



RESTORING VALUES

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First Prof S. Saroja Memorial Lecture

Held at Indian Institute for Public Administration,

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In the context of international law, there is the concept of due diligence by states for ensuring that violence against women is eliminated. And this concept of due diligence was elaborated in an international instrument to say that the state has an obligation to prevent, investigate and, in accordance with national legislations, to punish acts of violence against women.

Why is it that although we have these laws, we never seem to see them implemented? We still have such high levels of violence. How come this legislation has not been able to deter violence? The State's obligation is to prevent, to protect and respect and each of these requires that specific forms of violence against women are recognized in the

framing of laws. We have an adequate number of laws addressing different aspects whether it is reproductive health, induced deaths, dowry deaths, sexual harassment and abuse – all these aspects are covered by law. But this is not the end of the story. It was the 16th December 2012 case which was a wake up call for the nation as a whole and which led to the amendment of criminal law. It also led to very, very important procedural amendments.

We are often focusing on substantive laws rather than focusing enough attention on procedural laws. Procedure is as important as substance, because procedure is the gateway to justice. There are a huge number of formalities in the way in which cases are

argued in courts and these are all governed by procedural laws.

These aspects of due diligence that are lacking are protection in the sense that is not but law alone that you can deliver justice to women facing sexual violence. You need an enabling environment for handholding the person concerned. There is a huge reluctance of women to access law. They don't want to enter a courtroom, because they find that in court they face secondary victimization having already been victimized once. And when they enter the courtroom they are obliged to relive the incident.

Apart from that, more often than not the accused is in a position of power relative to the woman who has been abused. That gives the accused the ability to manipulate the legal system. The criminal justice system, the investigative system headed by the police, the prosecution and judiciary are in a position to manipulate if you have the means. If you have the power, if you have the political clout. And as against this, if you have a woman who has to negotiate the system on her own, you can be sure that she is not in a position to do so. Therefore the doctrine of due diligence requires that the woman be provided all that she needs to access the system. This would include support persons, counselors, community shelters, help lines etc. I know of many women who have been sexually harassed and whose families have abandoned them. Some of these are women lawyers who have complained about sexual harassment. Because the complaint was not taken seriously and there was no support, their husbands

told them they must have invited the harassment. There have been serious matrimonial breakdown in those cases. Therefore there is a failure of due diligence in these cases as well.

The State is expected to provide counseling and other support. These, incidentally, do not exist. On the contrary, criminal prosecution is handled by the State. The prosecution and the victim herself has no role to play at all. All of you know that the criminal case is described as State vs Accused. It simply cuts out the role of the victims in assisting the courts to arrive at a just situation. We have not addressed the issue of police and the accused. And that is a gateway to manipulation. If you cut out the most important person in the case do you expect to the justice?

The government envisaged the setting up of Nirbhaya Centers in all 660 districts in India. These centers would act as one stop center for women who are victims of violence. However, this plan has remained on paper only.

As a step forward in the right direction, the Delhi High Court has tried to remedy this by setting up a committee of different stakeholders for cases of violence against women in *Nandita Dhar v Union of India*, where the Court has directed the DSLSA to convene a meeting of Delhi Police, Dept. of Health Services, Directorate of Prosecution, Delhi Commission

for Women and experts working in the field to set up One Stop Crisis Centers in Delhi, and to draft a protocol for the different functionaries. The Proposal put forth by DSLSA is to have a two tier OSCC, with the first tier in the hospital and the second tier in the courts. The hospital attached to OSCC would provide medical intervention and the police intervention including the lodging of a FIR and recording of statement under Sec 161 CrPC. The Court attached OSCC would provide help and support for recording of Sec 164 statement, assessing interim compensation under the Delhi Victim of the progress of the trial. Such a system would provide for dispensation of immediate medical and rehabilitative help, aid in effective investigation and help in the victim's recovery. It would ensure that the rights and interests of the victim are protected.

The goal is to make the legal system sensitive to the needs of the victim. The courts have recognized that the State owes survivors of sexual violence the duty of care and protection. In *Dilip v State of Madhya Pradesh* (April 2013), the Supreme Court recognized that a victim of sexual assault requires a totally different kind of treatment not only from Society but from the State Authorities.

