



Speech by the Hon'ble president of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind at the closing ceremony of the 42nd World Congress of the International Committee of Military Medicine

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1. I am happy to be among you today at the closing ceremony of the 42nd World Congress of the International Committee of Military Medicine (ICMM). I am told that all of you, that is, the delegates from 74 member states who participated, had excellent discussions during this conference. I congratulate the ICMM as well as the Indian Armed Forces Medical Services for conducting the Conference successfully.
2. For nearly a century now, the ICMM has been making a meaningful impact in the practice of military medicine across the world. The uniformed medical services deliver health care in the most trying circumstances. They truly work at the 'cutting edge' of the medical profession. This 'edge' does not sharpen overnight, but is achieved through years of perseverance and training.
3. Through its Regional and World Congress, ICMM provides a global platform for sharing and meaningful learning. You are able to duly address contemporary, real-time and relevant issues pertaining to Military Medicine, Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief, Mass Casualty Medicine and Infectious disease epidemiology including outbreaks, Medical Logistics and missions.
4. The medical service is an important pillar for any military. The Armed Forces Medical Services of India have been providing stellar service not only to the Armed Forces but have also been in the service of the nation both in peace and war. They are the most valuable first responders in times of natural and man-made calamities and crises and are in a perpetual state of readiness. The onus of promoting and delivering preventive, curative and rehabilitative medical care for the serving soldier and his family, including our esteemed veterans, has been carried out by the Armed Forces Medical Services with commendable professionalism.
5. In this context I am extremely heartened to observe the content of the deliberations which have occurred over the last 5 days at the 42nd Congress of ICMM here at New Delhi. The theme of this year's World Congress has been appropriately kept as **"Military Medicine in Transition"**. The theme itself portrays both the dynamic and evolving nature of medical science per se and the ever changing and volatile environment of the practice of military medicine, in particular. I am sure the word 'Transition' mentioned in the theme, refers to a continuously occurring positive change and learning based on prevalent situation.
6. I am told that the Conference held deliberations on emergency medicine, environmental medicine, lifestyle diseases, Mass Casualty management, Disease Outbreak response, rehabilitative medicine, and so forth. All these issues are very relevant for our citizens but particularly important for the men on ground, that is, our brave SOLDIERS.
7. A soldier of any country is a very valued and special citizen. His or her pledge to safeguard the country from any threat, at the peril of life, puts him or her at a special pedestal. A soldier undergoes a well-planned regimen, and in doing so, is often exposed to harsh alien environments that put physical and mental stress on the body. In a vast country like ours, our valiant forces too, face tough environmental conditions of high-altitude, glacial conditions, deserts, jungles, violent seas and the aerospace. I am sure the deliberations on the medical aspects related to these very military specific environments, would have been fruitful, owing to the varied exposure and experience of speakers.
8. Now, I wish to say something about the brave women who join the armed forces. Women have always, in some role or the other, been an important part of Armed Forces across the world. Different countries have different terms of engagement and employment of women in uniform. More and more countries are going forward to give them greater responsibilities. In India too, women have evolved as able soldiers in whichever arm or service they have served in.
9. In the field of combat medical care, historically, they have had a distinguished record as health care providers. The Indian Armed Forces Medical Services has had women adorn the uniform as Medical, Dental and Nursing Officers since our independence, and they have served and proved themselves even in extremely difficult situations, with great distinction. I am glad to note that a special panel discussion was slated in the programme, to discuss the role of a woman as a combat soldier.
10. In keeping with the present world scenario, it is important that we focus on two aspects of medicine; **training and medical research**. Both are progressive and mandated requirements of the medical profession, which help the organization and the individual to constantly grow and expand. I compliment the 42nd World Congress of the ICMM to have addressed both aspects of training as well as medical research. I am sure that your deliberations would immensely benefit the medical fraternity in uniform, but more importantly would bring positive benefits to the health and longevity of the soldiers from respective national armies.
11. I wish the ICMM World Congress all success in their future endeavors, assuring it of full cooperation and support from India. I once again compliment our Indian Armed Forces Medical Services for hosting this conclave.

Thank you.

Jai Hind!

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