

EDUCATION FOR WOMEN

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Hon'ble Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh

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Speech delivered by Dr. M. Channa Reddy, Chief Minister, Andhra Pradesh at the inauguration of Girls Hostel of Vanitha Mahila Vidyalaya at Hyderabad on January 1, 1990.

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Distinguished guests and friends!

It is really heartening to note that within 14 months you are able to build this prestigious hostel with modern facilities both for living and also for catering. I understand the difficulty of the girls coming from the districts when they have to stay in a city like Hyderabad. In fact, that is the problem of all boys and girls and this difficulty is much more as far as the girls are concerned. Boys can somehow manage but the girls cannot do so and it is good that the Exhibition Society has come forward with a munificent grant and also an assurance from the President that funds will always be provided when expansion plants are taken up. We are told that by July, the second phase will also be complete. Hostel accommodation is important not merely from the point of view of residence but also to enable girls coming from different areas, different cultures to come together and live together and understand each other.

In fact, education is not meant to be another ornament for the girls. It is something more. In this world of competition, where we have to struggle for existence and in the atmosphere of survival of the fittest, in urban areas and also semi-urban areas, we find the girls working in different fields. I am excluding the rural areas because there every woman works. People glibly say that, only in other countries there is freedom. In fact, we have more freedom for woman in this country. Every one has to work necessarily in the rural areas and when the woman follow their husbands to the fields, through the day they work, and also have the pleasure of something like a picnic. In modern society, picnic is often talked about, hardly realising that it is practiced almost every day in the rural areas. Work combined with pleasure, work combined with satisfaction is what exactly we should seek. In semi urban and urban areas, the problems are different. We have to train our girls to fit into that society, ever fast changing society. As Prof. Madan Mohan has put it, the world is changing fast and we cannot afford to be indifferent to the changes that are taking place around us. We have to take up the challenges, take to modern things as they develop and become a part and parcel of the society.

There are many fields that are meant for woman, but I think there is no field where the woman can be excluded. Even in the police and the military and agriculture we find woman. We see not only in the rural areas but also in the urban areas where the educated agricultural graduates come in large numbers, woman are taking up this profession. So it is not probably correct to demarcate any fields of activity on the basis of male and female, but still we want to encourage woman and it has been the policy of the State, to give preference to women. And that is why we often talk of reservations in jobs for women. This may not be necessary for a long time. Because, in due course. I am more than certain that woman could outbid the men; I have seen in medical colleges in Hyderabad and also in other areas of Andhra. The Government toyed with the idea of reserving some seats for girls, up to 30 percent, but when we saw that the girl were joining in larger numbers than boys, reservation for girls appeared almost un-necessary. Given opportunities, women can come up in all fields and nothing can physically come in their way. It is just a misconception to think that women are meant only for certain jobs. They are meant not only for certain things but for everything.

I am glad Osmania University and other Universities have been giving Priority to provide more and more opportunities for girls. There used to be only one prestigious college, a Women's College in Osmania University. But now many institutions for women have come up. It is now time for the educationists of such organizations to consider what exactly should be the conception of the educational expansion. Is it merely degree courses? What for do we require these degrees? All this should be very carefully thought about. There are many countries in the world which made tremendous progress, but have fixed a limitation on higher education. Education if it is merely for status symbol, to get a better husband or to get a better wife or more dowry etc., is a different matter. But education also, just like anything else, should be seen from the point of view of our requirement. We want many science graduates and we want many medical Doctors and Engineers. We should have an idea of a plan of the requirements of the country. We are today finding many people, even girls going around after having graduated in all these technical faculties not finding adequate jobs. We are suffering from a psychology that education is meant for jobs. Perhaps there is something wrong with our system of education. It is time, that we take serious note of it. A boy or girl should not be allowed to suffer when they come out of the colleges. They become pessimistic and depressed with unemployment staring in their faces. That is not worthwhile. So we have to think what exactly we require. We may have been to get rid of many of these high educational courses which we really do not require. If a job can be taken up by a Matriculate, why should a double graduate come in for competition? Is it not a waste? Four years or six years of higher education, and mind you that it is done at the cost of the public exchequer. We should now think in terms of diverting it for some more useful purposes and divert these people for something else.

Science is developing, industries are changing, technology is fast improving and we have to stand not merely in competition with other States of this country but other countries of the world. Today India occupies a very important position. As a developing country, almost on the border, and almost on the threshold of development, we should keep up those standards. There was a time when Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, builder of our modern India had visualised and dreamt and therefore, a number of scientific research laboratories came up all over the country. And today we are in a position to produce many things and, from that point of view, we are one of the richest countries in the world. So now we have to think and keep up this kind of record so that we really produce from out of these Universities and Colleges some really required things. I have often repeated that the Universities as they exist now, are becoming stumbling blocks in rising to the occasion. They have their own vested interests. If the Professors do not mind, they become the members of Board of Studies and they would never like to part with what they are presiding over nor would they like to be replaced by any one else What changes are to be made? I want the educationists and also organisations of this kind to think in terms of making necessary changes.

I am glad Mr. Narayana Rao mentioned about a very ambitious scheme which would be a real answer to the modern requirements of society. I do not have many details before me. The Exhibition Society must have been preparing them and certainly the State Government would be interested in trying to give it a definite shape and also a helping hand.

I congratulate the College management for having done such good work in such a short time and also the exhibition society as a whole for venturing into this. I congratulate the

Principal of the College, the members of the staff and also the students who are going to be the beneficiaries of this good hostel accommodation. I wish each one of them all success, plenty and prosperity in future.

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