

**ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA,
SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND
ON THE OCCASION OF PRESENTATION OF STANDARD TO 51 SQUADRON
AND COLOURS TO 230 SIGNAL UNIT**

Halwara, March 22, 2018

1. I am glad to be at Air Force Station Halwara to award the Standard to the 51 Squadron and Colours to the 230 Signal Unit.
2. These frontline units have distinguished themselves in service to our nation. They have a rich history of professional excellence and have served India with honour and distinction, during peace and hostilities. It is a proud moment for me to honour the units today for their dedication, professional conduct and courage. My compliments to the Air Warriors on parade today, for their impeccable turnout and smart movement!
3. India has gained prominence as the world's fastest growing major economy. While we remain firmly committed to peace, we would not hesitate to use our might to protect the sovereignty of our nation, if the need so arises. I am confident that our valiant men and women in uniform would be more than equal to the occasion. Our armed forces, exemplified by the Air Warriors who stand before us, reflect this firm national resolve.
4. The Indian Air Force symbolises our military excellence. The performance of its personnel in international exercises, both at home and abroad, is a glowing testimony to its high standards of training and preparedness. The Indian Air Force, besides safeguarding our sovereign skies, has always been at the forefront of **Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief** (HADR) operations. The resilience, tenacity and zeal of our valiant Air Warriors is a source of pride for every Indian.
5. I am privileged to be at Air Force Station Halwara today. The Airbase was founded in March 1950 and is a premier operational base, hosting a variety of **weapon systems**. The airbase was the location of heroic feats during the wars of 1965 and 1971.
6. 51 Squadron or "Sword Arms" was formed on February 1, 1985, in Chandigarh and equipped with MiG-21 Type-75 aircraft. The squadron has enhanced its sterling reputation in the past 33 years, be it while

flying the MiG-21 Type-75 aircraft of yester-years or the **state-of-the art** MiG-21 Bison aircraft of today. The squadron has an enviable operational record and has remained vigilant to ensure credible deterrence while guarding the skies of the valley of Kashmir. It has thus lived up to its motto of विजयाय पराक्रमः. I am confident that the **Sword Arms** will continue to uphold this rich tradition and operate as a formidable fighting force.

7. 230 Signal Unit, known as “Vigilants”, was initially formed in Chandigarh on April 4, 1964. **Vigilants** has always answered to the call of duty and set high standards of professionalism in radar surveillance and interception. This unit remains alert round the year to ensure credible deterrence to the adversary, thereby living up to its motto of ‘सततं तत्परः’. I am confident that **Vigilants** too will continue to live up to its commendable history.
8. In acknowledgement and recognition of their outstanding performance, I am pleased to award the Standard to 51 Squadron and Colours to 230 Signal Unit. On this occasion, I take the opportunity to compliment the personnel and families, past and present, of these units for their selfless sacrifice and service to the nation. Our people are very proud of you. I wish you and your families a glorious future and convey the good wishes of every citizen of India.

Jai Hind!