The Court commented on the care to be taken by doctors while examining rape survivors, and also the way the investigation should be conducted. In *Khem Chand v*

State of Delhi (2008), the court recognized that to effectively rehabilitate the survivor, measures need to be taken from the stage of commission of the crime itself. The Court observed that the stakeholders in the criminal justice system need to be sensitized and that 'the role each one of them can play to mitigate the rigour of the trial and prevent the erosion and loss of confidence of the victim'.

It is only very recently that we have the enactment of the support person and that is the Protection of Children from Sexual Abuse Act, 2012. It has a provision that a judge may assign a person for support to the child and family. Obviously it is not enough to put this discretion in the hands of the Judges and obviously there should be right to support persons not just for children but also for women negotiating the system.

The biggest barrier to access to justice is the operation of bias within all the players of the system. This bias, as we all know is patriarchy, which permeates our systems. It results in prejudice, which clouds judgment and justice. Unless we get rid of bias within the system, we can not expect to see equality before law or protections of law becomes a reality.

Unless there is police accountability we are unlikely to see justice for women. It is painful to see that committee after committee have submitted their reports – Padmanabhaiah Committee, Ribeiro Committee, and most recently Verma Committee on the issues of Police Reforms – but we have not seen police reforms as yet. There are no performance

indicators. Our Grievance Redressal Act has been passed but remains ineffective. And all of these together add up to complete lack of accountability of our institutions, which are meant to deliver justice.

There is a kind of justification that is heard in the public domain about crimes against women that comes in the form of culture, tradition and religion. I recently had an occasion to handle a court case related to Khap Panchayats and honor killings in the Supreme Court. To my horror I heard the representative of Khap Panchayats state in court that it is our tradition that women cannot marry in the same Gotra. But in the same breath they denied that they kill women when they transgress such social barriers and boundaries.

In their submission before the Court they admit that they are not willing to accept love marriages and when such incidents happen, the family is bound to feel slighted.

In the case of Arnesh Kumar v State of Bihar, the Supreme Court thought it fit to remark that women are misusing Sec 498A which provides punishments of husbands and relatives for cruel treatment of wives. The Court was of the opinion that Sec 498A was among the provisions of law that were being misused by disgruntled wives as weapons rather than shields. By commenting that "the institution of marriage is greatly

revered in this country" the Supreme Court privileges the sacredness of the institution of marriage over the rights of women. By denigrating the importance of Sec 498A of the IPC based on the generalization and biases, the Court in effect gives greater importance to protection of marriage than the rights of women to defend themselves against domestic violence.

Hence it is very obvious that we need an attitudinal change in our institutions.

Post Nirbhaya, we enacted the Criminal Law Act 2013, which basically redefined rape in very critical ways. First rape was traditionally defined as penile penetration. This definition was changed to now is penetration by any object or any other means of manipulation of the vagina. You are aware of the very high profile case discussed in media, which is concerned with this newly enacted definition of rape. The woman in question did not allege that there was penile penetration but she did allege that there was penetration of the vagina by fingers. This is covered by the new definition of rape.

Second, it also made a very critical amendment to the definition of rape in that it recognized that rape can occur in police stations by police officers, in hospitals by doctors and in shelters by the management of shelter homes. In other words rape can occur by people in authority who are in a fiduciary capacity.

In that sense these are what we call aggravated forms of rape. So the critical shift in the definition of rape in 2013 was the focus in of coercive environment rather than what the victim did or did not do.

The critical change was the absence of consent, which is at the heart of the definition of rape. Rape was defined to mean unequivocal affirmative consent. For too long the courts were saying that the fact she submitted or lack of injury on her body means that she did not resist this amounts to consent. That was the infamous Mathura case of 1978, Since then we have been changing our laws and law did change by redefining what it meant by consent.

The 2013 law has put in place mandatory free treatment to victims of sexual abuse in public and private sectors. It is something like an emergency response, which is mandatory for all professional agencies whether person can pay for the service or not. The service has to be performed.

It is almost like a condition for being licensed as a professional is that you will give this mandatory physical aid to a person who is distressed. I can tell you how the law is going to work out because it is new and I am sure it will work in public hospitals because there is a will to make it work. I am not sure whether it is going to work in the private sector and whether the private sector will see this as an obligation.

One of the demands in 2013 changes in legislation was with regard to marital rape. It was not made an offence but there was an advance in that, the law now says that if a married woman is separated from her husband and she complains that she has been raped then it is seen as an offence.

