

**SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA, SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE
AT THE SPECIAL SHOW OF CHANGE-OVER OF CEREMONIAL ARMY
GUARD BATTALION**

Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi. : 09-04-2014

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen

1. Today, I am pleased to witness the change-over of Ceremonial Army Guard battalion from 28 MADRAS to 8 Jammu and Kashmir Light Infantry, in a ceremony which is happening for the first time at the forecourt of Rashtrapati Bhavan.

2. The MADRAS Regiment being one of the oldest regiments of the Indian Army, has a rich tradition of valour and courage and has rendered a distinguished service to the nation since its inception. The personnel have always set the highest standards in pursuit of excellence that others would do well to emulate. The glory, courage, sacrifice and devotion to duty displayed by the 'Thambis' both on Indian soil and abroad, stands testimony to same.

3. My heartfelt compliments to Colonel Praveen H, his team of officers and brave men of 28 MADRAS for successfully tenating the tasks entrusted to them as the Army Guard Battalion at Rashtrapati Bhavan from May 2011 to Apr 2014. 28 MADRAS has a glorious history since raising and has proved its mettle during various

operations in varied terrains. The Battalion has rightfully been awarded with two unit citations and a plethora of other bravery awards since its raising. This has been possible due to the dedication, sincerity and professionalism of the troops, both past and present of the Battalion.

4. As the Army Guard Battalion in Rashtrapati Bhavan, whether presenting arms to state guests and high officials visiting the country, or presenting arms whenever I depart and arrive at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, or the Guard saluting everyday before and after my walk in the Mughal Gardens, personnel of 28 MADRAS have always displayed highest standards of drill, turnout, bearing and discipline. Many visiting dignitaries have applauded the professional conduct of the personnel on parade. I congratulate the Battalion for their exemplary military traditions, professionalism and high standards of discipline.

5. Today you stand on the threshold of a new assignment and I am confident that you will strive to maintain the best traditions of your regiment and Indian Army. I wish you success in all your future endeavours.

6. I also take this opportunity to welcome 8th Battalion, The Jammu and Kashmir Light Infantry (Siachen), one of the most

decorated Battalion of the Indian Army to Rashtrapati Bhavan. The unit will be relieving 28 MADRAS and taking over an extremely prestigious and honourable assignment as ceremonial Army Guard Battalion at Rashtrapati Bhavan. The many laurels, the title of “bravest of the brave” and various battle honours the unit has won, is a testimony of their valour, strong determination, rich traditions and indomitable spirit. I am confident that the Unit will continue to strive for excellence with professional zeal and meet the high standards required as the ceremonial Army Guard. I wish Col Amit Soni, his team of officers and brave men of 8 JAK LI a successful tenure here at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

7. In the end I wish officers, troops and families of both the units, the very best and a glorious future. The Nation is indeed proud of you.

May god bless you all.

‘Jai Hind’