

CONVOCATION ADDRESS OF PRESIDENT OF INDIA, SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE ON THE OCCASION OF GRADUATION CEREMONY OF 71ST STAFF COURSE AT DEFENCE SERVICES STAFF COLLEGE

WELLINGTON, NILGIRIS, TAMIL NADU : 15.04.2016

1. It gives me immense pleasure to be here in this beautiful environment of the Nilgiris, at the Defence Services Staff College for the Convocation Ceremony of the 71st Staff Course.
2. You are all privileged to be here as students, in this exalted and most premier Joint Military Institution of the world, a microcosm of academic excellence. Only few brilliant officers are fortunate to be selected through a highly competitive examination, to qualify for the Staff College. You have the prodigious potential to be the future leadership of the armed forces and must therefore optimize the implementation of high quality professional military education in your respective military careers, imparted here in a conducive environment at the College.
3. I am quite certain that your last one year at DSSC has been a meaningful gain of rich professional experience and knowledge, imbibed from the most competent Directing Staff body. You have achieved this by synergising practical application with military academic issues, using imaginative and innovative thought process. Organisationally, the concerted endeavours of the mentors are consistently focused to nurture your multifaceted skills, enhancing intellectualism through creative and analytical thinking, to produce excellent staff officers and protean commanders. DSSC being one of the finest premier establishments accentuates well orchestrated synergised employment and integrated functioning of the three services in a multi spectrum conflict environment. It is indeed a matter of pride for the College for having been bestowed with Golden Peacock National Training Award for 2016.
4. At the College, you have also learnt broad based professional education on military concepts, doctrines, strategy and principles of war, along with related staff procedures. You have undergone an intensive training of 45 weeks, with dedicated time for military studies and research.
5. This perseverance, methodical study, intellectual application in perspective by each one of you, will benefit you substantially in the future. The contemporary subjects and salient issues discussed during the lectures of eminent Guest Speakers, should be treasured by you for posterity.
6. The training curriculum at this College is institutionalised, to empower jointness amongst our armed forces. The Army, Navy and Air Force are the military instruments of state power. The history of warfare bears testimony, that ultimate victory in war will be achieved through jointness among the three Services. The foremost example of excellent synergy and jointmanship exhibited in military history was during the 1971 War. No strategic military victory has ever been so precedented by any armed forces in the world, such as the liberation of Bangladesh, which culminated with the birth of a nation, on termination of the War.

7. It is now upon you to ensure, that you use this understanding with utmost maturity and prudence, to effectively leverage the combat power of our forces, when the country requires you, as custodians of peace and security, to preserve the sovereignty, conforming to our national interests. As your Supreme Commander, I implore you to do this with total loyalty, distinction, steadfastness and patriotic fervour.

8. The academic Degree that will be conferred upon you today, should be a catalyst in your implacable pursuit for knowledge. You should always remain well informed with the latest in military technology advancements, as well as aware of scientific developments, for their appropriate application in the armed forces. Study the numerous perceptions of various conflicts that have been chronicled and conscientiously study the evolution of potential flashpoints and their evaluated outcomes. It is only when you seek knowledge, that you gain wisdom in life, to take coherent and timely military decisions, which directly affects the lives of the forces under your command.

9. Articulate your views with clarity and conviction, in accordance with military rules and regulations to obviate ambiguity and ambivalence.

10. I am also delighted to learn that 35 officers from 25 friendly foreign countries shall be graduating from the portals of this College today. As befitting ambassadors of your respective nations during the last one year, you have received a professional insight, not only of our armed forces and our redoubtable nation, but also on subjects of international relations, military strategy, operational art, doctrines, and so on. I am sanguine that as thoroughbred officers, you shall rise to the hierarchical levels of leadership in your armed forces, similar to DSSC alumni icons in the past. I hope that the deep bonds of friendship and camaraderie that you have forged amongst you will transcribe into everlasting ties of brotherhood between our nations in an eternal dimension of time.

11. At the end, I congratulate each one of you for having successfully graduated from the Defence Services Staff College with a Masters Degree in Science from the University of Madras. My special compliments to your parents and families for having supported you in this endeavour. I also compliment the Commandant and his Directing Staff for having mentored and nurtured you in command and staff functions, to produce efficient 'Role Model' staff officers and leaders in your professional careers.

12. With these words, I extend my good wishes to all the Staff Members & Student Officers of the 71st Staff Course and wish them continued success in all endeavours.

JAI HIND