It raised the age of consent from 16 to 18 and we do believe that between the age of 16 and 18 there are consensual sexual relationships that should not be criminalized. One the contrary, the only way to defer the onset of sexuality at a young age is to provide sex education in schools. This is being resisted and the education is not really being provided. Second, it was made mandatory for doctors to report that sexual abuse has taken place. The health professionals find this unsatisfactory because there are women who want medical aid but do not want the details to be disclosed to the police. This has a chilling effect in driving women away from seeking medical help if they know there will be mandatory reporting. There have been protests against this.

We were also not in agreement with the introduction of the death penalty. Many of us believe that death penalty per se is unconstitutional and should be abolished. Far from moving in that direction, the law has introduced death penalty in two cases – gang rape and rape resulting in vegetative state.

Recently Supreme Court has

rendered a judgment on law related to mercy petitions, on the law relating to commutation of death penalty. We do see some hopeful trend towards a movement recognizing that the death penalty is not a solution.

Within the medical profession there is a bias and we are struggling hard to end this bias. We are all aware of what has come to be known as the two-finger test on every rape victim. The purpose if this test is to understand if the women is 'used to intercourse'. And if she is, then she could not have been raped. The Supreme Court has said that this test is unlawful but it continues to be done in medical hospitals. The Supreme Court is now looking in to framing the uniform protocols for medical examination of survivors of sexual violence in *Nipun Saxena v Union of India* Lawyers Collective has filed an intervention application in this regard.

Within the judiciary, procedures are very outdated and archaic and a women is almost asked to relive the incident when she goes to court. There is need to change the whole process of the trial. Undoubtedly it is too lengthy. I am sure many of you will know the appeal of Bhanwari Devi, who was raped in 1992 in Rajasthan is still pending in High Court of Rajasthan. No body can call this justice and I think many people would be willing to say that is an outright denial of justice and due process.

Our Court trials are about fact finding and ascertaining the truth. Testimony has to be led, but the law does not require the victim to relive the whole incident. In the case of the Bombay Shakti Mill rape case, the woman was asked to see the video of her rape in court and at that point she fainted because she was literally being raped again in court. The prosecution or court should have stopped it but neither of them did so. The law does not require this but this is the level of insensitivity that we find in the courts.

The point I am trying to impress upon you is that there are innumerable barriers. It is these barriers that we in the women's movement, and that I in courts have been trying to protest, sometimes successfully and at others times, unsuccessfully.

I would like to end by saying that viewing us history that I have just laid out, that there have been failures of due diligence on the part of the State. However, as this paper demonstrates there have been positive developments brought on by the shock the Nation received from the Nirbhaya case and we now see a movement from law to putting in place an enabling

environment from women facing violence. We also see duties being cast on the professionals with sanctions of violations of these duties.

There is an interesting judgment of the America Court – the Rodrigues Case in which this what they have said about due diligence. The court held that:

“An illegal act which violates human rights and which is initially not directly imputable to a State” (e.g. you may or may not impute the Nirbhaya case directly to the state)... “can lead to international responsibility of the State, not because of the act itself, but because of the lack of due diligence to prevent violation or to respond to it

The judicial system is often the last to respond. But in this case, the judiciary too has been shaken up by the national shock received from Nirbhaya case. It is my belief that there is a lot of attrition at the level of courts, the prosecution and the police and this change can only be led by sensitive judges as the grassroots level. We continue to have huge challenges before us with regards to violence

Legislative Initiatives to Empower Women of India

In general sense women empowerment as the phrase itself indicates is empowering of women to be self- dependant by providing them access to all freedoms and opportunities which they were denied in the past only because their being a woman whereas in specific sense women empowerment refers to enhancing their position in the power structure of the society. Women empowerment generally has five components : firstly, women's sense of self- worth; secondly, their right to have the power of control their own lives,

both within and outside home; and lastly, their ability to influence the direction of social change to create a just social and economic order nationally, internationally and universally. It is the power which enables women to move from periphery to centre stage.

