



Mr. M. Venkaiah Naidu
Hon'ble Vice President of India
Chief Guest – 2018

Governor of Maharashtra Shri Vidyasagar Raoji, Chairman Council of Advisors Dr. Justice Chandrashekhar Dharmadhikari, Shri Rahul Bajajji, my friend and fellow member in Rajya Sabha for some time together, Chairman Jamnalal Bajaj Foundation. Mr. Dhoom Singh Negi, Awardee Constructive Work Category, Ms. Rupal Desai: Joint Awardee with Mr. Rajendra Desai, in Application of Science And Technology For Rural Development Category. Shri Dhirubhai Mehta, Chairman Selection Committee Award for Constructive Work. Dr. R. A. Mashelkar, Chairman Selection Committee Application for Science and Technology for Rural Development Category. Mrs. Prasanna Bhandari, Awardee Development and Welfare of Woman and Children category. Dr. Clayborne Carson, Awardee International Award for promoting Gandhian values outside India category. Dr. Pheroza Godrej, Co-Chairperson Selection Committee Award for Development and Welfare of Women and Children. Mrs. Anu Aga who has been Member of Parliament along with me for some time and Chairperson Selection Committee International Award for promoting Gandhian values outside India. Shri Madhur Bajaj, Trustee Jamnalal Bajaj Foundation. Mrs. Minal Bajaj, Honorary Director Jamnalal Bajaj Foundation. Brothers and sisters who all have assembled here today evening for this pious function *Sarvanna Namaskar* (Greetings to all).

During the forty year period, the Jamnalal Bajaj Award has been considered the most prestigious award in different-different fields. Jamnalal sir, in whose memory the award is, was a multifaceted person, a freedom fighter, industrialist, social reformer and a philanthropist and was in the forefront in the fight for freedom.

I feel very, very happy to be here amidst you all today for this important function. Since the past 40 years illustrious citizens have been recognized for their eminent achievements working in various categories and have been honored with the Jamnalal Bajaj Award. They have played an important part in recognizing and motivating the nation's creative merit by this prestigious award. I appreciate the team which has decided on these scholarly awards. Talent award, service award, this is all an integral part of India's culture. Our ancestors have given us the guidance who had some talent and some have given some service. Meeting them and recognizing them and also honoring them is our Indian tradition... it is a part of our culture. Shri Jamnalal Bajaj, was a Gandhian till the end of his life. Gandhiji used to consider him as his 5th son. Shri Jamnalal Bajaj and his family followed Gandhiji's principles in their personal lives as well as in their family's culture. Jamnalal Bajajji used to follow Gandhiji's ideals and kept the struggle against the British. Alongside that he was involved in community work. His wife Janaki Devi was committed to service of cows.

She played a very active role in Vinobhaji's Bhoodan Movement. Both the sons of Jamnalalji have conscientiously conducted the family's Gandhian traditions. After independence Kamalnayanji played an important role in the industrialization of India. He was also active in constructive politics and represented Wardha in the Lok Sabha. The second son Ramakrishna connected business and industry to social government and through the fruits of his efforts the Council for Fair Business Practices was established, through which moral and social dedication, business practices and

