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‘हर काम देश के नाम’

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**Raksha Mantri reviews Combined Graduation Parade at Air Force Academy,
Dundigal**

**213 Flight Cadets, including 25 women, commissioned into various branches of
Indian Air Force upon completion of their training**

**Shri Rajnath Singh urges them to never lose their openness towards new ideas,
innovative thinking and idealism**

**“Strike a balance between tradition & innovation to keep pace with constantly-
evolving times”**

To mark the successful culmination of training of 213 Flight Cadets of the flying and ground duty branches of the Indian Air Force (IAF), a Combined Graduation Parade (CGP) was held at the Air Force Academy, Dundigal in Telangana on December 17, 2023. The parade was reviewed by Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh, who also conferred the President's Commission on the graduating Flight Cadets. The graduating officers included 25 women who were commissioned in various branches of the IAF. Eight officers from the Indian Navy, nine from the Indian Coast Guard and two from friendly countries were also awarded ‘Wings’ following the completion of their flying training.

In his address, Shri Rajnath Singh congratulated the newly commissioned officers and complimented them for their immaculate turn out, precise drill movements and high standards of parade. He urged them to not, in any circumstance, lose their openness towards new ideas, innovative thinking and idealism.

The Raksha Mantri exhorted the officers to give due importance to tradition in the Armed Forces, terming it as time-tested; but pointed out that if tradition is followed for a long time without thinking, then a state of “inertia or ossification” occurs in the system. He emphasised that to avoid this situation and keep pace with the constantly-evolving times, there is a need to innovate.

Shri Rajnath Singh called for striking a balance between tradition and innovation, describing it as extremely crucial. "If we follow only tradition, we will be like a dead lake. We need to be like a flowing river. For that, we will have to bring in innovation along with tradition. Keep flying and touch greater heights, but maintain your connection with the ground," he said.

Earlier, the Raksha Mantri was received by Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari. He was presented with a General Salute by the parade followed by an impressive march past. The highlight of the parade was the 'Commissioning Ceremony' in which graduating Flight Cadets were awarded their 'Stripes' by Shri Rajnath Singh. The graduating officers were then administered the 'Oath' by the Commandant of the Academy. The CGP was interspersed by a synchronised fly-past by trainer aircraft that comprised Pilatus PC-7 Mk II, Hawk and Kiran, along with Chetak helicopters.

The Raksha Mantri also bestowed various awards on trainees who excelled in various disciplines of training. Flying Officer Atul Prakash from the flying branch was awarded the President's Plaque and Chief of the Air Staff Sword of Honour for standing first in the overall order of merit in the pilots' course. Flying Officer Amrinder Jeet Singh was awarded the President's Plaque for standing first in the overall order of merit amongst the ground duty branches.

The Parade culminated with the newly commissioned officers marching-out in two columns in slow march to the notes of Rabindranath Tagore's 'Anandaloke'. An enthralling aerobatic show by Su-30MKI, synchronous aerobatics by the helicopter display team 'Sarang', and 'SuryaKiran' Aerobatic Team marked the grand finale of the CGP.

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