Educational attainment and economic participation are they key constituents in ensuring the empowerment of women. In India, the empowerment process has already begun. Women of India are now uplifted and

emancipated and are emerging as leaders in growing range of fields. be it aeronautics, medicine, space, engineering, law, politics, banking, education, business...you just name the profession and they are there, all that needed in today's world in their empowerment. We are now witnessing a steady improvement in the enrolment of women in schools, colleges and even in profession institutes. Their health is better as compared to earlier decades. In this decade, women are

entering into the job market in increasing numbers. They are showing their skills even in non-traditional sectors like police, defence, administration, media and research fields. **Twenty-six laws** have been enacted so far to protect women. Below a small effort has been made to bring forth the legislative initiatives towards empowerment of women **Legislative Initiatives Towards Empowerment of Women:**

In India, numerous laws are aimed at empowerment of women in the areas of personal, labour, service and criminal and social economic matters. Constitution of India guarantees equality for women. A brief reference is made to some of the most important legislations pertaining to empowerment of women.

1. Constitution of India, 1950 :

The Constitution of India not only guarantees equality to women but also empowers the State to adopt measures to positive discrimination in favour of women. The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian Constitution in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles. Article 14 of the Constitution of India says that the state shall not deny to any person equality before law or the equal protection of the laws. Article 15 prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sex. Article 16 states about equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to employment. Article 39, (a) states; the state shall try to

secure to all citizens men and women equally the right to an adequate means of livelihood. Article 39 (d) asks the Government to ensure that there is equal pay for equal work for both men and women. The 73rd and 74th amendments to the Constitution of India provided for reservation of seats (at least 1/3) in the local bodies of Panchayats and Municipalities for women.

Another Constitution Amendment (84th Constitution Amendment) reserving 33 per cent in Parliament and in the State Legislature .

2. Indian Penal Code, 1860 :

Sections 292, 293 and 294 provide for punishment in sale and exhibit of obscene books objections and for obscene act in public place. Section 304(b) deals about murder of women in connection with demand of dowry. Sections 312 to 318 deal about punishment for causing miscarriage. Section 354 provides punishment for outraging the modesty of any women, S. 366 deals about kidnapping for marriage against her will. Section 366-A deals about procurement of minor girls for sexual purpose. Section 376 deals about punishment for rape. Section 494 protects women from bigamy. Section 497 deals about protection of married women from adultery. Section 498-A of Indian Penal Code deals about subjecting women to cruelty by her husband or relatives and her husband and S. 509 provides punishment for uttering words

and gesture or act intended to insult the modesty of a woman.

3. Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973:

Under S. 125, Code of Criminal Procedure, a woman has got right to maintenance. Section 180 protects women from unnecessary harassment by police. A police officer can call a male to the police station for interrogation or to demand information during investigation. But in the case of a woman, or a male under 15 years, they are not required to go to the police station. The police officer must go to the place where the woman or boy resides.

4. Indian Evidence Act, 1872:

Sections 113(a), 113(b) and 114(c) provide for presumptions as to abetment of suicide by a married woman within 7 years of marriage, as dowry death of a woman and as to absence of consent of woman for sexual intercourse.

5. Hindu Adoption Maintenance Act, 1956:

Section 18-A provides for obligations of husband to maintain his wife. Section 18(2) provides right of wife to live separately and S. 19 provides for maintenance of widow by her father-in-law.

6. Hindu Succession Act, 1956 :

Section 14 of the Act provides for property of female Hindu to be her absolute property. Section 23 provides right of female legal heirs in the dwelling house

7. The Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act, 1956 : Section 6 of the Act provides for mother as a natural guardian for minors below 5 years.

8. The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 :Section 13(2) of the Act provides for wife to present a petition for divorce. Section 13(b) provides equal right for wife for getting divorce by mutual consent. Section 24 of the Act provides for relief for interim maintenance and expenses. Section 25 of the Act provides for right to a wife to seek permanent alimony and maintenance and S. 26 of the Act provides right to claim custody of children.

9. The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961:Under the provisions of this Act demand of dowry either before marriage, during marriage and or after the marriage is an offence.

10. The Muslim Women (Protection of Right on Divorce) Act, 1986:Under the provisions of the Act provides for maintenance of women by the relatives after the iddat period.

11. The Factories Act, 1948: The provisions of this Act provides for health, safety, welfare, and working hours for women labourer working in factories.

12. The Employees State

Insurance Act, 1948:The Act provides for insurance pension and maternity benefits to women workers

13. The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976: It provides for payment of equal wages to both men and women workers for the same work or work of similar nature. It also prohibits discrimination against women in the matter of recruitment.

