



Defence Minister's Customary Broadcast to The Armed Forces

Posted On: 14 AUG 2017 7:13PM by PIB Delhi

Following is the text of customary broadcast by the Defence Minister Shri Arun Jaitley to the Armed Forces personnel over All India Radio on the eve of the 71st Independence Day:

My Dear Jawans,

The country will be celebrating our 71st Independence Day tomorrow. On this momentous occasion, I extend my heartiest greetings and best wishes to each one of you serving in the Armed Forces. I extend my greetings to all serving personnel as well as ex-servicemen of the Army, Navy, Air Force and the Coast Guard. I also extend my best wishes to the family members of our Armed Forces personnel, many of whom are deployed far from their homes in not only tough terrain but also in deep seas.

2. On this auspicious occasion, my thoughts and gratitude are with the near and dear ones of all those who laid down their lives protecting our nation. We are forever indebted to them for their supreme sacrifice. Since the Armed Forces are at the forefront of our nation's defence, I assure you that the Government will do all that is necessary to keep your morale high and to meet your functional requirements.

3. Despite our repeated requests to our Western neighbour not to use our territory occupied by it not only to train terrorists but also use it as launch pad for pushing these militants into India, such nefarious activities continued. We ran out of patience as these terrorists were not only targeting our Armed Forces but also civilians. Based on specific and credible inputs about some terrorist teams having positioned themselves at launch pads along Line of Control to carry out infiltration and conduct terrorist strikes in Jammu and Kashmir and in various metros in other States, the Indian Army conducted surgical strikes on 29 September last year at several of these launch pads to pre-empt infiltration by terrorists. The operations were focussed on ensuring that these terrorists did not succeed in their design to cause destruction and endanger the lives of our citizens. During these counter terrorist operations significant casualties were caused to terrorists and those providing support to them.

4. Even now our jawans continue to be vigilant on the Line of Control, defending the nation, as our adversary continues with its abhorrent acts. Some of our soldiers continue to make the supreme sacrifice while defending our motherland. The nation is indebted to their martyrdom.

5. The Government is committed for the welfare of our jawans. The Government has taken decision on recommendations of the 7th Central Pay Commission on Allowances, which will benefit 14 lakh Defence Forces personnel. Some of these include, rates of Siachen Allowance for extreme risk and hardship increased from Rs14,000 per month to Rs 30,000 per month; Counter Insurgency Operations Allowance increased from between Rs 3,000 and 11,700 per month to between Rs 6,000 and 16,900 per month. Territorial Army Allowance increased from between Rs 175 and 450 per month to Rs 1,000 and 2,000 per month.

6. The welfare of Ex-Servicemen has been paramount for the government. The benefits of One Rank One Pension (OROP) scheme started reaching the accounts of Ex-Servicemen and families since last year. Till July 10 this year, a sum of Rs 4,156 crores and Rs 2,385 crores have been paid towards first and second instalments of OROP arrears to around 20,40,000 Ex-Servicemen/family pensioners and 15,93,000 Ex-Servicemen respectively. Further, a sum of Rs 2,250 crores has also been paid to 15,13,000 Ex-Servicemen as third instalments of OROP arrears. The Government is also sympathetically considering the report of the one-man judicial committee headed by Justice L Narasimha Reddy on OROP to look into the anomalies, if any, arising out of implementation of OROP and will take decision soon.

7. The government has enhanced penury grant to non-pensioner Ex-Servicemen/Widows to Rs 4,000/- per month from the existing rate of Rs 1,000/- per month. We have approved the enhancement of the penury grant following the demands by different stake holders, including Ex-servicemen Associations, Rajya Sainik Boards, Ex-servicemen/widows. The grant is provided to non-pensioner Ex-servicemen/widows, who are above 65 years of age by the Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare through Kendriya Sainik Board. It will benefit a large number of non-pensioner Ex-servicemen and widows who are virtually in a state of penury.

8. With the inspiration of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, to help create a spirit of respect for our real heroes, my esteemed cabinet colleague, Minister of Human Resource Development Shri Prakash Javadekar and Minister of State for Defence Dr. Subhash Bhamre jointly launched a campaign to have a 'Wall of Valour' in 1,000 educational institutions across the country in the Month of May. Portraits of Param Vir Chakra decorated soldiers will be displayed at designated places on educational campuses to instil sense of nationalism among the students.

9. I had privilege to inaugurate the Sainik Rest House at Naraina in New Delhi last month. It is built at a cost of around Rs 8 crore. I hope that this is the beginning of an initiative and the KSB will be able to expand on these in the years to come so that such facilities become an integral part of facilities for Ex-Servicemen. The facilities which have been created are extremely hygienic and very liveable. The Armed Forces have a tradition of maintaining their properties and preserving them well. And I am sure that the kind of modest charges which have been fixed will be of a great assistance and value to all serving and Ex-Servicemen.

10. With these words, I once again extend my greetings to all of you and your family members on the eve of 71st Independence Day. We fought long for our Independence and became Independent nation in which countless patriots immersed themselves in the struggle so that the new generation could live in a free India. The nation now looks to you to defend its borders with all your might and to the best of your strength & abilities so that all our people sleep in peace tonight so that we all see a new dawn together, tomorrow and to take our country to new heights of peace and prosperity for all our people.

11. Jai Hind!

NW/DK/Rajib

(Release ID: 1499627) Visitor Counter : 54

