

SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA, SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE ON THE OCCASION OF CALL ON BY THE MEMBERS OF THE 55TH NDC COURSE AND STAFF OF NATIONAL DEFENCE COLLEGE

Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi: 04 NOVEMBER 2015

1. Commandant, National Defence College, Lt Gen Navkiran Singh Ghei, Ati Vishisht Seva Medal (Bar) members of the faculty and staff, officers from the Indian Armed Forces, Civil Services and from friendly foreign countries. It gives me immense pleasure to welcome you all to Rashtrapati Bhavan.
2. The global environment today poses numerous challenges to the world because of its dynamic nature. The astonishing pace at which events have unfolded in the recent past could not have been foreseen a decade earlier.
3. Each country is guided in its actions by its national interests and objectives. The power relationships are constantly changing, and unless a country understands, appreciates and adjusts itself to the changes that are taking place around it, its own security will be seriously jeopardised.

4. Since natural and manmade resources are always at a premium, there will be intense competition among nations to take control of these resources.

5. Security is no more confined to preservation of territorial integrity alone as it encompasses economic, energy, food, health, environmental and several other dimensions of National well being. Intensive research and quality analysis in all fields and disciplines is thus a pre-requisite which calls for a holistic approach to studies across a vast spectrum of disciplines. There must be a conscious effort to strengthen the underlying linkages and not divide them into watertight compartments. Adopting such an approach will yield rich dividends. At the same time, one must not lose sight of the larger picture and keep the primary objective always in focus.

6. The success of any nation state depends on how effectively it harnesses all the available resources at its disposal, foremost among these being the human resource. The development of human resource for National Security is an onerous task undertaken by National Defence College of India where senior officers from not only the Armed Forces but also from Civil Services and friendly foreign countries are endowed with background knowledge to make policy decisions related to national security.

7. In a democratic system like ours, various organs of the state must understand the strengths and limitations of each other. Political leadership and senior Civil Services officers must be conversant with the capabilities and limitations of the Defence forces. Similarly, Armed Forces officers need to understand the limitations and constitutional frame work under which the political set up and Civil Services function. However, both of them should be aware of the larger perspective of National Security in order to take informed decisions of vital importance.

8. I am made to understand that a total of six studies comprise the curriculum of the National Defence College course. The Socio-Political Study is to make you comprehend the main features of the Indian society and polity and to assess issues which have a bearing on National Security. The Economy, Science and Technology Study is to introduce you to the principles and practices that shape economic trends as well as influences of science and technology in attaining self reliance in security related fields. Similarly, Study on International Security Environment, Global Issues and India's Strategic Neighbourhood is to focus on the international security environment as also its impact on India's foreign policy. The final study on Strategies and Structures for National Security is the synthesis and culmination of everything that has been learned and experienced during the year.

9. I hope the Course will make you into more aware and well-informed individuals, who can make well reasoned decisions taking the country's security perspectives into consideration. Multidisciplinary approach to problems of national security was recognised by Chanakya, the author of '*Arthashastra*'. Even Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, while inaugurating the National Defence College in 1960, articulated that 'Defence is not an isolated subject. It is intimately connected with the economic, industrial and many other aspects in the country and is all encompassing'.

10. The role of the Armed Forces has also expanded far beyond traditional military matters with the revolutions 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. Preparing military leaders, police officers and civil servants to deal with the complex security environment of the future will necessarily have to be addressed in a holistic and comprehensive manner.

11. Finally, I once again wish you all, success in your future endeavours and hope that you all will bring more laurels to the National Defence College and your respective countries.

Thank you

‘Jai Hind’