

**VALEDICTORY ADDRESS BY
LT GEN A K SINGH, PVSM, AVSM, SM, VSM (RETD)
LT GOVERNOR, ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS AT
DSSC WELLINGTON ON 17 APRIL 2014**

1. Commandant, Faculty, Officers of DSSC-69 and Ladies,
2. It gives me immense pleasure to be back at Wellington. Not having graduated from here, every journey to Wellington is a discovering and motivating experience. Today, I wish to congratulate each one of you for having **successfully completed 45 weeks** of dedicated studies in pursuit of academic excellence. Hereafter, you will experience a **new chapter** of your **professional career**, heralded by extremely high expectations from you, by your superiors, colleagues & subordinates. The endeavour has been to impart quality training and hone your skills both intellectual and analytical.
3. Your last one year at DSSC should have been fruitfully utilised in sharing professional experiences, **learning from the most qualified DS body, synergising theory with practical application** and the most important; reflecting on your own experiences in an environment which is most **conducive to professional understanding and enrichment**. DSSC is one of the **finest institutions**, which emphasises on jointmanship and the importance of **synergised employment of the three services**. In the last **60 years**, DSSC has **trained over 16,000 officers** of the Indian Armed Forces as well as hundreds of officers from **friendly foreign countries**. **Alumni of DSSC have risen to**

highest ranks in their respective services and countries. One has the same expectations from your batch too.

4. At DSSC you have been imparted education on **military concepts, doctrines, strategy, principles of war** along with related **staff procedures**. You have undergone an **exacting routine with long hours devoted to studies and research**. The hard work put in by each one of you will stand you in good stead in future. This realization will dawn on you only once you leave the portals of this **prestigious institution**. But I must add, that development and application of Military logic remains the basis of all Command & staff assignments alongwith a Military Leaders Sixth Sense to grab a fleeting opportunity to Your advantage. You must continue to refine & hone your Military Logic & Intuition as you progress in your service life.

5. You should endeavour to adopt a **'purple' vision and attitude**, exemplifying jointness of services, and use the last one year's association to build bridges with your counterparts in the services, other than your own. Understand the perspective of the other services and **optimize their strengths to surmount endemic weaknesses**. Simultaneously, you should **synergise the capabilities of all the three services**, without getting bogged down in Turf Wars. Jointness is the way ahead at all levels of military service in your career. The sooner we comprehend this, the better it will be for all of us. Our friends from foreign countries would have surely made a lasting professional impression on all of you by sharing their **intellect and experiences on warfare**. The

bond of friendship that has developed between our foreign friends and you is a valuable achievement, never to be forgotten. I am sure that our foreign friends too would have **gained considerably** during the last 45 weeks both **academically as well as socially**. The families would certainly **nurture memories of Wellington and India with nostalgia for years to come**.

Matters Military

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6. Of late the Armed Forces are getting more & more into the news, specially the electronic media. Recently I was taken aback to see full-fledged discussions on operational matters by Arm Chair Journalists, Strategists & of course those out of uniform. It is a domain that should remain sacred to those who have responsibility & accountability.

7. Having been in uniform for over 40 years, it is my pleasure to use this forum to share a few thoughts on matters military (These are personal thoughts & may have much in common with the official thought process – May I request for Chatham house code to be applied).

8. I won't go into the issues of National Interest, National strategy & current/futuristic threats but would come straight to Armed Forces.

Role

9. We have a primary and a secondary role, which you are well aware of; but we also have a derived role which encompasses:

- National building specially in remote areas.
- Employment generation.
- Enhancing India's image through our conduct & professionalism (Training Teams abroad and through Defence Cooperation).
- Pool of Disciplined & Skilled manpower (60000) retires every year – a great asset to society.
- Contribution in Sports, environment etc.

Core Values

10. Apolitical, Secular & high levels of Personnel & Professional Integrity. A true reflection of the Constitution of India.

