

THE BILL BANNING TRIPLE TALAQ IS AIMED AT SECURING JUSTICE TO WOMEN: VICE PRESIDENT

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Vice President's Secretariat

The Bill banning Triple Talaq is aimed at securing justice to women: Vice President

Investing in women's capabilities is important for propelling economic growth;

Addresses Diamond Jubilee celebrations of Janki Devi Memorial College

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The Vice President of India, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu has hailed the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill, 2019, passed in the Rajya Sabha the other day, and said that it was aimed at securing gender rights and justice to women.

The Vice President said that the passing of the Bill was a great moment in India's legislative history. "It is a major social reform bill that will go a long way in ensuring justice to Muslim women", he added.

Speaking at the Diamond Jubilee Celebrations of Janki Devi Memorial College in New Delhi, Shri Naidu said this was long overdue for a country that has taken great pride in its deep-rooted principles of democracy, secularism and equality.

The Vice President stressed that investing in women's capabilities and empowering them were important for propelling economic growth and overall development. He observed that women's education has been found to have a more significant effect on lowering poverty and promotion of sustainable development.

Pointing out that women's literacy was more than just about economic opportunities, the Vice President said that increasing knowledge and awareness among women would have a huge, positive impact on the society.

Shri Naidu said that a country like India could not neglect the importance of education and the empowerment of the women, especially when it was aspiring to be a 5 trillion-dollar economy and striving to acquire a position of leadership in the world.

Quoting the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Report, Shri Naidu said that raising women's labour force participation to that of men could boost GDP by as much as 27 percent in India. "If 50% of skilled women could join the workforce, India can scale its growth by 1.5 percentage points to 9% a year. India needs its women to contribute to the workforce," he added.

Opining that empowerment of women would enable them to respond to the challenges, improve their status within the family and participate in the decision making, the Vice President said that a happy family and a healthy and robust society could not be sustained without the active participation of women.

Observing that education was the foundation, on which the progress of a nation depends, the Vice President stressed the need to provide good quality and affordable education to our young people. He said education would help India convert its demographic dividend to achieve all-round and inclusive development of the nation.

Shri Naidu called upon the universities and schools to strive to become the centres of excellence where knowledge was imparted, skills were honed, character was built, curiosity was inspired and morals were fortified.

To achieve this, the Vice President said that there was an urgent need to reorient the education system. He said that India 'simply cannot harbour an obsolete an educational system that promotes mediocrity, rote learning, stifles creativity and pulls us backwards instead of propelling us forward into the future.'

Shri Naidu wanted educational institutions to shun the status quo and embrace change in accordance with the changing times and constantly and objectively evaluate the curricula, teaching methodologies and upgrade research facilities.

Opining that education does not, by itself could make a person employable, the Vice President asserted that educational institutions must impart essential skills to students, including crucial life skills required for the knowledge-driven, interconnected world of the 21st century.

Shri Naidu appreciated the institute's initiatives such as the rainwater harvesting system and Equal Opportunities Cell to support economically challenged students.

The Vice Chancellor of Delhi University, Prof, Yogesh Tyagi, the Chairman of the Governing Body, Janki Devi Memorial College, Prof. Brajesh Choudhary, Principal, Janki Devi Memorial College, Dr. Swati Pal, faculty members and students of the college were present.

Following is the text of Vice President's address:

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It gives me immense pleasure to participate in the Founder's Day event and inaugurate the Diamond Jubilee Celebrations of Janki Devi Memorial College. It is a momentous occasion for the college, its students, faculty, management and all others involved in the running of this institution.

I am glad to learn that Janki Devi Memorial College aspires to provide quality education to young women, to empower them to be economically self-reliant and contribute meaningfully to progress of the society and the world at large.

The founder of the College, Shri Brij Krishan Chandiwala or Bhajji, as he was fondly called, was a profound visionary. His vision to empower girls, especially from the marginalized sections of society, through quality education, reveals not just his deep commitment to Gandhian principles but also his foresight.

He chose the trading area close to Karol Bagh to set up a college for women because he felt that women from the trading class lacked access to quality education. He was convinced that education for the elite was easily accessible and the more daunting challenge was to provide quality, affordable education to the underprivileged and economically backward classes.

I am glad to know that, today, JDMC is one of the most prominent colleges of Delhi University. I am happy to learn that JDMC has excellent facilities that provide a holistic environment for its students to pursue academic and extra-curricular interests.

The students of this college, many of whom, I believe, come from humble backgrounds, have gone on to make their mark in various fields and contributed meaningfully to the nation.

The institution has, thus, succeeded in its mission of providing quality education to students for six decades.

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equal opportunity cell ,

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I am glad to note that the Women's Development Centre, National Cadet Corps (NCC), National Service Scheme (NSS) and the Gandhi Study Circle of the college provide an opportunity for students to engage with social issues like legal literacy, women's health and empowerment and adult education.

