



**Madhur Bajaj**  
**Trustee, Jamnalal Bajaj Foundation**

Respected Chief Guest and esteemed dignitaries on & off the dais.

Lately, I have been doing some deep thinking. I am questioning the practices and rituals we continue for years and decades, without thinking whether they are relevant or not in today's times. I am glad that the judiciary has replaced the old, archaic laws that suited the British with fresh appropriate laws, which ought to have been done decades back. But better late than never.

One of the customs we follow is the giving of 'Vote of Thanks'. This has essentially been a Western Culture where immense contributions would be repaid by a mere 'Thank You'. The Indian culture shows gratitude from the heart, not from the mind. Have you said a Thank you to your mother? at least I don't remember having done so. Instead, there would be a warm hug or a bright smile or words with feelings.

I feel honoured and humbled giving a vote of thanks annually for over 3 decades but now I am unable to justify to myself giving a vote of thanks, any further.

Coming to the Awardees, they are unconcerned with Russia-Ukraine or Israel-Hamas wars or the Trump-Harris competition and Modi-Rahul confrontations. The Gandhian Warriors have dedicated their lives in transforming the lives of tribals, *Adivasis* and the downtrodden, the poorest of the poor without getting distracted. They deserve our thunderous ovation.

Our popular Chief Guest, Shri Abhay Bang can easily be counted amongst our awardees based on the breadth and depth of his work.

Our Pranaams to him.

We severely miss the presence of our Nobel laureate, Shri Kailash Satyarthi, whose life is in danger every minute as he uncovers the highly lucrative and profitable ways of the traffickers of innocent and helpless women and children and subjects these culprits to severe penalties and punishments.

I know that he is listening from wherever he is.

We all need to bow down to him.

Dr. Mashelkar has the energy, perseverance and a commitment to value add to different segments of society. Hence, he's a member of over 100 NGOs and institutes and chairs most of them.

A small word of gratitude will not do. Will be highly inadequate. He deserves a royal salute from all of us.

And, how can we forget the master of ceremonies, Minal Bajaj, who is involved from A to Z of these awards. She deserves our utmost love and affection.

Well, it is only fair to recognise the contributions of the trustees, the selection committees, the media, the hall management and the enthusiastic audience that is all of you for gracing the occasion and making it a grand success.

Kindly allow me to be a keen observer to the proceedings henceforth.

My hearty Namaskar to one and all for your deep affection and valuable encouragement for the last 34 years!

Goodbye!

Alvida!