14. The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961: It provides for maternity benefit with full wages for women workers. The provisions of the Maternity Benefits Act protect not only the health of the mother but also that of the unborn child. Under Section 4, a woman cannot be made to work by her employer during the six weeks immediately following her delivery or miscarriage. Section 9- In case of miscarriage, the woman can claim leave with wages at the rate of maternity benefit for six weeks immediately following the abortion; Section 10 provides for measure if women suffers illness during pregnancy and so on....

15. The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971: The Act safeguards women from unnecessary and compulsory abortions.

16. The Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1976: The Act provides safeguards for girls from child marriage.

17. The Immoral Trafficking (Prevention) Act, 1986: The Act safeguards women from prostitution.

18. The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986 :The Act safeguards women from indecent representation

19. The Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1992: It safeguards women from Sati.

20. The National Commission for Women Act, 1992: The Act provides for a setting up a statutory body namely the National Commission for Women to take up remedial measures, and facilitate redressal of grievances and advise the Government on all policy matters relating to women.

21. The Prenatal Diagnostic Technique (Regulation and Prevention of Measure) Act, 1994: This Act prohibits diagnosing of pregnant women and also identification of child in the womb whether it is male or female.

22. The Family Courts Act, 1984: The Act provides for setting up a Family Court for in-camera proceedings for women.

23. The Tamil Nadu Prohibition of Eve-teasing Act, 1988: The Act provides punishment for eve-teasing.

24. The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005:

The Act provides for punishment for domestic violence committed by husband and his relatives and also provides legal assistance for women suffering from domestic violence. It also provides interim maintenance to women.

25. Hindu Undivided Family (HUF) :

The said act has been amended to give the women right in the assets of the Hindu Undivided Family even after marriage . The Hindu girl had a right in the HUF till her marriage but after the said amendment the Hindu women have been given an equal right in the assets of the HUF even after she is married

26. The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 :

A legislative act in India that seeks to protect women from sexual harassment at workplace and which prescribes strict punishment, including termination of service, for the guilty and similar penalties in case of a frivolous complaint.

27. The Companies Act 2013:

The Act has made provision vide Section 149(1) to appoint one woman director on the company board. The new requirements are part of the rules related to the appointment and qualification of directors

under the Companies Act, ... to appoint at least **one woman director**.

The law on the 'protection of women against domestic violence' and 'sexual harassment of women at workplace' satisfies the long pending demand of the women activities. In the political field, the reservation for women is a significant step forward towards their political empowerment. With thirty-three percent reservation for women in Parliament becomes a reality, women's voice will be heard in the highest forum of democracy. But still, a lot of work has to be done as there is a category of women (who consider themselves highly educated) that proudly accepts that they don't have digital literacy even though they own a computer, they cannot even operate bank accounts or make travel arrangements for family or handle hospital admissions even during emergencies. Even for a simple task like social visits or shopping generally they need the company of their husbands.

A large number of women in India feel proud to display that they are well protected and pampered by their husbands without realizing that they are making themselves helpless. Such women's economic literacy is so low that they cannot play role in family's budget, savings and investments. To such women, the national budget discussion is for men only and soap operas are for them. Such women suffer to a large extent if

something untoward happens to their husbands. This type of extreme dependency is not good for the development of women. Women should remember that they are also rational, intelligent and thinking human beings. Dependent women are not empowered women. If modern women think that they are empowered, it's a myth for them. Empowerment means to inspire women with the courage to break free from the chains of limiting beliefs, patterns and societal or religious conditions that have traditionally kept women suppressed and unable to realize their true beauty and power.

It is admitted by one and all that women are better managers in every sphere of life. Let us take a working women and see for ourselves. She manages her home, her children, her husband and the work in the office. When she returns from work she still manages the home. Even if she is not working outside home, even then she is still doing three or four jobs except for going to work .Most of the time she is managing three or four jobs with ease because she has the inbuilt capacity to manage affairs and she is blessed by this strength by birth; every woman has it in her. It is only that women do not realise it and the day they do, they succeed in all spheres, better than men. She is born as a manager. Women are more perfectionist in the power to create, nurture and transform.

