Defence Minister, Shri Rajnath Singh Ji; Minister of State for Defence Shripad Naik ji; Chiefs of all the three forces; other senior officials; the brave soldiers of the Kargil war and their families, other dignitaries present here and my dear brothers and sisters!

On this occasion of Kargil Vijay Diwas, every Indian is commemorating the valour and an inspiring saga of dedication to the nation today. On this occasion, I pay tribute to all the brave-hearts, who had foiled the conspiracy of bringing down the tricolour from the Kargil’s peaks. I salute the martyrs who sacrificed their blood; and to all the mothers who gave birth to all those martyrs. Congratulations to all the citizens of Jammu and Kashmir including Kargil, who have fulfilled their responsibilities towards the nation.

Friends,

The story of the victory of Kargil war inscribed in the peaks of Kargil 20 years ago will continue to inspire several generations. With that inspiration, for the past two-three weeks, several programmes related to Vijay Diwas are being organized in different parts of the country. There
have been various programmes in all the military stations, in the border areas as well as the coastal areas of the country.

A little while ago, the valour of our sons was commemorated here. And in today’s event, there was a tradition of discipline, hard work, valour, sacrifice, resolutions as also moments filled with compassion. Sometimes people started applauding after watching the scenes of valour and heroism, while the next moment people started shedding tears watching the mothers. This is an evening of enthusiasm; it instills a conviction of victory; and it also forces us to bow down to sacrifice and penance.

Brothers and Sisters,

The victory in Kargil was the victory of the brave sons and daughters of indomitable courage; Victory in Kargil was the victory of India’s resolutions; Victory in Kargil was the victory of India’s power and patience; Victory in Kargil was the victory of India’s dignity and discipline; Victory in Kargil was the victory of the expectations and dutifulness of every Indian.

Friends,

Wars are not fought by governments but the entire nation. Governments come and go; but those who do not mind living or dying for the country are immortal. Soldiers sacrifice their lives for not only the present but also the future generations and for a secured future. Soldiers don’t differentiate between life and death. For them, duty is supreme. The lives of these soldiers associated with the nation’s strength are not tied to the tenure of governments. There could be any ruler and administrator, but every Indian has the right to be proud of the valiant and his valour.

Brothers and sisters,

Just after a few months of taking the oath in 2014, I had got the opportunity to visit Kargil. Although I had been to Kargil 20 years back too, when the war was at its peak. The enemies were playing their game. Death was close yet our every soldier wanted to reach the valley first carrying the tricolour. As an ordinary citizen, I had saluted the bravery of the soldiers engaged in the front, by visiting the same soil. The Kargil Vijay site was like a pilgrimage site for me.

Friends,

Besides the scenario in the battleground, the entire nation was with the soldiers. Youngsters stood in queues to donate blood and the children broke their piggy banks for the soldiers. During the same period, Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji had reassured the people of the country. He had said that if we fail to take care of the soldiers who sacrifice their lives, then it
will be assumed that we are not carrying out our duties towards the motherland.

I am glad that we are ceaselessly trying to strengthen that belief of Atal ji with your blessings. In the last five years, many important decisions related to the welfare of the soldiers and families of the soldiers have been taken. Our government has completed the work of implementing the long awaited scheme ‘One Rank One Pension’ that was due since independence.

This time the foremost decision taken as soon as the government was formed was to increase the scholarship of the children of the martyrs. Besides, the National War Memorial is also inspiring the country with the stories of our heroes. This too was long awaited for decades. You gave us the opportunity to end that wait as well.

Brothers and sisters,

Pakistan has been deceitful in terms of Kashmir since the very beginning. In 1948, 1965 and 1971 Pakistan did the same. But in 1999, just like before, their misadventure had been foiled. At that time, Atal ji had said – “our neighbour had thought that India would hit back after Kargil and would protest and the world would be scared of this tension. Some people would jump in to bring out a solution and they would manage to draw a new line. But they had not expected us to give a befitting reply, and an effective one.”

Friends,

This strategic change of giving a befitting reply instead of begging and crying took a heavy toll on the enemies. Earlier, due to the peace initiative that Atalji’s government had taken with the neighbour, the world view started changing in our favour and those countries that had turned a blind eye towards our neighbour had then started to understand our side of the story.

Brothers and sisters,

The history of India is a witness to the fact that India has never been an invader. Peaceful conduct in the interest of humanity is inherent in our culture. Our country has followed this policy. The image of our army in India is to protect the country and it is also the protector of humanity and peace all over the world.

