

**ADDRESS BY THE HON'BLE PRESIDENT OF INDIA,
SMT DROUPADI MURMU
ON THE OCCASION OF CALL ON BY THE FACULTY AND
COURSE MEMBERS OF 62ND NDC COURSE**

Rashtrapati Bhavan, September 15, 2022

I welcome all the participants of the 62nd National Defence College Course to Rashtrapati Bhavan. I also extend a warm welcome to the Commandant and Faculty members of this prestigious course.

The National Defence College has a rich tradition of training senior professionals from military and civil service background in the fields of strategic security. I congratulate the NDC for continuing this tradition. I am told that this Course is in its 62nd year. The prestige associated with this course has been consistent in the past half a century for which it deserves appreciation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Security is a term which we often use in our conversations. But it has wide ramifications. Its interpretation has expanded drastically in the past decades. What was limited to mere territorial integrity has now come to be seen in political and economic contexts also. Thus, the aim of the NDC course to study “strategic, economic, scientific, political and industrial aspects of national defence” is even more relevant today.

I am happy to know that the NDC course has over the years lived up to its aim of educating its participants to have a deep understanding of these issues. The Sanskrit words 'Buddhiryasya Balamtasya' from Hitopadesha, which means ‘wisdom is strength’, is the motto of the NDC. Undoubtedly, the NDC is following its motto in letter and spirit by imparting knowledge to its participants over the years.

I am told that the present batch of the NDC has 62 participants from the armed forces, 20 from civil services, 35 from friendly foreign countries and 1 participant from the corporate sector. I must say, it is a great mix of people from varied professional backgrounds. It gives them an opportunity to know different perspectives, thereby widening the horizons of their thoughts and understanding.

It is this unique feature of this course which has made it win immense appreciation. The lectures combined with seminars, interactions and study tours give a practical shape to the theories analysed in lecture rooms. It good to know that our approach is consistent with the practical realities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are in a dynamic world where even a small change can have wide impact. Sometimes, it can have safety and security connotations. The pace and tide of the Covid pandemic is just an example of the threat which the humanity faces today. It makes us realize the vulnerability of humankind. Every threat makes us think about the need to fight it and prevent its recurrence.

I say this because today we need to prepare ourselves to face not just the traditional threats but even the unseen ones which also include the vagaries of nature. Climate change and sustainable development are issues which are of prime importance today. It is the need of the hour that countries across the board should come together and work out solutions for them. It is at this point that the strategic policies coincide with the foreign policies of the countries. It is a multi-discipline and multi-dimensional approach for which we need to equip ourselves.

I am pleased to know that the faculty at the NDC course is bringing these sensitive aspects into the curriculum for discussion and analysis. The resource persons from armed forces, administrative and diplomatic backgrounds are indeed giving good insights into all these issues. I congratulate them for giving a sound training to the participants of the course. It is not surprising that the past

participants of this course include stalwarts in the field of defence and policy-making. I would like to specifically mention that the first Chief of Defence Staff, Late General Bipin Rawat was an alumnus of this college. He will forever be remembered for his immense contribution in the field of defence and strategic affairs. It is definitely a matter of pride for NDC that even heads of state of numerous nations are alumni of this college.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would also like to emphasize one more significant aspect. India as a nation is taking strides to become an Atmanirbhar Bharat. Various policy initiatives are being implemented to make this vision possible. It is this vision which brings India on the path of development and progress. It was a proud moment for each Indian when recently the first indigenously built aircraft carrier, Vikrant, was inducted in the Indian Navy. Such steps bring a fresh hope and inspiration in the people of India. I hope that we would continue to tread this path of progress in a steadfast manner.

As we all know, we are celebrating 75 years of Indian Independence. We are also entering 'Amrit Kaal' to the centenary of our independence, which is a crucial phase for all of us. It is time to come together and build a nation which can be hailed as one of the developed nations of the world. For this, we need the efforts of officers like you to take all positive steps in this direction. I am sure the knowledge and understanding which you have gathered from the NDC will help you in this pursuit.

I once again congratulate the course participants and wish them very best for their future. I hope that you all will bring greater laurels to the National Defence College and your respective countries as seasoned professionals in your domains of expertise.

Thank you.

Jai Hind!