

**DRAFT SPEECH OF SMT. D. PURANDESWARI
MOS –HRD (HE) AS CHIEF GUEST FOR THE
COLLEGE DAY IN THE ANNUAL DAY
CELEBRATIONS OF THE COLLEGE OF HOME
SCIENCE, HYDERABAD ON 27TH DECEMBER, 2006**

I am extremely delighted to be present here this evening on the occasion of the Annual Day celebrations of your College of Home Science. This college has been rendering yeoman service and is universally acknowledged as an established institution in the realm of domestic science.

Home Science now more commonly known as Human Science has outgrown its old outfit and come out of the stigma of being a subject of study that prepares girls only for marriage and family life. It is no longer regarded as the finishing 'school curriculum' that equips the young girl to become good housewives, good homemakers or good mothers. It is now considered a comprehensive programme that is essential for developing a holistic view of life and living encompassing a comprehensive range of subjects.

It provides a wide field of study which draws upon multi disciplines such as house keeping. Child development, community living, food nutrition, clothing textiles, biotechnology and many more. In short it is aimed at achieving and maintaining the welfare and well-

being of home, family and community life. In an ever changing social scenario Home management now-a-days requires skill and competence not just to update activities within a domestic set up; rather it extends to broader social challenges having wider ramifications.

For obvious reasons, it is not possible to deal with the entire gamut of human science in my brief address. I will therefore, restrict myself to some specific points and draw your focused attention thereto.

The first point I would like to refer is Human Nutrition. We require food substances to supply the components necessary to build and repair tissues as they wear out and die, to keep the body in good working condition, and to supply fuel for energy. For good nutrition a person should have a well-balanced diet, which provides an adequate but not excessive number of calories for the body's energy needs. Children require relatively larger amounts of nutrients and calories because of their rapid growth.

In this context I would like to briefly refer the to effect of nutrition on sports and sportsmen. We are a sports loving country although, our performance in the various events in the international fora are far from encouraging. We must realize that nutrition and nourishment are very important constituents for improving the performance of our sportsmen and sports women which can put our country on the global sports map. We also need to devote focused attention to the

problems of nutrition, particular that of child malnutrition which is widely prevalent in the country.

Now I turn to a subject wherein our young generations will be quite interested, namely Fashion technology. I am not aware whether your faculty of Home Science is having any separate discipline on Fashion Technology. Today it is no longer the exclusive preserve of the urbanites. Serious efforts are being made to put some women from the rural areas on the fashion map in the different parts of country. The latest fashion trends are keenly observed and surveys are conducted before training members of self-help groups. The uniqueness of the course is its stress on working in the most eco-friendly manner with materials available in Nature. Though the products have not been adorned by mannequins on their cat-walk under the glare of arc lamps, they are in no way inferior either in material quality or fashion design-wise. The cloth used for designing the attire for both men and women comes from traditional weavers.

Years back Parliament passed the National Institute of Fashion Technology Act and in 1986 the Government setup NIFT. A number of students who have studied in these institutes have become fashion czars, as we call it. Not only in this country, but these designers are being accepted in the world over.

If we see fashion in our villages, that is equally good fashion and we must carry it forward. The fashion value addition of a product is quite a lot. That is what the country needs when we export. When we export anything with value addition, the total cost is much lesser and that will be a great plus point for the country's business. It is not a question of ten or 40 billion dollars. The scope is unlimited. It's the question of taking advantage of it. And at this point of time, if we keep our mind closed that we will not do this or do that and keep bureaucratic control on every step of our activity, then, I am sorry, we will be giving only lip-service to this technology. This mindset must change if we really want to flourish in the realm of fashion design.

Basically, fashion does not mean only the cotton or silk or only the textiles. Fashion could mean everything – jewellery, leather or even crafts. When we think of fashion, even interior decoration is a fashion wherein there are tremendous potentialities which we must exploit them to our advantage.

NIFT has been emerging as one of the pioneering institutes in the country in the field of fashion designing with nearly 1,500 intakes every year. It is fully funded by the Government. Now, with the new Fashion Technology Act, in place the NIFT would transform fashion technology into a wealth-generating business by getting more assistance from the Government. There is however a need to embed fashion technology into a textile industry which is very important for our economy.