processes have been encouraged. This is very important in today's age. I will come to that little later. Looking at the efforts of Ramakrishnaji, the Jannalalji Foundation, Bajajji's foundation was established. Keeping in mind his principles today, this award is being presented. It is really commendable that the nationalist traditions of Late Jannalal Bajaj's is being fulfilled today with dedication under the inspiring leadership of Shri. Rahul Bajaj, the third generation of his family. This is real dynasty, that is what is required. Normally I don't like dynasty. I don't encourage dynasty. In democracy dynasty is nasty, that is what people say. But in service, in showing talent, in doing social service, this dynasty as we call it, is very praiseworthy. Rahulji your family is continuing this dynasty. Congratulations to you for this. Everyone in your family, third generation, fourth generation that will also be there, my congratulations to all of you, my appreciations. Continue to do the same in the future also. This is what is required. Following the footsteps of the elders. This is our tradition/heritage. It is necessary to maintain this tradition forever. Jannalalji was a multifaceted personality. He was a freedom fighter. He was a businessman. He was a social reformer. And he was a great philanthropist. He exemplified India's core philosophy. What is the core philosophy of India? Share and Care - is the core of Indian philosophy. You call it as Indian or you call it as Bharatiya or you call it as Hindu, some people have some reservations also to mention even the name of Hindu also. I have no such reservations. In this way, whatever name you call, this tradition - Share and Care - is the core of Indian philosophy. India, my friends once upon a time was very rich. Before the invasions, before the colonial rule, we had so many resources. India, once upon a time was known as "*Vishwa Guru*". Students from abroad, from entire globe, used to come to India - to *Takshashila*, to Nalanda, to Pushpagiri, to all other places, to come and read here. But at no time India has never attacked any country. All Tom, Dick and Harry came and attacked us; ruled us, ruined us, looted us, cheated us enough. And some of them have looted our minds also. They have changed our mindset also. But India has never attacked anybody because its philosophy is - "*Sarve Jana Shukhino Bhavantu*" "*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*" (Let the people of the world be happy. The world is one Family). We must take care of each and every person. That is the philosophy. This is what Ramakrishna Paramahansa has said. This is what Shankaracharya has said. This is what Swami Vivekananda has said. This is what Mahatma Gandhi has said. This is what Dr Ambedkar has said. This is what Deendayal Upadhyay has said.

So we have to follow that core philosophy and continue the same. I am very happy this family is continuing the tradition in spite of the changes that have come in the society aftermath of independence. India's image abroad also is of the same. That's why Indian civilization is still surviving. Ours is one of the oldest civilizations. You have Babylonian, you have Egypt, you have Greek, you have Roman, you have all the civilizations; they're also old. But where are they today? Why India is still surviving? Because of this philosophy; concept of "*Vasudhaivka Kutumbakam*". We must preserve it. We must enrich it. We must propagate it. We should not only profess it but also practice it. That is the way to take the country and to take the culture, to take the tradition forward. I am very happy that this foundation is doing that work. My compliments to them.

And also what we should do is that we should take care of women's empowerment. They're 50% of our population. We should focus enough on taking care of the women. We should end all gender discrimination whatsoever. Some people say- no sir, this is our custom, that women should remain at home only. Who said so? Maitreyi, Gargi, those days, Vedic days, they used to come and sit in public and then they used to argue also in those days. That is our tradition. Even if you believe in purana. I'm not asking you to believe in *purana*, that's your choice. Even Ramayana, Mahabharata or even all your puranas, gods and goddesses, you take Lakshmi, you take Saraswati, you take

Parvati. Saraswati was in charge of education. Now we have Education Minister here, Vinod Tawde. Saraswati was taking care of education. Parvati- Defense Minister. She was in the puranas. Now we also have a woman as Defense Minister. Then Lakshmi- Minister of Finance, in charge. That was the respect. Not only that, you take the name of any river- Ganga, Kaveri, Yamuna, Saraswati, Mahanadi, Narmada, Tapti, Mahendratanya, all the rivers are named after women. That is the tradition of this country. And we call this country also as Motherland, not Father's Land. We say Matrubhoomi, we don't say Pitrubhoomi. That is the respect we give to women. So they have to be taken care and they have to be given all the opportunities. In between some people told me that sir, you are saying this, should give more encouragement to women. What is your objective? I said what objective, they should also be given the opportunity in every field. They should get equal opportunity. Didn't you see what happened in the field of politics. I said - what, what happened? No Sir, you must not have seen at the lower levels. I said what happened, tell me. So they said Sir, nowadays the Sarpanch, women are becoming Sarpanch and the husband is coming there and sitting down. On the Sarpanch's chair the husband of the Sarpanch is coming and sitting there in certain instances. I told him - you don't worry. Let some days go by. Later you will come to know, what is the condition of the Sarpanch's husband you will understand. That is what I explained. They are capable. Once you give them an opportunity they can excel in any field. We've also seen some of the women. Social workers, the wonderful work they have done. And there are a number of examples of a woman leading in the society. So we have to take care of them. And also the elimination of untouchability. It is really a national shame, after so many years also there's still certain instances of caste discrimination. Untouchability - we should do away with it at the earliest. For that also you've to change the mindset of the people.

