

**Speech of Mrs. D. Purandeswari MoS-HRD(HE) as  
chief guest on the occasion of the Valedictory  
Function of Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the  
S.R.R. Government Degree and P.G College,  
Karimnagar, AP on 18-2-2007.**

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It gives me great pleasure to be present here to-day to participate in the valedictory function of the golden Jubilee Celebrations of the S.R.R Government Degree and P.G. College. Established in 1956 under the patronage and blessings of late Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao, former Prime Minister of India, this institution has come a long way in its onward march espousing the cause of education. I am glad to learn that the college has flourished as one of the most premier institutions in the state of Andhra Pradesh which has discharged its social obligation of educating thousands of students belonging to the socially and economically under privileged sections of the population.

More than a century and a half back our colonial masters introduced a new system of education in this country for a limited purpose namely, to create an educated elite class which would serve the interests of the empire. But with the attainment of Independence this limited role of education lost its relevance. The post -independence requirement of the country was widely different. After independence our educational system had to be remodelled to meet fresh challenges of development and growth. Unfortunately we have not been very successful in this endeavour. Even after more than half a century of our freedom our universities and colleges have been

turning out in large numbers persons with general education who are unsuited to the new demands of a growing society. Result was a phenomenal increase in the number of unemployed persons in the country that clearly points to a defective educational planning. Many of our leaders teachers and academicians, social activists and policy makers have come to realize that our system has culminated in a dead end that there is no light even at the end of the tunnel. More importantly, our educational system has failed to inculcate in our graduates the qualities of head and heart.

As Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, India's philosopher –Statesman has beautifully observed: I quote

**The function of the universities is not merely to send out technically skilled and professionally competent men, but it is equally their duty to produce in them the quality of compassion, the quality which enables the individuals to treat one another in a truly democratic spirit. Our religions have proclaimed from the very beginning, that each human individual is to be regarded as a spark of the Divine. Unquote.**

Education is not just the amount of information that is put into a child's brain undigested, unrelated and unassimilated. The very essence of education is the concentration of mind and not mere collection or collation of facts. As Swami Vivekananda said: "Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man". The

concept of education is that it should help the formation of character expansion of intellect and development of a positive view of the life. It is this man-making character which is the basic object of all education.

In modern day scenario, education is not only a goal in itself but is also a powerful driver of social change. Combined with sound macroeconomic policies, education is fundamental for the construction of globally competitive economics and democratic societies. Education is key to creating, applying and spreading new ideas and technologies which in turn are critical for sustained growth. It augments cognitive and other skills and in the process leads to higher productivity and development. Education builds what the Noble Laureate Amartya Sen calls “human capabilities’ the essential and individual power to reflect, make choices, seek a voice in society, and lead a quality life. In short, education is one of the most powerful instruments known for reducing poverty and inequality and for laying the basis for sustained economic growth, sound governance, and effective institutions. In order to ensure that a meaningful education is imparted to our children, it is essential that right type of teachers and instructors are put in place. Teacher education programme generally train our teachers to adjust to a system in which education is seen as a mere transmission of information and knowledge is treated as information ‘given’ by the teacher and taken by the taught with out question. In this system there is very little leeway for inquiry, initiative and innovation. This is because mostly the teachers training schemes do not give much scope for the teachers undergoing such

training to have a critical examination of curriculum, syllabi or the course contents. Most of such programmes provide little or no opportunity for inquiry or investigation: In the process the teachers end up with a purely pedantic outlook and restrictive mindset which prevent them from serving as effective facilitators of social transformation. This mindset must change. Teachers must be encouraged to develop a spirit of inquiry and research and must be perennial learners and must update their knowledge continuously. It is some times complained that teaching profession always does not attract the best talent because of inadequate prospect of career advancement. This I think is not correct. Over the years we have taken fundamental steps to improve appreciably the teachers' lot in terms of monetary and other fringe benefits; and the process is still on as we go along.

We in India have had a rich record and long history of teaching and learning. Through "Guru – Shishya parampara" which is exclusively unique to Indian ethos. Be it learning of music or archery or techniques of warfare or for that matter worldly or spiritual knowledge, we have traditionally regarded learning as a collective wisdom landed down from one generation to another through Guru – Shishya Parampara ). It is important a potential teacher must inculcate a sense of dedication and spirit of service. He must take up the challenging task with the enthusiasm of a zealot, only then he will be able to create a niche for him as the prime mover of social change. A successful teacher is he who can motivate his students to discover their latent talents, to realize their physical and intellectual

potentialities to the fullest, to develop character and imbibe the desirable social and human values. A teacher who does not measure upto the standard will leave no indelible impression on the society at large.

With the attainment of the Independence a demand grew up for a new educational system which could address the needs of a country in the changed political scenario. Accordingly in 1948 the Government of India appointed the University Education Commission under the Chairmanship of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, the illustrious philosopher statesmen of the country. The Commission identified some major defects of the prevailing educational system which, *inter alia*, were the absence of linkage between education, productivity and economic growth, and absence of emphasis on character formation and promotion of moral and spiritual values conducive for the development of a democratic and equalitarian society. The Commission duly recognized education as a critical input in human resource development which was essential not only material for welfare and prosperity of an individual. At the same time it emphasized that the goal of education was also to develop the moral and spiritual qualities of the younger generation and to promote the latest potentialities of dynamic social and political leadership. The commission submitted a comprehensive report on educational reforms for the country's development and growth.

The Common Minimum Programme of the UPA government under the leadership headed by Smt. Sonia Gandhi Ji for the first time decided to give a new direction to our educational system to suit our requirements in the changing socio-economic scenario. It was therefore, decided to increase the expenses in the development of human resources to 6 percent of our GDP. True this percentage is not in itself a very substantial amount when compared to some of the developed countries like England, Japan, Germany and France all of which allocate a much higher percentage on this account. But a good beginning has been made though in actual practice, we have not been able to provide more than 3% so far. We are however unmistakably on our way to redeem our pledges in this regard. Through a massive expansion of education, the present government wants to empower the vast majority of our people who for centuries have been deprived of their rights and privileges because we are convinced that education is the most important instrument of empowerment .

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century is universally acknowledged as the “Knowledge Century” which means that Knowledge or brain power should be reflected in a country’s competitiveness, advancement and human capabilities Human capabilities are a function of the well-being of a people and the investment we make in human capital formation. The ability of a nation to make best use of its knowledge or brain power will ultimately determine its place in the comity of nations in the present century. It is important to remember that education is fundamental to the development of a nation. It builds the base for

economic and social development, develops the capacity of individuals to contribute to and benefit from that development, sustains and enriches both individual and overall culture of a nation and builds mutual respect and understanding that transcends cultural differences.

Recently the National Knowledge Commission (NKC) appointed by the Prime Minister has submitted its report to him. The report consists many valuable suggestions which, if implemented in letter and spirit could bring about fundamental reforms in our higher education which is a dire need of the time.

I am often confronted with a question as to whether the rising population of our country is a liability or an asset. My reply is that for too long we have viewed the size of our population as an economic and social liability. However, an educated, skilled, healthy, empowered people are an asset. The challenge before us is to ensure that each and every citizen of India is an asset and this empowerment can come only through education.

With these words I wish the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of your college all success and pray that may the college play a vital and proactive role in the educational build-up of the country.

Thank you and Jai Hind.