If you look at the textile designing, the global supply and retail chain are the key characteristics of this industry. India has a tremendous opportunity in textiles in the area of design and supply chain logistics. Design costs in India are one-tenth of that in the U.S. and there is big scope for India to become a design outsourcing hub and we should not miss this opportunity.

Technological development is not linear, but exponential, and this explosive rate of change means that human life will soon be irreversibly transformed to a state of enrichment and excellence. To keep this growth process alive, we must continue with higher studies and research in different facets of human science with or without government's support and patronage. I wonder whether your faculty of Home Science could initiate an indepth study into different aspects and possibilities in this segment, if feasible, in tandem with the NIFT. May be if such a tie-up comes through, our nationalized Banks would take due cognizance of such ventures and may be forthcoming in granting financial loans and assistance to such schemes.

Even if one more to take a compartmental view, instead of a holistic view one can hardly ignore the growing importance of human science. Having received the multi dimensional training in the realm of home science in its various ramifications, you are in ever increasing demand in government and non governmental sectors. Since you are already trained in essential community based work, employing Home Science trained young women proves to be cost

effective. The research methodology training you receive here should help the various research institutes to employ Home Science students for a wide range of laboratory and field researches. With this training and back ground the Home Science students seems to have an edge over other graduates in employment avenues.

Finally, I would like to refer to one more area where talented girls could be given a focused and intensive training. The area I am referring to is the place and position of our women in society.

An International Labour Organization study has shown that women represent 50% of the world adult population, 1/3rd of the official labour force, perform nearly 2/3rd of the working hours, receive 1/10th of the worlds income and owns less than 1% of the world's property.

In India also, the gender discrimination is equally grave if not graver as per the 2001 Census, though women constitute 48% of the total population of the country, women suffer many disadvantages as compared to men in the areas of education, labour participation rate and earnings.

This is in spite of the fact that our Constitution which is the supreme law of the land expressly prohibits gender discrimination and prescribes, specific, measures for economic and social empowerment of women. The provisions of Art 14,15,16(2), 21,23, 39(a), 39(d), 39(e) etc., uniformly speak for equal treatment for both

men and women in all economic and social activities including educational and cultural activities and make the message loud and clear that State will actively promote measures so that men and women have equal access to “finer graces of human civilization”. But despite these statutory measures being in place and despite umpteen number of judicial interventions, the ground realities are altogether different.

I do not propose to present a detailed and graphic descriptions of gender discrimination in a women’s life in our country. Suffice to say that right from the womb to the tomb, women’s life are replete with instances of denial of basic and statutory –assured rights.

The increasing instances of female foeticide, female infanticide child marriages, dowry deaths have not shown any decline despite the existence of legal provisions prohibiting these social evils. Even the Hindu Women’s Right to Property Act recognizing the girl child’s right to acquire property has remained practically a dead letter. Similarly the instances of domestic violence, and harassment of women in work place have not abated despite the legal provisions and judicial directives to the contrary. The Government have over the years put in place a number of legislations and issued administrative fiats for the benefit of women, their education, health, job security, congenial atmosphere in workplace, their safety in moving around etc. But unfortunately the actual implementation of these measures have not been very effective as we had expected. Otherwise how do we explain, continuously declining child ratio, high foeticide and

infanticide, high rates of female girl drop out from the school, continuously rising cases of dowry deaths and cases of rape, sexual harassment and trafficking in women all of which are constantly showing upward trend.

I would like that institutions like yours dealing with Home Science should introduce a formal course as a part of its curriculum for the young girls who study here for creating a social awareness among them about these social evils which inflict grave mental and physical injuries on our womenfolk and in the process acts as a great deterrent hindrance to our overall development. This is no doubt an unconventional suggestion I have made but I hope this will enable the young graduates to sensitize the female members of the society that eradication of social evils and gender discrimination would be possible only when our women are firm on effective implementation of the laws which confer rights on them. Eternal vigilance is not merely the price of liberty but is also the price for strict enforcement of legal rights by the laws – enforcing agencies.

With these words, I once again wish your faculty of Home Science a resounding success in its rapid stride towards perfection and excellence.

Jai Hind.