Then upliftment of the poor. Elimination of untouchability. Uplifting the downtrodden. The suppressed and depressed oppressed classes. They haven't been taken care of. Mahatma Gandhi has said it. Deendayal Upadhyay has said it. *Antyodaya* - whoever sits in the last row/line in society should be uplifted first. I am not talking about those who are sitting in the last row here. Those who are in the last row in society their upliftment should be given priority. Uplifting the poor. That should be our motto. And then taking care of the Swadeshi concept. Encouraging our Khadi, our Indian dress, our cotton, our other things. That is what is required for our country now. Jammalaji was working for all these things. He returned the title of Rai Bahadur conferred on him by the British during the Non-Cooperation Movement. We need to draw inspiration from the socially conscious leaders like Jammalal Bajaji in bringing about reforms and changes in the mindset of the people. Although Caring and Sharing is India's cultural core philosophy, increasing materialism, receding spiritualism, selfishness, fast paced lifestyles and the growing trend of nuclear families are making people to adopt an indifferent attitude towards the problems of the needy and vulnerable sections of the society. This has to be corrected. Another specialty of India's system... our culture is joint family. Or at least the family system. The family system takes all the shots. Absorbs all the shots. It gives you immense happiness, living together. Instances of neglect and abuse of the elderly, growing atrocities on women and lack of tolerance to certain points of view are serious and social malice which need to be tackled in a concerted manner by all the stake holder, families, communities, NGOs and the Government. We should not leave this to Government alone. One weakness that has come to our India, after independence our mindset has become such - all the work Government will do, it's okay if we sit idle. It does not work like this. Society also should take an interest in this, they should participate in this. I remember when as a Urban Development Minister I was fulfilling my obligations, when we were launching the Swachh Bharat Scheme, Prime Minister told me that don't give this an appearance of Government program. I said... okay. It should not be given a political

color. I said -okay. But a doubt came to mind, if this is not political and if it is not a government program, then what is this? So immediately he said that this should shape into a *Jan Andolan* (People's Movement). We should convert it into a People's Movement. What is required is that all this becomes People's Movement. Ending untouchability; elimination of poverty or ending the gender discrimination; all these things and Swachh Bharat, Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao, promoting the girl child's education, they should all become People's Movement. And this movement was started by Jannalaji at that time itself. See that, his vision. That is the foresight they had. And we, the present generation must think on those lines and follow the great footsteps of such people.

