

SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA, SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE AT THE PRESENTATION OF STANDARD TO 501 SU AND 30 SQN

Ambala, Haryana: 10 November, 2016

1. At the outset, I compliment the air-warriors for their impeccable turnout and outstanding precision of drill movements. I am extremely pleased to be present here today, at Air Force Station, Ambala to award Standards to 501 Signal Unit and 30 Squadron. These distinguished Units have glorious past and rich traditions of professional excellence. Since their inception, both units have distinguished themselves in the service of the Nation with honour and distinction. In recognition of their selfless devotion, professionalism and dedication to Service, the Nation honours them today with a deep sense of gratitude and appreciation.

2. India's increasing eminence in the comity of Nations also draws its strength from the ever increasing capabilities of our Armed Forces. Though we remain firmly committed to peace, we will use all our might to protect the sovereignty of our Nation, and I am confident that our valiant men and women in uniform will rise to the occasion to meet the challenges triumphantly. Our Armed Forces, exemplified by the air-warriors who stand before us today, epitomise grit and determination in fulfilling their responsibilities by upholding the highest standards of service ethos.

3. The Indian Air Force is the cutting edge of our Nation's military might. The excellent performance of its personnel in International exercises, both at home and abroad, is indeed a glowing testimony to the level of training and preparedness of our Air Force. The Indian Air Force has also been at the forefront of all Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief operations.

4. **501 Signal Unit** has completed 52 glorious years of service to the Nation. The unit has been the pioneer of Air Defence in the Northern region since its inception as an Air Defence Ground Station at Barnala. 501 Signal Unit has performed its role with utmost determination and single minded dedication, both in peace and in war. In the 1971 war, despite taking a direct hit by enemy air action, the Unit not only recovered quickly, but also continued aiding our Air Operations against the enemy. Through the changes heralded by modern technology and introduction of new equipment, the MADBEES have remained steadfast as per their motto of '**Satatam Tataparrah**' meaning '**ALWAYS ALERT**'. It has carved a niche for itself as is evident in the professionalism displayed in the conduct of round the clock surveillance and operations. I have

no doubt that the Station personnel will continue to serve the Nation in line with the rich traditions of the IAF.

5. **30 Squadron** or 'Rhinos' was formed on 01 November 1969 in Tezpur. It was then equipped with the MiG-21 FL aircraft. Whether flying the MiG-21 or the formidable Sukhoi-30 MKI, the Squadron has an enviable operational record. Its personnel have contributed selflessly and set high standards of professional excellence for others to emulate. The Squadron today undertakes extensive Maritime Strike operations in conjunction with the Indian Navy and is a pioneer in International exercise participation. The Rhinos continue to live up to their motto of '**ASEEM PAURUSH**' which translates to '**BOUNDLESS VALOUR**'. Having completed 47 years of gallant service to the Nation, I am confident that the Rhinos will continue to uphold their rich traditions and operate as a formidable fighting force in the years to come.

6. In acknowledgement and recognition of their outstanding performance over the years, I am pleased to award Standard to 501 Signal Unit and 30 Squadron. I am confident that these Units will continue to strive for excellence with professional zeal and serve the Nation selflessly in the years to come. On this occasion, I also take this opportunity to compliment the personnel and families of both Units, past and present, for their selfless sacrifice and service to the nation. The Nation is indeed proud of you. I wish you and your families the very best and a glorious future.

JAI HIND!
