

**ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA,  
SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND  
ON THE OCCASION OF CALL ON BY THE FACULTY AND  
COURSE MEMBERS OF 59TH NDC COURSE**

**Rashtrapati Bhavan, November 21, 2019**

1. It gives me immense pleasure to welcome you all to the Rashtrapati Bhavan. I am sure that the 59th Course of the National Defence College (NDC) has been both fruitful and enriching for all of you. It is a unique Course indeed as it brings together officers from our Armed Forces and Civil Services. I also welcome the spouses of all participants, faculty members and staff officers who are present here today.
2. The global environment today poses numerous challenges to the world due to its changing dynamics. Events in the recent past have unfolded at an astonishing pace, which could not have been foreseen perhaps even a decade earlier.
3. In such an environment, each nation is guided in its actions by its evolving national interests and objectives. Unless a nation understands and adjusts itself to the changes that are taking place around it, its own security could be affected.
4. Our security paradigm extends beyond mere preservation of territorial integrity. It encompasses the economic, energy, food, health, environmental, cyber and personal security dimensions of national well-being. In addition, it also extends to a nation's soft power which features elements of art, culture, heritage, values as well as learning exchanges such as the one provided by the NDC Course. Intensive research and quality analysis in all fields are essential to develop a holistic approach to study a vast spectrum of disciplines. Adopting such an integrated approach would deliver rich dividends and meet the emerging challenges. While doing so,

one must see the larger picture and keep the primary national objectives always in focus.

5. There must also be a conscious effort to strengthen the linkages between different state organs. In a democratic system like ours, all the wings of executive, that is, political leadership, civil services and defence services, must understand the constitutional framework under which the country functions. We have to be aware of the strength and challenges of each of the wings, and together create the larger perspective of national achievements.
6. The success of any nation state depends on how effectively it harnesses all the available resources at its disposal. The foremost among these is the human resource. The development of human resource for national security is the task assigned to the NDC. It imparts knowledge to senior officers from not only the armed forces and civil services but also friendly foreign countries to help them make informed policy decisions related to national objectives and aims.
7. I am aware that the curriculum of the NDC is rich and diverse. It is also unique as I am told that spouses stay with the participants throughout the course and also play a role in enriching the social and learning experience.
8. I am sure that this exposure at the NDC would have made you more aware and well-informed individuals, who can make well-reasoned decisions taking the country's security perspectives into consideration. Knowledge is power and the knowledge the NDC Course imparts will help you in protecting the national interest. Being senior officers in your ranks, you all are role models for the next generation of officers in your respective organisations. Your professionalism, integrity and honesty will be a source of inspiration for these younger officers.

9. The role of the Armed Forces has expanded far beyond traditional military matters with the developments in military affairs and globalisation. It is clear that future conflicts in the complex defence and security environment will require a more integrated multi-state and multi-agency approach. This Course, therefore, plays an important role in preparing the military and the civil service officers as strategic leaders to deal with the complex security environment in a comprehensive manner. Additionally, the close interactions among participants from different countries enrich your outlook on many international issues. It also paves the way for closer international relations at the highest level.
10. India and its neighbourhood – and the broader Asian continent – is faced with multiple security threats and risks that have assumed global significance. Terrorism and violent extremism are common challenges that are both state-based and asymmetrical. Also, as Asia emerges as the hotspot and the growth centre of the global economic order, security concerns will increasingly focus on securing our economic interests and growth objectives. Threats will come in all domains – from the maritime space to cyberspace. We have to be prepared. I am certain that the 59th NDC Course will contribute substantially towards this end.
11. I wish you all success in your future endeavours and hope that you all will bring greater laurels to National Defence College and your respective countries.

Thank you,  
Jai Hind!