

**ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA,
SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND
ON THE OCCASION OF PRESENTATION OF COLOUR TO THE
ARMY AVIATION CORPS**

Nasik, October 10, 2019

1. It gives me immense pleasure to be present amid my sky soldiers. In my capacity as the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, I dedicate this event to the armed forces of our country.
2. It has been 32 years since the Army Aviation Corps came into existence. This period has been replete with tales of heroism, honour and glory in various operations. Immediately after its raising in 1986, the Army Aviation Corps proved its impeccable combat credentials during 'Operation Pawan' in Sri Lanka.
3. The Siachen Glacier has been the ultimate operational frontier for the Corps since 1984. Routinely operating at 20000 feet and above in extremely challenging conditions, the highly skilled and motivated pilots of the Corps have been carrying out yeoman service in 'Operation Meghdoot'.
4. In this context, I would particularly refer to my Siachen visit on May 10 last year at Kumar Post. It was a unique experience. Our Jawans living there in most adverse circumstances in the glacier is a testimony to their unparalleled valour and determination. I realized on my visit that we live in peace because of vigilance and sacrifices of these brave soldiers.
5. The Army Aviation Corps has earned 273 Honours and Awards for conspicuous gallantry and distinguished service. This speaks volumes of the exceptional valour and spirit of the Corps personnel and is a model for all soldiers and officers of our

armed forces. You have earned distinction in various wars and operations and have excelled in sports, adventure and overcome numerous professional challenges.

6. Your courage and steadfastness have won you the Battle title 'Kargil' in 'Operation Vijay' in 1999. Many of your squadrons have been awarded the prestigious 'Chief of Army Staff Unit Citation' for their exceptional performance. You have been excellent ambassadors of our country while operating overseas in countries like Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo, while on United Nations Peace Keeping Missions. You have performed much beyond the call of duty during natural calamities.
7. At this Colour Presentation Ceremony, I would like to pay homage to the martyrs of the Army Aviation Corps. Their blood and sacrifice has secured our sovereignty and brought glory to our nation. I also congratulate all veterans and serving soldiers of the Corps for their devotion to duty and professional conduct. You have been true force multipliers in some of the most inhospitable terrain and adverse climatic conditions in the world. I take this opportunity to convey my best wishes to all ranks and families of the entire Army Aviation Corps fraternity. The Indian Army and the nation are proud of you.
8. We take the solemn vow to defend the borders as well as sovereignty of our country against all odds. I am confident that we will fulfill this vow and uphold the dignity of our nation and our people, whatever be the cost, and strive for excellence in all our endeavours.
9. May you fly high and bring glory to the nation. I wish you "Happy Landings" and "God Speed".

Thank you, Jai Hind!