Tenets of Indian Military Philosophy

11. Operational Imperatives:

- a. Multi Front obligations
- b. India not part of any military alliance or grouping; therefore need an Independent Deterrent Capability.
- c. A versatile capability across the spectrum of conflict, from the lower end of the spectrum to the higher end – of conventional war against a nuclear backdrop.

Where do we stand & what are the challenges

12. The Armed Forces are the last resort of the Nation; We can't afford to fail or think of being runners up even once. And the Armed Forces are very conscious of this responsibility.

13. Operationally we are capable of fulfilling our assigned roles; Yes there are shortfalls, some severe, but we do have the minimum wherewithal, even though we may not have the optimum.

14. The biggest Challenge we have is in the human Resource Domain.

a. It still remains our biggest strength, bulk of the Armed Forces are focused on their jobs with sincerity & integrity. Morale is high, specially at the cutting edge; leaders still lead from the front & by example & put their lives at risk, even to avoid collateral damage. Still live by the honour code of Imandari, Wafadari & Izzat.

b. Having said this, let me also say this also remains our biggest challenge. How to continue to nourish our human resource so that they remain upto the task. The deterioration of values in our society has also affected the Armed Forces, though to a lesser extent. A transparent environment and assertive media has highlighted many failings – but I am absolutely certain these remain isolated cases & do not reflect a trend. Its just that there is more transparency & less tolerance. Integrity both Personal &

Professional has to be reinforced & the way is **“Top Down – Top First”**

c. The next challenge is to develop & nurture combat leaders as distinct from Event Managers. Leaders who lead from the front, look after their men & stand up when the chips are down. While we are doing well on this front, being critical, we have to continuously reinforce this. In fact as Southern Army Cdr, my recipe for a Good military Leader was:

“Humility in his Persona” and “Arrogance in his Uniform”

(An Arrogance based on his integrity, his competence & commitment).

d. Officer-men relationship is another domain receiving the attention of the Armed Forces. The recent isolated incidents have been taken note of and correctives are being applied – but at the end it is still all about good leadership.

Leadership

15. Leadership in every situation has 3 Constituents: The Leader, the Led & the Environment. So how is leadership different in the Armed forces. Three aspects highlight this difference:

a. An unlimited Liability contract.

- b. Deal with Life & Death Issues not profit/gain. Need Leaders not Event Managers – Leaders who will lead from the front; Who will stand up and be counted; Who will choose the Harder Right than the Easier Wrong; Who are Forthright, Bold and Transparent.
- c. We are the last resort of the Nation and therefore cannot be runners up even once.

The Army as a way of life : Welfare Aspects

16. Army Service is a way of life – Not a Tenure! Means high degree of Involvement & Joy in living this life. You bring both to the table – we are grateful & proud.

17. Welfare is a command responsibility. Anything & everything that can motivate and make a soldier perform better - is 'WELFARE'.

18. The Officers Wives assist us – as the softer face, who can reach out to the Families and dependents. They have a most difficult task – Responsibility without any authority; and they perform it with a smile.

19. It is a voluntary effort - has got mixed up due to inability of some to understand the true connotation of welfare in the Army. In principle, it should be about:

- a. Empowerment.
- b. Better facilities & opportunities.
- c. And being able to share and care.

Conclusion

20. Before I conclude, may I take the liberty of giving some advice, based on my 40 years experience.

a. You are a Professional soldier, dealing with life & death issues – so continuously strive to improve yourself, through study & reflection.

b. Remember, the ultimate calling for a soldier is combat, so always nurture the attributes of:

- Combat leader, not an Event Manager.
- Always be transparent, forthright and bold- so that you can look your seniors, as well as juniors in the Eye.
- Always retain empathy for the soldier and those entrusted to your charge; when in doubt remember the Chettwode Moto – Country first, the men you command next, you yourself last always and every time.
- Read from Military history & look at some role models so that you can learn from their experience.
- In the end its all about your Military Logic, Battle field Intuition & Combat Leadership.

21. My Mantra – Humility in Your Persona & Arrogance in Your uniform.

Thank You for your Patience, Jai Hind.