

**ADDRESS BY THE HON'BLE PRESIDENT OF INDIA
SMT. DROUPADI MURMU
ON THE OCCASION OF CALL ON BY THE MEMBERS OF
65TH NDC COURSE**

Rashtrapati Bhavan, October 7, 2025

I am very happy to be with you all today. I am told, and I also gathered from the introduction and experience-sharing by the participants that this group comprises officers from the Indian Army, Navy and Air Force, officers from the Civil Services and also officers from friendly foreign countries. I extend my warm welcome to all the officers from friendly foreign countries.

This selected group of senior officers, including participants from 32 friendly foreign countries, can play a very important role in strengthening the bonds of mutual and international cooperation.

I compliment the National Defence College of India for conducting this international program which has become a benchmark learning intervention. I am sure that this program has succeeded in fostering better understanding, mutual cooperation and appropriate linkages in the national, regional and international fields related to security.

I was shown an image of the crest of the National Defence College. It contains the motto of the college 'बुद्धिर्यस्य बलम् तस्य' which means 'Wisdom is Strength'. Strategic wisdom is the foundation of leadership in any sphere, more so in the field of security. The outcome of the comprehensive course conducted over 47 weeks will be demonstrated in the strategic insights the participants bring to their roles and functions while formulating policies and taking decisions.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Our Armed Forces demonstrated the strength of joint-ness and strategic foresight during 'Operation Sindoor'. The calibrated, tri-service response resulted in effective synergy. This synergy was behind the successful campaign to dismantle the terror infrastructure across the line-of-control and deeper inside the territories across the border. I take this opportunity to express my effusive appreciation for the leadership of the Armed Forces.

As you are aware, the process of promoting joint-ness started with the creation of the Department of Military Affairs with the Chief of Defence Staff as its Secretary. I am happy to note that efforts are underway to restructure forces through the establishment of Integrated Theatre Commands and Integrated Battle Groups.

The changing geo-political environment and security-contexts call for dynamic responses. India is engaged in transforming the Armed Forces into a technologically-advanced combat-ready force capable of multi-domain integrated operations.

Ladies and gentlemen,

National interests and objectives form the foundations of the security framework of any nation. However, universal values are at the core of defining our national interests. The Indian tradition has always looked at the entire humanity as one family. This rich sentiment of the entire world being one family is expressed in our ancient saying 'Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam'. Universal brotherhood and peace have been our articles of faith. But we have also given importance to being battle-ready to defeat the forces that are harmful to humanity and our nation.

In the Mahabharata, the epic around the great war, which is said to have been fought centuries ago, we find expressions of the values we cherish. Every attempt was made to avoid the war and arrive at an amicable solution. Efforts for peace were led by Krishna, the principal character, who is regarded by us as a divine entity. When the war became unavoidable, Krishna told Arjuna, one of the most important warriors, to get rid of all doubts and fight bravely.

Thus, the holistic Indian approach to war and peace, gives highest importance to the values of peace and non-violence. But it also strongly inspires to fight with utmost resolve when a battle becomes unavoidable. An interesting physical reflection of the holistic Indian value-system can be seen in the premises of 'Gandhi Smriti' and the 'National Defence College' facing each other, more out of co-incidence than design. It is as if nature placed the two institutions close together to remind us of our integrated values.

The Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi is respected as an apostle of peace and non-violence. However, he always believed and said that non violence was a weapon of the brave. He always appealed to his followers to demonstrate the utmost courage and fearlessness.

I am sure that at the end of this course, the participants will feel enriched with deeper insights into a wide range of critical issues. I wish each one of you a very successful future as strategic leaders in your domains.

Thank you!

Jai Hind!

Jai Bharat!