I am of the opinion that involvement in social service right from school days will help in inculcating an attitude of sensitivity and empathy among children. Perhaps school curriculum should be revamped to make it mandatory for children to take part in social service activities. I remember in my student days, the school days we used to have a Morals Science class. We have now only Science no morals. We used to have a craft class. No Craft now. We used to have a physical training class... mandatory. And we used to have NCC, Social-NSS, and we used to have all other activities. But no other activity today. Mugging, mugging, 24x7... have given so much of a load to children they have to keep on studying and studying. So that's why the social values, our value system is getting eroded. The new generation, they're not aware of our history, our culture, our heritage. There is every need to preserve our culture and heritage. I am very happy the categories of awardees include culture. This is very much required for civilization advancement and for harmonious living together. The culture has to be preserved. The culture is different from religion. Religion is way of worship. I am not preaching any religion to you. It is your choice. Whatever religion you want to have you can preach and profess that religion. In India that liberty is there. And not only our religion we have invited other religions also. India is so kind and so, we have heart enlargement that we can invite anything. You've seen how many Gods are there. If somebody wants to add one more God, no problem, 30 crores plus one more God. "*Aham Brahmasya*". You can say that you are also God. That also is permitted. That is the greatness of this society, this culture. But what is required is not the religion. What is required is culture. What is culture? Culture is way of living. Some child asked me a question- sir, I don't understand. I said -culture means a way of life. So he said- sir tell me with an example. I don't understand the meaning, and what is the difference between culture and *sanskriti / english*. I said *sanskriti* is – you have a roti, you ate your roti. It is nature (*prakruti*). You snatch someone else's roti and eat - this is *vikruti* (perversity). And you have roti and the other person does not have anything, you give half your roti to him, this is *sanskriti* (culture). This is Indian culture. This is our *paddhati* (ritual/practice).

So Jannalal Bajajji and his family have put this same practice in front of society. This inspiration, we should all take inspiration from this. "Be the change you want to see in the world - said Mahatma Gandhi. We all need to become changing agents in building a more emphatic, caring and harmonious society. Everyone might not be inclined to or interested to get involved in social service activities. However, it is important for every individual to discharge his or her responsibility towards society and country at large by observing for instance basic environmental protective measures. Like not using plastic bags or material, following the civic rules. That is also our responsibility. And then, some people argue - no, no, I'm a free country, sir I have got freedom. Whatever I want to say, whatever I want to do I will do it. From Taj hotel if you go out because it is free India and everybody wants to move in different directions and both of you come and crash together, then you'll meet there, not at Taj. You have to follow certain rules for the overall order of the society. That's why this one way traffic, these regulations, all these things have come. They're only regulations, they're not

strangulations. So one has to understand...your obligations, rights and responsibilities come together. That is also a great social work.

What is *Desh Bhakti*? Each person does his work, that is only *Desh Bhakti* (Patriotism). That is what he was saying. I said what is there in this; everybody is doing his work. He said it's really patriotism. There is a meaning in that. If you do your work, if everybody does his work, that is real patriotism. Patriotism does not mean saying *Jai to Bharat Mata* (saluting Mother India) or to offer a garland to a picture of *Bharat Mata*. *Jai Ho Hindustan* - means *Jai to Bharat Mata* means the *Jai Ho* of 130 crores of people. This is the meaning of *Bharat Mata Jai*. That is *Desh Bhakti*. That is patriotism. That is nationalism. That sort of attitude has to be there. In India we have so much diversity. We have different languages and we have so many religions also. We have so many other things. But we should all understand that *Vividhata mein Ekta, Bharat ka Visheshta* (Unity in Diversity, India's specialty). Different languages, different clothes, even then we are one country. Irrespective of caste, creed, sex, religion and region, India is one. One nation, One people, One country. That is how we must all think when we are participating in this function. Why this award function? What is it that makes difference to the lives of these great people? These awards are rewards. Why are they given? This felicitation should give inspiration to others. That is the purpose of these awards. Jamnalal Bajaj Foundation has instituted these awards to give inspiration to others to follow these people so that they can also get inspiration. So that is the purpose of this. Let us all be really inspired by this good work of these great people. My heartiest felicitations and congratulations to today's four distinguished awardees who have made a difference to the lives of people through their work in environment, in disaster mitigation, women and children's welfare and promotion of peace and non-violence and our cultured heritage. Also when I look at the galaxy of past recipients, it evokes admiration as this man and woman have become icons of service and selflessness, braving scorching heat, shivering cold and pouring rain, they have been tirelessly engaged in the reconstruction of rural India, in consonance with Gandhiji's philosophy, and most interestingly stayed away from the glare of media and the fame. I was just telling Rahulji that I am reminded the way you have chosen these people. You means, the Committee under Dharmadhikarijis leadership, the Committee has chosen such people who were not recognized earlier.

