

**ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA,
SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND
ON THE OCCASION OF REVIEW OF THE PASSING OUT PARADE
OF THE 134TH COURSE OF THE NATIONAL DEFENCE ACADEMY**

Khadakwasla, May 30, 2018

1. I am delighted to be here this morning to review the passing out parade of the 134th course of the National Defence Academy. I must congratulate the cadets on their disciplined drill and perfect turn out. This is a sight to behold – a sight that reflects the glory and pride of our nation. As the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, this is a moment of immense satisfaction for me. The Armed Forces are a symbol of excellence and dedication for the entire country. This parade comprises cadets from all parts of India and from a variety of communities. Its harmony speaks for our essential unity as much as for our pluralism as a society.

2. A soldier or an officer in uniform, irrespective of whether he or she is from the Army, the Navy or the Air Force, evokes admiration and trust everywhere in the country. If a fellow citizen sees a member of the Armed Forces at a railway station or a market or at any other place, there is an immediate emotion of pride and reassurance. This is due to the unparalleled and unquestioning service to the nation in times of war and peace, on the border or within the country during a natural calamity. The Armed Forces represent the best of the Indian ethos. I am confident that these values have been imbibed by the cadets who are graduating today.

3. I have strongly identified with the Armed Forces ever since I became the President of India. My first visit outside Delhi after taking office was to Ladakh, to be with brave soldiers on a distant frontier. Subsequent travels have taken me to Air Force stations and naval bases. A few weeks ago I was privileged to fly to the Siachen Glacier. Experiencing the tough conditions there, and seeing the grit and determination of the gallant soldiers and

officers posted there, made me very proud. With smiling faces and nerves of steel, they have kept the National Flag high. All of you here will be carrying forward that remarkable legacy.

4. The National Defence Academy is more than just a training facility. It is the crucible of valour and bravery. The fact that among its alumni are those who have been decorated with gallantry awards such as the Param Vir Chakra, the Ashok Chakra, the Maha Vir Chakra, the Shaurya Chakra and other honours bears testimony to this. The NDA has inculcated a resolve and a spirit of national service in generations of cadets and generations of officers. It is because of this heritage that in December 1978, my predecessor, President Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy, conferred the President's Colours on the NDA.
5. Cadets, as you cross the quarterdeck today, do remember that you owe a debt of gratitude to your parents and families who have sacrificed so much to support you. And you owe your professional credo to the NDA that has groomed you into leaders. In particular, let us cherish the late Subedar Major Rajeev Kumar Rai, a veteran of operational duties in Siachen, Jammu and Kashmir and the Northeast, who was the Subedar Major Drill of the NDA and who trained you for this ceremony. Unfortunately, he passed away only a few days ago. While expressing condolences to his family and colleagues, let his memory inspire you to greater heights.
6. You should also draw courage from the NDA motto of "Seva Paramo Dharma". Hold this motto in your heart and act it out in deed. These three words are your personal code of ethics. My best wishes to all of you and congratulations to the cadets of the Kilo Squadron for winning the banner.

Cadets

7. The Armed Forces are not merely about doing a job – they are about answering a calling. And this is a calling for a rare breed of human beings. Today, you become role models for our young people, guarantors of our peace and prosperity, and guardians of

our nation – in the snow-capped mountains and under the desert sun, in the stormy seas and in the cloudy but boundless skies.

8. May success and victory mark every step! May you prove worthy successors to the unflinching and fearless officers who have preceded you! May the force be with you!

Jai Hind!