It is scientifically proven fact that women have more power and strength to bear pain and stress than men. It is only that it is a man's world and women are made to believe over the last century or more that she is weak and timid but the matter of fact is that she is not. Just as an elephant does not know how big and strong he is and the day he comes to know he creates havoc, so is the state of women. In the same way the women do not know their strength because the men do not want her to know the same. The day she knows and realises that she is the greatest assets in our society and equal to men in all aspects she will leave no stone unturned. We can see for ourselves that whichever field of work women have pursued they have excelled and have reached great heights because they have the capacity and capability to do so. Let us not underestimate the power of the women. Let us build to strengthen the hands of women and let them understand that they are inferior to none.

To be truly empowered, women of today need to acquire some qualities of awareness about risk prevailing at home, in work place, in traveling and staying outside home. They should be aware in aspects of politics, law, economy and health. They should set goals and achieve them with courage. If women of today choose to be ignorant of their rights then all the efforts taken by the Government and women activists will be in vain. So, it is important for women to wake up from their deep sleep and understand the true meaning of their empowerment.

Meaning and Purpose of India's Independence Excerpts from Swami Bhoomananda Titha's talk

When we got independence in 1947 and we started working upon the Constitution of India a Constituent Assembly was formed they started debating and discussing and ultimately made a constitution for us. But The Constituent Assembly did not have anything to say in the way of 'Motherland' about India. Our Constituent assembly has declared India to be a geographical piece of sub-continent bequeathed to us by the British rulers. They considered India to be a piece of land they did not go into the nature of the people, how long people have been living here and what is the legacy and heritage they have give to us. Our existence dates back to prehistoric times, the history runs up to 600 or 700 BC but we have got literature far earlier

than that.

The one memorial that a society can create anytime in the history of mankind in the world is the literature they are able to produce. Any kind of a memorial you construct using earthen substances will not last for long. Over centuries everything is bound to perish. On the other hand we have got literature which has passed countless millennia. A literature has to be preserved. If it has to be preserved, it has to be imbibed, it has to be pursued, it has to be perfected, it has to be bequeathed.

Right from the prehistoric times, Vedic times, generation after generation, our people learnt from the mouth, through the ear. They practiced, they bequeathed it. If one generation

was negligent, the whole Vedic legacy that we have would have broken and become extinct. We did not allow that to become extinct. At the same time, look at the consciousness level, the responsibility level of the people of today. Any kind of a literature of an eternal nature is what the human society can produce and bequeath. This is what every one of us should know.

We have got a legacy, we have got a culture we have got a heritage, and these are not merely spoken – they are documented. We have got an act called "The Evidence Act." It says that any document acceptable to you, executed 30 years or more earlier, it has to be accepted as valid evidence.

So the Ramayana that we have, the Mahabharata that we have, the Vedic Upanishads that we have – are they not an evidence of our people, their thoughts their aspirations, their findings, their goals, their values, their achievements, their potential, their possibilities, and the like?

It is not like history, which occupies the bookshelves, which occupies the education institutions and libraries. It is in the heart and the minds of the people. Ramayana is not merely a historic record. It is the history-maker of India, it is a value-maker of India, it is a message giver of India. It is a vibrant thing like the radiation in your own body, the radiation of heat.

Some Chinese travellers visited the country, and they say they visited, and they have scribbled something. That has become history for us. Do you agree? They say, we visited India, and we found such and such things, so that has been accepted as history. What about ascetic Valmiki and ascetic Veda-Vyasa, who did not have any worldly or material interest at all, who only had a love for the country, love for the people. That alone is the motivation. They have also written something very faithfully. And they wrote, not history. They wrote what was taking place right before them. And why

is it that our country is not able to accept it as history?

The Chinese scribbling is in the form of a writing before you, this is also equally in the form of a writing, much more beautiful writing with poetic excellence. And Macaulay said in 1835, “I have not seen a beggar or a thief. I have seen such wealth, high moral values, people of such caliber. We cannot conquer this country at all. We have to break the backbone of this nation, her spiritual and cultural heritage.

This is a testimony to India’s potential, greatness, and dignity. I want every Indian to feel that he is equal to anybody else in the nation. I will even say that he is the best and the highest creation!

With the international outreach, science and technology benefits that we have, should we not be able to do far better than what our forefathers achieved at that instance in time? The meaning and purpose of independence is to understand India. Our independence will become meaningful provided we know what we were, what we are, and what we should be. For that, you must have a peep and insight into our own past.