So that is the new trend now. The Prime Minister also has started that trend. You might have seen Padma Awardees. Recognizing the unrecognized, reaching the unreached, funding the unfunded, that is the order. That should be the order. I am very happy that this Foundation also has chosen such people to give recognition, to give awards, because that really inspires. Grassroot level work, Constructive Work that is the need of the hour, construction is required, not the destruction or obstruction. What we're seeing in different fields of public life in the country, we should replace destruction by construction; obstruction by construction. This applies to all, including Parliament to legislative assemblies to local bodies to public life, everywhere, everybody should pursue constructive attitude because we are a free India. It is our own country. By doing obstructive things or destructive things, we're harming ourselves. This has to be understood by one and all. Gandhiji said in those times to do Constructive Work. We really have to appreciate those who are doing work in the rural regions. What is the reason? Rural people are not organized. Whereas urban is comparatively better focused because of the media and because of the communication, because of other facilities and all.

After independence Mahatma Gandhiji gave two advice to people. One advice he gave was political, I will not speak much about it. The second point is important. He said - back to villages. Move towards villages, that is what he said. Look at his foresight. Look at the vision. Because rural people

even today, after so much urbanization, 60% of the people are still living in rural areas. We have to take care of their necessities. And we should have the constructive work in the rural areas. I am very happy that such people who have worked in the rural areas have been identified and they have been recognized and they have been given awards today. The reconstruction of rural India is in consonance with Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy and most interestingly they stayed away from the glare of media and fame. Friends, today the Gandhian social worker from Tehri Garhwal, Uttarakhand, Shri Dhoom Singh Negiji has been chosen for this award for his constructive social work. Sushri Rupal Desai and Shri Rajendra Desai are being awarded for rural development and for the use of science and technology. Sushri Prasanna Bhandari of Shri Karni Nagar Vikas Samiti, Kota is being awarded for her efforts in the field of Women and Child Welfare. The Founder of the Martin Luther King Jr. Research and Education Institute, America, Dr. Clayborne Carson has been awarded the international award for his outstanding contribution in promoting Gandhian values outside India. I would like conclude my speech with Gandhiji's popular quote, Gandhiji had said, "The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others". This is what Gandhiji has said. So keeping that in mind, we should all work in that direction and also we should all encourage Indian-ness. I am not against anybody. We have opened up Foreign Direct Investment. When the world has become small and we're living in an age of LPG-Liberalisation, Privatisation, Globalisation, you cannot live in isolation and have consolation for isolation. We have to understand the better practices and we have to follow the better practices. But there are good practices in India. First remember them. Practice them. So that's why wherever I am going nowadays, my friends, after becoming Vice President and after leaving politics, I started going around the universities, colleges, attending their convocations; secondly, interacting with the scientific community, research institutes. And thirdly, I am also interacting with the farming community, because agriculture is in dire crisis. And then fourthly I am also interacting with the people who are working in culture and heritage and preservation of our culture. And I am also meeting and interacting with those who are doing good work from the Swayam Sevak Sanghatana, the NGOs. At that time I always get inspiration to tell people about five things. I will tell you the five things and then I will conclude. One is Everybody should remember his mother. Mother includes father also. Don't misunderstand. Mother... Woman... W-O-M-A-N. M-A-N is there. Mother and father. Second- Everyone should remember the *Janma Bhoomi*, the native place. Wherever you are born you should never forget it. And just now, Rahul-ji was telling me you have to remember *Karma Bhoomi* (land of labor) along with *Janma Bhoomi* (land of birth). It is good. That is also very important. And along with that we have to remember our Mother Tongue. The language that has come from the womb of mother should never be forgotten. Whether it is Marathi or Punjabi or Assamese or Bhojpuri or Telegu or Tamil or Kannada or Malayalam or Kashmiri or Dogri, or Urdu also, our language which has come from the womb of mother should always be practiced. I am not against any language.