I am told that the college has an Equal Opportunities Cell to support economically challenged students through several measures, including free meals. I also commend JDMC for creating a built environment that caters to the specific needs of the differently-abled students. I applaud your commitment towards inclusive education.

I also compliment the college for its culture of promoting eco-friendly initiatives through an active environment programme.

It is indeed noteworthy that the rain water harvesting system of the college has been rated as one of the best in Delhi by the Centre for Science and Environment. It is crucial that we instill an environmental consciousness in young people through such initiatives.

My dear sisters and brothers,

Education is a cause that is very close to my heart. In the two years that I have been in office, I have toured all over the nation meeting and interacting with students and educators.

According to Swami Vivekananda, **“Education means that process by which character is**

formed, strength of mind is increased, and intellect is sharpened, as a result of which one can stand on one's own feet"

Education is the foundation on which the progress of a nation depends. Today, India stands at the brink of a demographic dividend as 65% of its population is below 35 years. This is an unprecedented opportunity for the country to fast track development.

The only way to convert this dividend for achieving all-round and inclusive development of the nation is to provide good quality and affordable education to our young people.

Our schools and universities must be centres of excellence where knowledge is imparted, skills are honed, character is built, curiosity is inspired and morals are fortified. However, the need of the hour is to reorient our education system.

We simply cannot harbour an obsolete educational system that promotes mediocrity, rote learning, stifles creativity and pulls us backwards instead of propelling us forward into the future.

Our educational institutions must shun status quo and embrace change in accordance with the changing times. We have to constantly and objectively evaluate our curricula, teaching methodologies and research facilities. We need to keep updating and upgrading.

We must also realize that education does not, by itself make a person employable. Educational institutions must impart essential skills to students, including crucial life skills required for the knowledge-driven, interconnected world of the 21st century.

Schools and colleges must ensure that the children and youth of our country acquire the knowledge and skills that will enable them to become active contributors to building a new India and a new world.

They must ensure that the foundations are strong. What we need is the ability to observe and absorb, to assimilate and articulate, to ask questions and seek answers, to decipher and discover. It is also of paramount importance that our children must be equipped with a 'moral compass' to ensure that they never deviate from the righteous path.

The Kothari Commission observes that "the greatness of a country does not depend on the extent of its territory, the length of its communication or the amount of its wealth, but on the love for higher values of life. All must develop thought for the poor and suffering, regard and respect for women, faith in brotherhood regardless of race, colour, religion etc".

Our educational institutions must promote equality and social justice and reduce social and cultural differences through the spread of knowledge.

We must also realize that in this age of scientific knowledge and technological advancement, there is no room for superstition and blind faith. Inculcating a scientific temper among children from a young age is of vital importance to spawn a culture of research and innovation in the country.

My dear young friends,

I have also been a strong advocate of women's empowerment and the need to educate the girl child.

I strongly believe that investing in women's capabilities and empowering them are important for

propelling economic growth and overall development. 'Education for All' has been a priority policy of successive governments. We have made significant strides in education in the seven decades since independence.

Our literacy rate which was 12% in 1947 grew to 74.04% in 2011.

Unfortunately, the gap between male and female literacy rate is considerable. According to the 2011 census, literacy rate for men was 82.14 % whereas for women it was 65.46 %.

Though this gap is narrowing, with more women becoming literate than men since 2011, we still have a long way to go.

As India aspires to be a 5 trillion-dollar economy and dreams of acquiring a position of leadership in the world, it simply cannot neglect the importance of education and the empowerment of the women.

Women constitute about 50 % of India's human resource. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) recently estimated that raising women's labour force participation to that of men can boost GDP by as much as 27 per cent in India. If 50% of skilled women could join the work force, India can scale its growth by 1.5 percentage points to 9 % a year. India needs its women to contribute to the work force.

Empowerment of women enables them to respond to the challenges, improve their status within the family and participate in the decision making. Today a happy family and a healthy and robust society cannot be sustained without the active participation of women.

The Government of the day too accords great priority to women empowerment. The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill, 2019, passed in the Parliament the other day is aimed at securing gender rights and justice to women.

The passing of the bill is indeed a great moment in India's legislative history. It is a major social reform bill that will go a long way in ensuring justice to Muslim women. I compliment all MPs for passing this crucial bill.

This was long overdue for a country that has taken great pride in its deep-rooted principles of democracy, secularism and equality.

Women's literacy is more than just about economic opportunities. Increasing knowledge and awareness among women has a huge positive impact on the society. For example, literacy is directly related to health and infant mortality. Kerala has the highest female literacy rate and the lowest infant mortality whereas states like Bihar and UP with low female literacy have high infant mortality rates.

Women's education has been found to have a more significant effect on lowering the poverty line and promotion of sustainable development.

Many more institutions such as the JDMC should come up and create avenues of education for

our girl children.

I once again congratulate JDMC for achieving this coveted milestone. I wish each and every one of you the very best in your future endeavours.

Thank You!

Jai Hind!

RR/BK/MS/RK

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