

CNS Address at NCC Republic Day Camp on 16 January 2017

1. I feel much younger today to be amongst one of the best representative group of youth that the country has to offer. I say this with great confidence because the National Cadet Corps, by design, encourages self-development, discipline and commitment. These are the qualities that play a vital role in 'Nation Building'. You will all agree with me that the activities and curriculum of NCC would have provided great opportunities to all you to imbibe these qualities.
2. At the outset, for the NCC cadets taking part in the Republic Day Camp this year, I wish to congratulate each one of you on the excellent standards of Drill and Band display this morning. The briefing by cadets in the Flag Area was indeed very impressive. My special compliments to the Cadets who performed in the cultural programme this morning.
3. I am aware, how hard all of you have worked to make yourself eligible to reach here. It is certainly not an easy task. Let me also tell you that expectations from NCC contingent at RD Parade are also rising with each passing year. In the run-up to the final event, I am very sure; all of you are going to work even harder to make this the best contingent of this year's parade.
4. The National Cadet Corps has played a commendable role over the years in enabling the youth to become responsible citizens of the country. The institution of NCC has given shape to the lives of many eminent personalities in India.

5. I am sure, you all are aware that our Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi as well as the Raskha Mantri Shri Manohar Parrikar have been groomed by the NCC. I can only imagine how proud they will feel to see you marching on the Rajpath in your smart uniforms and your impressive drill on the Republic Day.

6. This organisation has also shaped the lives of a number of military officers, many of them reaching the highest rank in their service. First Woman IPS Officer of this country, Kiran Bedi, also owes her early mentoring to this very organisation. The list would go very long, if I were to cover all names in uniform as well as in the fields from sports to art, industry and literature.

7. Every activity that you do at NCC makes you a better person for tomorrow and a better example for other citizens to follow. Therefore, I personally attach a lot of importance to this institution. I am confident that NCC will continue this trend and guide the Nation's youth in the correct direction.

8. Today, the country is expecting much more from this organization. In keeping with the Hon'ble PM's vision of expanding the footprints of NCC, 40,000 additional cadets are due to get enrolled very soon. It is this group in front of me that is going to set the standards for these new cadets to emulate.

9. Sports and extracurricular activities have always been a vital ingredient of NCC curriculum. I am glad to note that more than 2000 cadets have participated in various disciplines of sports and games during the last two NCC National games. I am also especially happy to

know that, for the first time in the history of NCC, the Under-17 NCC Boys Team won the prestigious Jawaharlal Nehru Hockey Tournament in 2015. Two teams of NCC cadets also reached the semi-final stage in the prestigious Subroto Cup Football tournament last year.

10. I especially wish to compliment the NCC All – Girls Expedition Team for successfully summiting Mount Everest in May 2016. This was an extraordinary achievement as the 10 girl cadets forming part of the expedition team were between the age group of 17 to 21 years. I also wish to compliment the NCC Boys' expedition team for successfully scaling Bhagirathi.

11. I am also told that 20 Officers and 138 cadets visited various friendly foreign countries on NCC Youth Exchange Programme. This programme must have provided the Cadets an invaluable exposure to the history, culture and heritage of these countries.

12. The community development and social awareness programmes undertaken by the NCC cadets like the Swatch Bharat Abhiyan, Blood Donation, Tree Plantation, AIDS awareness, Cancer awareness, Pulse Polio, Anti-Drug Day, Earth Day, Girl Child Day and many other such programmes are powerful tools to spread awareness across all sections of the society. It is your enthusiasm that gives strength to these activities and the Nation would always remain grateful to NCC for this contribution.

13. I would like to compliment you on these wonderful achievements. These would no doubt attract a large number of young and enthusiastic students to join the NCC. I am sure these young achievers would bring laurels to our country in the years to come.

14. On a more serious note, Cadets, let me admit that India, today, is very different from what I saw at your age. And I have no doubts that your generation is going to take this great nation to even greater heights. It is, therefore, the responsibility of each one of you, individually as well as collectively, to make a positive contribution to India's development.

15. In the end, I wish to congratulate you, once again, on your excellent performance today and wish you all the very best for the final event.

16. I will be very glad to see you at the Navy House this evening, and even more, if I happen to meet some of you in white uniforms in a few years from now.

17. While you continue to follow your dream, do enjoy the moment, keep smiling and keep working hard.

18. Jai Hind!