

CNS Address at NDA Passing Out Parade on 30 May 2017

1. Lt Gen PM Hariz, GOC-in-C Southern Army Command, Air Marshal Jasjit Singh Kler, Commandant NDA, Deputy Commandant, Members of the Faculty and Staff, distinguished guests, cadets on parade, parents and families, members of the media, ladies and gentlemen.

2. It is indeed an honour and a privilege for me to review the Passing Out Parade of the 132nd Course at the National Defence Academy, today. This ceremony is of special significance, as it marks a very important milestone in the journey of the 132nd Course, towards earning the prestigious President's Commission.

3. At the outset, I would like to congratulate the passing out course on successfully completing their ab-initio training. I compliment you all on your immaculate turnout, smart military bearing and the splendid display of drill.

4. I would also like to convey my felicitations to the Commandant, officers, instructors and members of faculty of the NDA, whose diligence and sustained efforts have enabled successful culmination of training.

5. On behalf of the three Services, I deem it my singular honour to congratulate the parents who are present here today. It is with heartfelt gratitude that I thank all the parents for having encouraged their wards to take up this noble profession and for having stood by them through tough times.

6. Ladies and Gentlemen, there is an old saying in the military that when the situation gets tough, "*We do not rise to the level of our expectations; We fall to the level of our training*". It is training that holds us all in good stead as we fulfil our leadership roles in the service of our nation.

7. The ab-initio training that you cadets have completed is the very foundation upon which the rest of your careers will be built. Academic knowledge, weapon training, drill, swimming and physical fitness are the basic skills that will be required throughout your career. Therefore the training, at the NDA that you have undergone in the last three years, has focused primarily on these aspects.

8. In addition, there are a number of valuable lessons that training at NDA has imparted. Chief among these values is the understanding that discipline, professionalism, courage and camaraderie are invaluable to the 'Profession of Arms'.

9. I am confident that each and every cadet passing out of the Academy would enshrine these values in his heart and revisit them frequently through his career in the Armed Forces.

10. Cadets of the 132nd Course! On this solemn occasion, I would like to draw your attention to a few fundamental and indispensable aspects of the military way of life.

11. First would, undoubtedly, be the primacy of the Nation and the Services. All of you have pledged your life to the selfless service of our nation. It is, therefore, incumbent upon you to serve with honour, dignity and commitment. It is important to remember that no effort by you would be too small and no sacrifice too great in serving our glorious nation and her gallant Services.

12. Throughout your training, you have been guided by the motto of '*SEVA PARMO DHARMA*' - 'Service Before Self'. This simple yet profound principle has defined the leadership of our Armed Forces over several decades. It is now your turn to carry this principle to the field and live it through your actions.

13. The second aspect is leadership by example. Your character will hereinafter be an open book. It will be judged by your superiors as well as subordinates through your conduct. The men under your command will always look up to you as a role model. As you add stars and stripes on your shoulders, remember to clothe yourself with humility. This is essential to create a bond of unity in your teams. It is from personal

experience that I can state that unquestioned obedience does not stem from superiority of rank or positions of power but by demonstrated commitment, honesty of purpose and willingness to 'walk the talk'.

14. The third aspect is courage which includes both aspects of physical valour as well as courage of conviction. Your men expect you to lead them into harms way when the situation so demands. Therefore, physical courage should be demonstrated and be evident in all your actions on the field. You must develop the wisdom to clearly differentiate between right and wrong and imbibe the strength of character that empowers you to stand by your convictions, come what may.

15. The confidence of holding your ground with conviction is underpinned by the next aspect, which is professionalism. Learning is a continuous and incremental process. Seek knowledge at every opportunity, master every facet of this knowledge and let no one find you lacking in it. This professionalism will give you confidence in your interactions as well as stature within your respective services.

16. The last aspect that will serve you well in your challenging and adventurous journey ahead is developing a positive attitude. It is this single attribute that will decide the bonhomie, trust and respect that you will inspire.

17. Therefore, as you step out of this premier establishment, bear in mind that it will be your professionalism, discipline, motivation, character, courage and attitude that will determine your success as an officer and a leader. Make your family, your Service and the nation proud by your exemplary service.

18. After a few weeks of a well-deserved break, you will be embarking on a new voyage at your respective Service training establishments. It is during this phase that professional knowledge will be further ingrained in you. This phase demands single minded devotion to duty and sustained focus on acquiring core professional skills.

19. You will also notice that the centralised monitoring of your daily work and training by your instructors and mentors will reduce as you

move to the next stages of your training. However, the training tasks will get tougher, the margins of error will shrink and your training here onwards will demand more of your personal commitment. I, therefore, urge all of you to be conscious of your roots here and resolve to be the best professionals in your respective Services. Take pride in what you have set out to achieve. Dream big; set yourself some tough goals and work hard to achieve them.

20. In this wonderful journey that awaits you, cherish the true spirit of jointness that has been instilled in all of you at the National Defence Academy. Gentlemen, you may train and work separately, but when the call to arms is sounded, what you do together will dictate the outcome of battle. It is this underlying sense of belongingness and camaraderie that has made the Indian Armed Forces stand tall amongst its peers in the world.

21. Before I conclude, I would like to make a special mention of the Cadets from our friendly foreign countries. My heartiest congratulations to you all for completing your training with flying colours. I am certain that as you step outside the portals of this Academy, you would carry a positive impression of India and her Armed Forces. I am sanguine that you will do your alma matter proud when you return to your nations and I urge you to build up on the training that you received here. I wish you great success in your careers and as you rise to positions of eminence and stature in your respective Services, I look forward to seeing you again in India.

22. Cadets of the passing out course, as you eagerly await to march to the tune of '*Auld Lang Syne*', on behalf of all the three Services, I would like to once again congratulate you on successful culmination of your training at this revered institution. I will also take this opportunity to congratulate all award winners for their distinguished performance and also to the Champion Squadron for winning the Banner.

23. I wish each one of you good luck, success and glory in every endeavour.

24. Jai Hind.