independent and democratic India. On this occasion, let us recall the iconic status acquired by one of the many illustrious alumni of the academy, General Bipin Rawat, who by dint of his hard work emerged as the role model of soldierly conduct for the future generation. Our flag

shall always fly high because brave men like you will preserve and protect its honour.

I also extend my heartiest congratulations to the proud families of the cadets passing out today.

Thank you

Jai Hind!