When I go to Israel, the leaders there show me that photograph in which the soldiers from India had liberated Haifa. When I go to France, the memorial there tells us the saga of the sacrifices of Indians during the World War.

The martyrdom of more than one lakh Indian soldiers for the entire humanity in the world war cannot be forgotten and the world cannot
forget that the largest numbers of people who made the highest sacrifices in the United Nations Peace Keeping Mission are Indian soldiers. The dedication and service of the army, the sensitive role and the ability to reach the masses during natural calamities have touched the heart of every Indian year after year.

Friends,

Our heroes, our brave army is versatile in traditional war. But today the change through which the whole world is passing is also changing the form of war. Today the world, the mankind is a victim of proxy-warfare, in which terrorism stands as a great challenge to the entire humanity. In their respective conspiracies, some people defeated in the war are trying to fulfill their political goals by using proxy war, thereby promoting terrorism.

The need of the hour is to ensure that all the powers that believe in humanity stand in support with the armed forces; only then can terrorism be effectively fought against.

Brothers and Sisters, Today’s battles have reached the space and are also fought in the cyber world. Therefore, modernizing the army is our need and priority. Modernity should be the identity of our army. Our armed forces should try to attain the highest peak in their respective arenas and become modern, whether it is water, land, or air. This is our endeavour.

The security of the nation will not be compromised under any kind of pressure or influence or due to lack of resources. Whether it is the establishment of an atomic triangle with the help of ‘Arihant’ or conducting the ‘A-SAT’ test, we will take steps and continue to take such steps for the future needs and to protect our resources regardless of pressure.

India will make full use of its potential, wherever there is a need for securing India’s interests; from deep sea to the endless sky. With this idea, modernization of the army in the country is also going on at a rapid pace.

We are manufacturing modern rifles, tanks, cannons and fighter aircrafts at a rapid pace in India. We have made efforts to ensure more investment of the private sector in Make in India for Defence as well as foreign investment in Make in India for Defence. Modern weapons are also being ordered as per requirement.

In the future, our Army is going to have the latest equipment of the world. But friends, along with modernity, one more thing is important for the army to be effective; that is joint-ness. Regardless of the type of uniform, the colour of the Uniform, the purpose is the same; the mind is
the same. Like our country's flag has three different colours, but the three colours together constitute the flag which inspires to live and die. In the same way, with all the three organs of our army being modern and strong, it is time to connect among each other in terms of action and system.

Friends,

Besides empowering the Army, we are making the villages along the border areas a part of the country's security and development programme. Infrastructure is being strengthened for every place whether it is along the international border or along the sea coast. We are well aware of the fact that the villages along the borders have to face a lot of difficulties. Due to difficult circumstances, the people settled on the border are forced to flee.

In order to change this situation, Border Area Development Programme has been strengthened in the last five years. More than Rs.4500 crores has been given to 17 states of the country for this work.

Providing reservation to the people of Jammu and Kashmir residing along the International border is also an important decision taken in this direction. I am confident that the security of the country is impenetrable and will be impenetrable by the joint efforts of every citizen of the country and our heroes. Only when the country is safe will it touch new heights of development. But we have to take care of a few things on the path to nation building.

Brothers and sisters,

Was only a particular linguistic group freed in 1947? Were people of only one religion liberated? Were people of a single caste liberated? No, the entire India became independent.

When we drafted our Constitution, was it written only for people of one language, creed or caste? No, it was drafted for the whole of India. And when 20 years ago more than 500 of our brave fighters made sacrifices in the snowy hills of Kargil; it was for whom? For whom did Vir Chakra Major Saravanan of the Bihar Regiment – Hero of Batalik, who hails from Tamil Nadu, had sacrificed his life? For whom did Vir Chakra Captain Hanif Uddin of Rajputana Rifles, who hails from Delhi had sacrificed his life? And when Paramvir Chakra awardee Himachal Pradesh’s son, of Jammu and Kashmir Rifles, Captain Vikram Batra, said, “Yeh dil mange more!”; who was his heart asking for? It was not for him, or for any particular linguistic group, caste or religion but for the entire nation; for Mother Bharati.
Come; let us all together decide that we will not let these sacrifices go in vain. We will seek inspiration from them and will continue to spend our lives in building India of their dreams.

On this occasion of Kargil Vijay Diwas today, seeking inspiration from these brave-hearts and their mothers, let us dedicate ourselves and our duties towards the nation. With this spirit, saluting those brave-hearts, all of you say along with me –

Bharat Mata ki Jai!
Bharat Mata ki Jai!
Bharat Mata ki Jai!

Thank a lot!