While leaving they (colonial rulers) have spoilt your minds and left. We think they are superior and we are inferior. And we don't think about our own the great Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, or Sambhaji, the great. Our Narayan Guru, Shankar Dev, Veerapandiya Kattabomman of Tamil Nadu, Subramanian Bharathi, V. O. Chidambaram Pillai, Alluri Sitarama Raju, there are so many heroes. Jhansi ki Rani Laxmibai. But we are not taught about the great sacrifices they have made for the sake of the country.

That is an unfortunate thing and that's why our mindsets and also anything that comes from outside we have a weakness for that. We have to think in terms of value addition. Think of making in India. Even today in spite of the competition you must take care of your own internal needs. That's why

Bhasha (language); language and emotion go together. We have to protect our Indian languages...should feel pride. Mother tongue is like your eyesight. Your eyes are like mother tongue. This is where Mahatma Gandhi also has insisted, promoting Indian languages; speaking in Indian languages; feeling proud, encouraging Indian goods. This is all what is required to the extent possible. And then fourth is – Motherland...the country which has given you beautiful opportunity. Wherever you go you must remember your motherland. Lot of people want to go abroad. Nowadays there's no need to go abroad, lot of things are available here for the younger generation. Still you want to go, go. Learn, read and return. Serve the motherland. That's my advice to the younger generation on this occasion. And then fifth one is- Guru. Whatever maybe technological advancement, Guru is very much essential. The Guru who we're talking about today is Gandhiji. Gandhiji's teachings and preaching are immortal. They are relevant forever. Today, tomorrow, day after. Even after 150 years, we are now thinking about Gandhi. That's what is required because his thoughts are eternal. They are a guiding philosophy to all of us. And Gandhiji stayed with Jannalal Bajajji. Jannalal Bajajji helped Gandhi-ji in strengthening and taking forward the movement at that time against the mighty British, being a businessman. Because he was more concerned about his country. He was a patriot to the core. So keeping these things in mind my dear friends we must all work together, to take the country forward. 20% of the people are living below poverty line today. 22% of the people cannot write and read. Still there are cases of gender discrimination. Still there are cases of caste discrimination in certain areas. Atrocities against children...all these are challenges before us. For that we should all take inspiration from these great people. From the lives and teachings and preaching of these great people and then try to move forward. And Gandhi-ji always said public life, politics, is a mission. Politics is a mission. We should not convert into a commission. And should not do any remission or commit any omission. It should be continued as a mission. That is what is required. Today there is decay in value system; in cultural ethos. Functions like this, reading the life and teaching and preaching of people like these, will give inspiration...Because this is what is required. We must all be aware of what is happening. We must take part in public activity. We must also observe. In every society, in every walk of life you need to go for good people. Good means people with Character, caliber, capacity and conduct. 4 Cs are important...Character, Caliber, Capacity and Conduct. But unfortunately the other 4 Cs are trying to dominate now. They're being replaced, these first 4 Cs. What are the other 4 Cs? – Caste, Community, Cash, Criminality. This is a very dangerous trend. We should curb that at the earliest. And we should all take inspiration from the teachings and preaching of Mahatma Gandhi. And we must all strengthen to take the grassroots level activity that is happening in the country. I am very happy once again that I've been invited to this. Minalji has come, Bajajji and then requested me, there is a slight change of date because of you know I have other obligations also. I had to change. But change seems to be for better. Because instead of doing it in a closed room we're having it in this open air to air our views...beautiful weather. I am very much thankful to the organizers for giving me this opportunity and I convey once again my compliments to these great people who have been given these awards. And I also would like to compliment the selectors who have selected the best people available. And I am also thankful to all of you for coming over here to this function. Thank you very much. *Namaskar. Jai Hind.*



